**Guidance to Schools from Kent County Council (Extract)**

**School events such as end of year performances and sports days**

Some of you will have seen in Schools Week this week ([link here](https://schoolsweek.co.uk/consider-holding-proms-outdoors-dfe-tells-schools-after-freedom-day-delay/)) that an email was sent to school leaders regarding the impact that the continuation of restrictions would have on school events.

The DfE have stated that sports day events can go ahead but the guidance is that “pupils and students must remain in their bubbles, and early years children should remain in their consistent groups as is usual for your setting.”

“Sports equipment should be cleaned regularly throughout the day and should schools invite spectators the must adhere to current social distancing requirements.” This will mean that spectators can gather in separate groups of up to 30, with multiple groups being permitted.

When planning indoor or outdoor live performances in front of an audience should follow the latest [performing arts guidance](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/performing-arts).

Although the Government guidance is that sports days and performances can go ahead, we believe that this is challenging to manage for schools and serious consideration should be given to alternative options such as recording or live streaming events as many schools did last year.

Allowing spectators into schools is challenging and schools would need to consider how this can be managed safely. Social distancing would be maintained, details of all attending would need be collated for Track and Trace, access to toilet facilities will need to be managed so that they are regularly cleaned and school that bubbles are not impacted.

Should schools decide to organise such events, thorough risk assessments must be put in place which evidence how Government guidance will be adhered to.

**The Spread of the Delta Variant**

We have all heard in the news that the Delta variant is much more transmittable than previous versions. This seems to be the case in Kent as Public Health colleagues have started to see an increase in cases of Covid in schools and we are aware of a small number of schools that have had to send significant numbers of pupils home to isolate.

As the spread of covid reduced, schools rightly followed advice and increased the size of bubbles, working in year groups rather than class bubbles. There also has been increased movement around school sites as shared class bases, such as IT suites which were previously closed have been reopened.

We appreciate how challenging it would be to change timetables now and to roll back to the very tight bubbles seen earlier in the year but we need to continue to do all that we can to minimise contacts within schools.

Public Health colleagues have asked us to remind you of The Schools coronavirus (COVID-19) operational guidance (24 May 2021 [linked here](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2Fpublications%2Factions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak%2Fschools-coronavirus-covid-19-operational-guidance&data=04%7C01%7CLee.Round%40kent.gov.uk%7Ca9481be551ab4a3a2e8c08d930822c71%7C3253a20dc7354bfea8b73e6ab37f5f90%7C0%7C0%7C637594157911236856%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=gZCGjN3us7RXOja37nRkWaSz7D8mXsUYGYN2M5wMND8%3D&reserved=0)) which states the following:

Minimising contacts and mixing between people reduces transmission of COVID-19. This is important in all contexts, and you must consider how to implement this. You must do everything possible to minimise contacts and mixing while delivering a broad and balanced curriculum.

The overarching principle to apply is reducing the number of contacts between pupils 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 the:

• pupil’s ability to distance

• layout of the building

• feasibility of keeping distinct groups separate while offering a broad curriculum.