

Easter Activities 2021: Covid-19 information from Sheffield City Council Public Health

Introduction

Many people, of different faiths and no faiths, celebrate Easter or Spring. The activities people enjoy at this time of year may include duck races, crafts, parades or processions, egg hunts, baking as well as faith-based activities such as group worship. You may plan to celebrate at home, at church, at school, at workplaces, at residential settings such as hostel, supported housing, or care homes. You may decide or be advised to do things differently this year due to the ongoing pandemic.

This information has been produced by Sheffield City Council Public Health to help you join in safely given the ongoing pandemic of Covid-19. We don't want to stop you celebrating this festival, but we want to help you keep yourselves and your communities safe while you do so. This is general advice following basic principles which will be applicable for a range of settings. Sheffield City Council Public Health can't provide advice and information that will cover every setting so please follow setting specific advice. This advice does not cover specific faith-based activities which may take place as part of Christian worship.

This year, Easter falls over the weekend of Good Friday 2nd April – Easter Sunday 4 April 2021. However, schools may organise activities before the school holidays begin. Easter will take place under Step 1 of the roadmap which begins on 8th March with further relaxation of rules from 29th March . From 29th March:

- People will be allowed to meet as two households outdoors or in groups of 6 people from different households outdoors;
- No household mixing indoors;
- Outdoor sport and leisure re-opens
- Outdoor parent and child activities can take place (up to 15 parents)

Healthy behaviours

We are all being asked to follow healthy behaviours to be able to safely move out of lockdown. This includes:

- “hands, face, and space” – keeping hands clean by washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using hand gels if wet handwashing is not available, wearing a face covering in enclosed environments with people not from our household/bubble unless exempt, social distancing from people not in our households (2m+ is safest)
- meeting outdoors where possible
- limiting social contact with people not in our household/bubble – if you meet one different person each day for exercise, even though this is within the rules, it increases your risk of coming into contact with someone who has the virus
- limiting the amount of time we spend with people who are not from our household/bubble
- letting fresh air in when we are indoors
- downloading and using the NHS Test and Trace app
- test immediately if you have symptoms, share details with contact tracers, and self-isolate if you have symptoms, have had a positive test for Covid-19, or are a close contact of someone who has tested positive for Covid-19.

Easter Activities

This advice covers a number of different activities. It may not cover all your planned activities so please contact us if you have specific questions.

Duck races

Outdoor activities (see introduction) will be allowed for small groups over the Easter weekend. We would recommend following “hands, face, space” precautions when organising duck races:

Hands - Plastic surfaces retain the virus for longer¹, so please wash hands or use hand gels before and after handling ducks.

*Face*² - new more transmissible strains of the virus mean we need to consider using face coverings in a wider range of settings where people could be asymptomatic and are in close proximity (<2m), or where the environment or behaviours mean distancing is likely to be difficult. This includes outdoor spaces which are crowded or where it is difficult to maintain distance. Some people are exempt from wearing face coverings or should not wear face coverings.

Space - Duck races can be very exciting so it can be hard to remember social distancing. Please keep at least 1m apart outside and preferably 2m.

Please take care around water, and make sure your risk assessment covers non-Covid-risks such as slips, trips, falls and other hazards. Please keep a register of who has attended as this may be required for test and trace if there is a positive case.

Easter egg hunts

Outdoor activities (see introduction) will be allowed for small groups over the Easter weekend. We would recommend following “hands, face, space” precautions when organising egg hunts. It would be safer to use laminated eggs/chicks out of touching range - on walls, hanging from trees. If you do use chocolate eggs encourage participants to collect them up and take them away to eat (cleansing hands before eating) as it is advised not to share food with people not from your household.

Hands – shiny, non-porous materials such as foil wrappings³ on chocolate eggs may hold the virus longer so cleanse hands before and after handling. It would be safer to offer a no-touch activity such as spotting eggs or chicks.

Face - new more transmissible strains of the virus mean we need to consider using face coverings in a wider range of settings where people could be asymptomatic and are in close proximity (<2m), or where the environment or behaviours mean distancing is likely to be difficult. This includes outdoor spaces which are crowded or where it is difficult to maintain distance. Some people are exempt from wearing face coverings or should not wear face coverings.

¹ <https://search.bvsalud.org/global-literature-on-novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov/resource/en/covidwho-1065478>

² https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/957010/s1029-emg-face-coverings-distancing.pdf

³ <https://search.bvsalud.org/global-literature-on-novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov/resource/en/covidwho-1065478>

Space – egg hunts can be very exciting so it can be hard to remember social distancing. Please keep at least 1m apart outside and preferably 2m.

