



Social Distancing Guidance - Overview

Below are some summary extracts taken from the DFE guidance for schools and in blue our response to the guidance provided. The document that has been shared before gives even greater detail.

The full guidance can be accessed [here](#)

The government has clearly stated its intention and view on schools returning here:

“Given the improved position, the balance of risk is now overwhelmingly in favour of children returning to school. For the vast majority of children, the benefits of being back in school far outweigh the very low risk from coronavirus (COVID-19), and this guidance explains the steps schools need to take to reduce risks still further.”

*The overarching principle to apply is reducing the number of contacts between children and staff. This can be achieved through keeping groups separate (in ‘bubbles’) and through maintaining distance between individuals. **These are not alternative options and both measures will help**, but the balance between them will change depending on:*

- *children’s ability to distance*
- *the lay out of the school*
- *the feasibility of keeping distinct groups separate while offering a broad curriculum (especially at secondary)*

How contacts are reduced will depend on the school’s circumstances and will (**as much as possible**) include:

- grouping children together - [We have distinct year group bubbles.](#)
- avoiding contact between groups - [There is a clear movement plan to reduce contacts between groups, movement is largely outside where it is safer and all bubbles have their own dining and play areas.](#)
- arranging classrooms with forward facing desks - [All rooms where possible have been arranged in this way. In some subjects this has not been possible and screens have been installed.](#)
- staff maintaining distance from pupils and other staff as much as possible - [All staff / students have been briefed clearly on this and there are staff zones identified at the front of the room. Staff will still at times circulate and support students but this will be minimal.](#)

“In secondary schools, and certainly in the older age groups at key stage 4 and key stage 5, the groups are likely to need to be the size of a year group to enable schools to deliver the full range of curriculum subjects and students to receive specialist teaching. Schools should assess their circumstances and if class-sized groups are not compatible with offering a full range of subjects or managing the practical logistics within and around school, they can look to implement year group sized ‘bubbles’” - [We are operating full year group bubbles to ensure students can continue studying their full choice of subjects and also the National Curriculum.](#)

Both the approaches of separating groups and maintaining distance **are not ‘all-or-nothing’ options, and will still bring benefits even if implemented partially.** Some schools may keep children in their class groups for the majority of the classroom time, but also allow mixing into wider groups for specialist teaching, wraparound care and transport, or for boarding pupils in one group residentially and another during the school day - [We have done all we reasonably can to minimise the mixing between bubbles with our movement plan.](#)

Schools should make small adaptations to the classroom to support distancing where possible. That should include seating pupils side by side and facing forwards, rather than face to face or side on, and might include moving unnecessary furniture out of classrooms to make more space. - [All rooms where possible have been arranged in this way. In some subjects this has not been possible and screens have been installed. Other adaptations have taken place to increase space in some rooms.](#)