

# Bubbles

Liann Brookes-Smith  
Associate Director Public Health  
With Public Health England  
[DPHadmin@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:DPHadmin@warwickshire.gov.uk)

07807979175

# What are bubbles?

- The purpose of bubbles is to reduce mixing between staff and students as much as possible, to ensure close contacts can be identified and isolated quickly.
- This needs consideration when thinking about lunchtimes, before and after school clubs, sports and which groups teachers are with.

# Without Bubbles



- No idea which children are mixing with which.
- One positive case and all children will need to go home and self isolate for 14 days.
- Likely wider transmission if one case.

# With Bubbles



- Children and staff to not mix between bubbles, they play, eat and learn separately.
- Wider transmission is prevented due to the children and staff only mixing with a small group.
- One positive case and a small group of children self isolate.

# FAQs

## **Bubble Size**

- National guidance states that a bubble should not exceed 15 children. However, where it is necessary bubbles can be larger but more staff and students would potentially require isolation. Each setting need to review the balance of isolation should there be a positive case of COVID-19 and being able to function if staff need to isolate.

## **Bubbles in same room**

- Two separate bubbles can share the same space such as; taught in a class or under an outdoors marque together, if 2m is kept between the groups such as cones marking the line (children old enough to keep to it).
- Sports not be discouraged in a gym setting if different bubbles in same room. But ensure maximum distance and ventilate the room. Ensure the communal areas cleaned between use.
- Outside space is better than inside, but the more ventilated the better.

# FAQ (2)

## Using the same facilities:

- Toilets don't need to be cleaned between use if a bubble of children are using them. Clean touchpoints in the toilets between each bubble.
- If bubbles of children cant have their own toilets, then ideally clean touch points between use.
- If not possible to clean touch points between every use then very frequent cleans, ensuring repeated good hand hygiene and respiratory hygiene messages.

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

# FAQ (3)

## **Staff moving between bubbles:**

- A teacher or worker can move between bubbles as long as there is at least 48hrs between each bubble. I.e. Friday to Monday (unless they keep 2m from the class).
- Ideally classrooms are ventilated as well as possible, teachers going from class to class is not ideal but can happen, but they must keep 2m distance.

## **Multiple subjects:**

- Ideally children will social distance in class, any classroom together is a bubble. If a child has more than one class with more than one group of children, were they sit within 2m of each other, then should a child become positive they all need to self isolate.
- A teacher can teach different subjects if 2m away from the rest of the class

# Things to consider so your bubbles stay bubbles

- When children:
  - arrive and leave (staggering times)
  - go to the toilet
  - Eat lunch/ snack times/ break times
  - Transition between activities
- Age groupings/ younger age may not maintain bubbles well.



# Things to remember:

- Ensure messages around good hand hygiene and that children and adults can sanitise their hands.
- Good respiratory hygiene messages (catch it, bin it, kill it).
- Ensure families know how to contact you, and to do this as soon as a child has symptoms. To stay home if they or their children develop symptoms
- Bubbles only need to isolate for 14 days if there is a positive test result.
- Keep lists of attendees, names, addresses, mobile numbers. By day and by bubble to enable contact tracing.
- Have an agreed “contract” with families, that to attend the setting they must agree to get tested for COVID-19, if they develop symptoms.