

**Updated Principles for Transition Days (Revised 17/6/2021) including other events.**

**This document supersedes the Principles for Transition released on 19/5/2021.**

**The update is necessary because of the delay in the country moving to the final phase of the Roadmap.**

**17/06/2021**

**The following summary has been created with the support of local public health colleagues.**

We recognise that wider society has opened up and some parents will already be experiencing visits to restaurants and pubs, meeting informally with groups of friends outdoors and a range of other activities allowed under the current guidance.

However, as you may have seen in the news, the more transmissible SARS-CoV-2 variant Delta (formerly “India”) has overtaken "Alpha" (formerly “Kent”) to become the dominant form of COVID-19 both nationally and locally.  In Buckinghamshire there has been a significant increase in COVID outbreaks in educational settings over the past month, mostly caused by the Delta variant, and we are now starting to see more significant and increasing numbers of pupils and staff having to self-isolate. It has therefore become necessary to review the assumptions that the previous advice was based on.

Buckinghamshire Council believe that it is the responsibility for the whole school and setting community to protect our pupils, staff and communities from transmission of the virus. School outbreaks, driven by this more infectious variant, are leading to significant lost nursery/school time for a large number of children and young people. Even a single case in a school or early years setting can result in:

* lost education,
* lost opportunities for children to enjoy particular events scheduled in the summer term,
* a potential impact on children’s wellbeing and experiences, and
* longer term and wider impacts on school and setting staff and children and all their families after the end of term.

This is particularly an issue for children scheduled to transition to a new setting / school in September. We believe we must all do our utmost to ensure that these final weeks of this academic year continue to be as safe as possible for all pupils and staff alike so as to minimise the potential for them to have to self-isolate and miss key events at school and in the holidays.

It is with this in mind that the Task and Finish Group including colleagues from Buckinghamshire Council Education and Public Health, as well as primary and secondary head teachers, have therefore come to the following recommendations:

**Transition Day**

All schools will have noted the advice provided by the Office of The Prime Minister regarding Transitional and Open Days (see Appendix 2)

**The following advice is appropriate for all points of transition – nursery/reception entry, junior transfer and secondary transfer even if not explicitly referred to.**

Following due consideration of the prevalence of Covid in Buckinghamshire and neighbouring areas, the government advice and health and safety advice **we are recommending that Transition Days become virtual events.** We recognise that many will be disappointed in this decision, but this is made for the reasons set out above. Had the proposed in-person arrangements continued, despite all the mitigations we had set out, there was a significant risk, for example, of multiple primary schools being impacted by a Covid-19 infection in a child that had previously attended a secondary school for Transition Day with children from other primary schools, and the consequences of this impacting on multiple schools’ end of term arrangements.

All pupils should therefore continue to attend their current setting/primary school on the 6 and 7 July dates originally scheduled for Transition Day. All schools will wish to consider what might be done on the day and other strategies for ensuring that the virtual transition experience is as similar as possible for all children.

Some mitigations might be:

* Receiving schools should give consideration to the events on the first few days of term and ensure that transition experiences are covered as well as a more formal introduction to life at a new school.
* Receiving schools might consider designing a virtual introduction/welcome that can be shared with / downloaded by primary schools and used on the scheduled date, or later if any children have missed out on seeing it. This might be in the form of a video (if age appropriate to do so) which will help the students to get a feel for life in their new school and perhaps include a tour of the school. This can then be sent to the feeder school/setting with a password protected link so that they can manage the students on the transition day itself and ensure that everyone has parity of experience in their transition whilst being in school.
* It was recognised that other year groups normally moved up to their new year/room/teacher for the day and this could still happen.
* An example of further communications might be that where appropriate past pupils from the primary school who are now in KS3 at their new secondary school could chat virtually and explain what it is like at the school.

**Sports day**

**These can continue for the children but as not all schools have the same outdoor spaces or facilities our recommendation is that sports days are undertaken with no parents on site. This is the case unless schools are very confident that they can meet the very stringent COVID-safe requirements for parental presence on the school site.** Buckinghamshire Council fully supports any school that decides to not allow any large-scale parental attendance at present if the security of bubbles and social distancing cannot be assured.