Please make sure your risk assessment covers non-Covid-risks such as slips, trips, falls and other hazards such as choking hazards from small eggs or foil wrappings. Please keep a register of who has attended as this may be required for test and trace if there is a positive case.

Crafts

Many people enjoy craft activities such as making bonnets, baskets for eggs, bunnies. We don't know how long the virus lasts on different materials. Paper is considered less risky for surface transmission than plastic or metal, so scissors, glue sticks, spatulas, shiny papers, sequins may hold the virus for longer⁴. Try to minimise sharing of scissors, glue sticks, spatulas and non-porous materials such as plastic googly eyes, sequins. It may be best to give each participant their own set of materials and equipment on a tray, rather than sharing these. Always cleanse equipment such as scissors, glue sticks between activities using an antibacterial/antiviral wipe (one wipe per item, then safely dispose) or a disposable cloth and your usual cleaning products⁵. These activities should take place socially distanced (1m outdoors as a minimum and 2m+ indoors). It may help to show people visually their work area, for example using tape on tables.

If it is good weather, then these activities are more safely enjoyed outdoors. If you use semi-enclosed areas such as gazebos then if appropriate you could ask participants such as helpers/carers to wear face coverings (please remember some people are exempt and some should not wear face coverings).

Please assess other non-Covid-risks such as choking hazards from small items, scissors. Keep a dated register of who has attended each craft activity and where they have sat and for how long e.g. a table diagram with names of participants and helpers/carers. This will help with contact tracing if there is a positive case.

Parades or processions

Some people celebrate with parades and processions at this time of year such as Easter bonnet parades. It may be possible to enjoy this type of activity outdoors with small groups, for example:

- School bubble (from 8th March)
- Support group, day care group of 15 people (from 8th March)
- Parent and child group of 15 parents (from 29th March)

Larger outdoor gatherings (of 30 people) will not be allowed until Step 3 (17th May at the earliest) so please do not organise parades or processions without checking the rules to see if this is allowed for your setting.

These outdoor processions or parades should be socially distanced (at least 1m apart and preferably 2m), and you could consider wearing face coverings (remembering some people are exempt and some people are not advised to wear face coverings).

⁴ <https://search.bvsalud.org/global-literature-on-novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov/resource/en/covidwho-1065478>

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

Please make sure your risk assessment covers non-Covid-risks such as slips, trips, falls and other hazards, particularly if using candles. Please keep a register of who has attended as this may be required for test and trace if there is a positive case.

Baking⁶

We recommend due to safety reasons not to hold a bake sale this year or share food with people outside of your household. Although it is very unlikely that the virus can be caught from food, guidance suggests not sharing food with people who are not in your household such as in workplaces so please do not bring and share food or bring food for consumption on the premises. This can be a riskier activity because people remove face coverings to eat and drink and may relax their behaviour in a more social setting and find it harder to socially distance or avoid “mingling”.

If you are selling or sharing cakes or chocolate eggs to take-away then these should be individually wrapped portions prepared by someone following food hygiene procedures such as good handwashing. If you are selling/sharing from under a gazebo or a semi-enclosed outdoor space such as a market stall please consider wearing face coverings (remembering some people are exempt, and some are not advised to wear face coverings). Face coverings should be worn in indoor settings as appropriate such as in communal areas when not seated, with the usual exemptions.

Please remember to wash or sanitise your hands before and after eating to ensure the virus doesn't get from your hands to your mouth and onto surfaces.

Performing Arts⁷

We would recommend you do not offer performing arts in front of a live audience at the moment. Outdoor performance with an audience cannot take place until Step 3 (at the earliest 17th May). You could offer performance via a virtual platform but please consider other safeguarding risk and ensure this is secure.

We wish you all the very best for the Easter Holidays and hope you enjoy spending time outdoors, and celebrating in small groups.

If you have questions that we haven't answered please contact the Sheffield City Council Public Health inbox mesh@sheffield.gov.uk and we'll do our best to find an answer.

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-consumers-on-coronavirus-covid-19-and-food/guidance-for-consumers-on-coronavirus-covid-19-and-food>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/offices-and-contact-centres#offices-7-4>

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-lockdown-stay-at-home#businesses-and-venues>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/performing-arts>