**Inter-school sporting events**. Under current government guidance these can continue but we would strongly advise against large gatherings of school teams (i.e. maximum two school teams present), non-contact sports only and no off-pitch contact between the teams. Please follow the guidance below for participants and spectators.

**To summarise the requirements:**

The Government Roadmap [COVID-19 Response - Spring 2021 (Summary) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-spring-2021/covid-19-response-spring-2021-summary) currently limits large groups of parents on school/setting sites as this would be categorised as a mass gathering and would require managing in line with large group/gathering arrangements as set out in the roadmap.

The official guidance for sporting events remains the Step 3 guidance described at the following links - [https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-grassroots-sports-guidance-for-safe-provision-including-team-sport-contact-combat-sport-and-organised-sport-events](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fguidance%2Fcoronavirus-covid-19-grassroots-sports-guidance-for-safe-provision-including-team-sport-contact-combat-sport-and-organised-sport-events&data=04%7C01%7Cdebbie.munday%40buckinghamshire.gov.uk%7Cdba7ba717e0a4c819ca508d9317fd3af%7C7fb976b99e2848e180861ddabecf82a0%7C0%7C0%7C637595247338852335%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=Q5WQO4mFTEikt%2BDb3LRvmbrAEFfUAZqjHKbSOXmfiC0%3D&reserved=0) and [https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-grassroots-sports-guidance-for-the-public-and-sport-providers](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fguidance%2Fcoronavirus-covid-19-grassroots-sports-guidance-for-the-public-and-sport-providers&data=04%7C01%7Cdebbie.munday%40buckinghamshire.gov.uk%7Cdba7ba717e0a4c819ca508d9317fd3af%7C7fb976b99e2848e180861ddabecf82a0%7C0%7C0%7C637595247338862326%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=8VU5A1b3QDpGQC36j1LidjddEu%2FqQ2zxMvhsnYKGViw%3D&reserved=0)

In summary, organised outdoor sporting events can only take place with the following restrictions:

**Participants**

1. Organised outdoor sporting events are exempt from all legal gathering limits (for the participants).
2. You should still avoid unnecessary breaking of social distancing such as handshakes, huddles, and celebrations between participants.
3. When not participating (e.g. before and after a match) the normal rules on social contact must be followed.

 **Spectators (advised against unless you are confident that you can meet the following standards)**

1. Outdoor formally organised sport/sports participation event limit: 4000 spectators or 50% of normal venue capacity – whichever is lower.
2. Spectators must adhere to legal gathering limits (meaning that they cannot gather in groups larger than 30, but there can be many smaller groups of spectators **provided the current guidance on social distancing is observed which requires plenty of space, ideally a 1-way system and precautions in place to prevent clustering at entry/exit points, such as staggered start and finish times**).
3. Organisers should advise spectators to maintain social distancing.
4. Spectators should minimise shouting or raising their voices.

How this guidance applies to your particular school setting, facilities and community will vary – especially the 50% normal venue capacity aspect.

**Other events:**

**Evening Session for Parents of Transition Children (all transition phases) -** These should now be held virtually.

**Assemblies (e.g. Leaver assemblies) -** Under government guidelines these can only progress ‘if necessary’. Schools are recommended to consider carefully why parental attendance at leavers assemblies is ‘necessary’ as opposed to desirable, and consider planning for after July 19th only (or any other date the roadmap changes) when it may be possible to have parents present in a socially distanced format if held after the next roadmap step is taken right at the end of term.

**Leaver Events -** We would recommend these are held outside and socially distanced (for example picnics) and ideally held after 19 July. Please be mindful of limiting parent volunteers only to the amount necessary to successfully manage any event.

**Performances -**  are permitted under the guidance with the following caveats – bubbles should be maintained for performers, spectator numbers should be restricted to less than half of the normal venue capacity, seating should be planned to ensure >2m distancing between households, ideally a 1-way system in place and precautions in place to prevent clustering at entry/exit points, such as staggered start and finish times.

**Outdoor public events (e.g. summer fetes) held on school grounds -** Outdoor events can take place for the public so long as there isn’t a particular focus (e.g. a performance which has a specific starting and finishing times).  Car boots etc can happen under the current guidance as long as they have a thorough risk assessment.  Flow of people needs to be managed, there should be no pinch points.

**Please note that the Buckinghamshire Safety Advisory Group need to sign off large events – the event organisers must arrange this and be happy with the risk assessment.  Where the risk assessment is of concern, the event should not go ahead.**

**Summer schools -** After the end of term, the primary school class bubbles will no longer be required to be maintained and so summer schools will be new bubbles. However, schools should ensure they maintain contact lists for track and trace purposes should they be needed and contact links with the previous primary settings in the event that a case of Covid is reported at the beginning of the summer school so that the primary school can contact the parents of others in the previous bubble.

**New staff induction -** New Staff Induction should only take place if it is professionally necessary. It is important that any new staff entering your school should take a lateral flow test in the morning and then confirm that it is negative before they arrive at your school and that the visit meets the requirements of your risk assessment.

**Tracking of cases -** Our current understanding is that schools should be prepared to track cases for 7 to 10 days after the end of term.

**Open evenings (Autumn Term) -** It not possible to confirm what the situation will be for September, but these may need to be held as virtual experiences rather than face-to-face experiences. We would suggest schools prepare/refresh virtual tours just in case.

**General matters -**

* any planned relaxation of current in-school precautions should be delayed, until after the next roadmap step,
* bubbles should be maintained and kept as small as is practical,
* the whole school community should be reminded of the importance of practicing the principles of ‘hands, face, space, fresh air’ whenever possible,
* anyone who is eligible for COVID-19 vaccination but has not yet taken up the offer, or who has not taken up their second dose when invited, should be encouraged to do so ASAP,
* immediate self-isolation by the entire household when any person in the house develops possible COVID-19 symptoms or gets a positive LFD result.

If you have any queries about your events then Public Health can assist publichealth@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

If you would like to feedback any comments to the task and finish group then please email debbie.munday@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

**Transitions Task and Finish Group 17/06/2021**

**Appendix 1 – to continue to be put in place throughout the summer term 2021 or until superseded**

**The 12 principles from government guidance**

Schools coronavirus (COVID-19) operational guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

**Prevention**

**You must always:**

1. Minimise contact with individuals who are required to self-isolate by ensuring they do not attend the school.

2. Ensure face coverings are used in recommended circumstances.

3. Ensure everyone is advised to clean their hands thoroughly and more often than usual.

4. Ensure good respiratory hygiene for everyone by promoting the ‘catch it, bin it, kill it’ approach.

5. Maintain enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products such as detergents.

6. Consider how to minimise contact across the site and maintain social distancing wherever possible.

7. Keep occupied spaces well ventilated.

**In specific circumstances:**

8. Ensure individuals wear the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) where necessary.

9. Promote and engage in asymptomatic testing, where available.

**Response to any infection**

**You must always:**

10. Promote and engage with the NHS Test and Trace process.

11. Manage and report confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the school community.

12. Contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice.

Appendix 2

The Prime Minister’s announcement and what this means for some of your summer term activities

The government has always been clear that 21 June 2021 was an indicative date for progression to Step 4 of the roadmap, which would be guided by data and not dates.

Yesterday the government announced a 4-week pause at Step 3. Step 3 restrictions remain in place, including those set out in the [COVID-19 operational guidance](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2Fcollections%2Fguidance-for-schools-coronavirus-covid-19%3Futm_source%3D15%2520June%25202021%2520C19%26utm_medium%3DDaily%2520Email%2520C19%26utm_campaign%3DDfE%2520C19%23history&data=04%7C01%7Cdebbie.munday%40buckinghamshire.gov.uk%7C36e1e019bc454770e95008d9309e6157%7C7fb976b99e2848e180861ddabecf82a0%7C0%7C0%7C637594279058103362%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=65nmYc3uIR%2BKwwCSCimpLtMbKRlSGrGWfhezdWYjayg%3D&reserved=0) for your setting.

It is expected that England will move to Step 4 on 19 July 2021, although the data will be reviewed after 2 weeks in case the risks have reduced. The government will continue to monitor the data and the move to Step 4 will be confirmed one week in advance.

It is our priority that all education and childcare settings deliver face-to-face, high quality provision to all children and students. At a time when further easing of restrictions has been paused, the current system of controls should continue to be implemented in education and childcare settings. This means settings should encourage staff, and students, where applicable, to continue to test twice weekly and student bubbles, where they exist, should stay in place. Early years settings should continue to minimise mixing by keeping children in consistent groups.

We will update schools, colleges and early years settings on plans for Step 4 as soon as possible.

We know you may have questions following the Prime Minister’s announcement about what this means for some of your summer term activities. The general principle is that early years, schools and colleges must continue to risk assess and plan activities in line with the system of controls and should follow government guidance. We have set out some positions on common activities below.

Sports days

Sports days can go ahead. In line with the rest of the system of controls, 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 regularly cleaned throughout the event.

Spectators must adhere to current social distancing requirements. Where events take place outdoors, spectators can gather in separate groups of up to 30 – the legal gathering limit. Multiple groups of 30 are permitted.

Leavers events

Currently, you should avoid hosting large group gatherings indoors for more than one bubble (or in early years more than one consistent group), such as assemblies or mass worship. The [schools COVID-19 operational guidance](https://eur03.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%3Futm_source%3D15%2520June%25202021%2520C19%26utm_medium%3DDaily%2520Email%2520C19%26utm_campaign%3DDfE%2520C19%23history&data=04%7C01%7Cdebbie.munday%40buckinghamshire.gov.uk%7C36e1e019bc454770e95008d9309e6157%7C7fb976b99e2848e180861ddabecf82a0%7C0%7C0%7C637594279058113358%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=uyUTR3NiR13WPznBeJy%2FEMuvGySLsOc%2FzG%2BKBuX8J9M%3D&reserved=0) states that children should be kept in separate, independent groups (for example, their bubbles). The [early years guidance](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2Fpublications%2Fcoronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures%3Futm_source%3D15%2520June%25202021%2520C19%26utm_medium%3DDaily%2520Email%2520C19%26utm_campaign%3DDfE%2520C19%23history&data=04%7C01%7Cdebbie.munday%40buckinghamshire.gov.uk%7C36e1e019bc454770e95008d9309e6157%7C7fb976b99e2848e180861ddabecf82a0%7C0%7C0%7C637594279058123356%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=bqbIkzMTsXpHd%2FI3jV9C1E8xkvl%2BSITWXnNvvO8VjiU%3D&reserved=0) states you should minimise contact between groups within settings (for example, keeping children in consistent groups). The [FE guidance](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2Fpublications%2Fcoronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-further-education-provision%3Fpriority-taxon%3Db350e61d-1db9-4cc2-bb44-fab02882ac25%3Futm_source%3D15%2520June%25202021%2520C19%26utm_medium%3DDaily%2520Email%2520C19%26utm_campaign%3DDfE%2520C19%23history&data=04%7C01%7Cdebbie.munday%40buckinghamshire.gov.uk%7C36e1e019bc454770e95008d9309e6157%7C7fb976b99e2848e180861ddabecf82a0%7C0%7C0%7C637594279058123356%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=6A2k%2BletfvRZZpfA2%2BN6diMNZ46cGNYFUU7kNGs2ekg%3D&reserved=0) also has advice on how to group students.

Outdoor events are generally lower risk. Once you have undertaken a risk assessment and planned your event in line with your system of controls, you may consider an outdoor event (for example a leavers’ celebration or prom) that caters for more than one bubble or consistent group, as long as the groups continue to be kept separate.

Any parents attending outdoor events must adhere to current social distancing requirements. Where outdoors spectators can gather in groups of up to 30 – the legal gathering limit. Multiple groups of 30 are permitted.

Transitional and open days

You should complete thorough risk assessments before running transitional, taster and open days in your setting, to ensure that they are run in line with your system of controls and align with the advice contained within the guidance for your setting and the [roadmap out of lockdown](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2Fpublications%2Fcovid-19-response-spring-2021%2Fcovid-19-response-spring-2021-summary%23step-3---not-before-17-may%3Futm_source%3D15%2520June%25202021%2520C19%26utm_medium%3DDaily%2520Email%2520C19%26utm_campaign%3DDfE%2520C19%23history&data=04%7C01%7Cdebbie.munday%40buckinghamshire.gov.uk%7C36e1e019bc454770e95008d9309e6157%7C7fb976b99e2848e180861ddabecf82a0%7C0%7C0%7C637594279058133348%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=0WvgJeF99yfRs3ysvM5ukpQPLNGh3eaqyXNFB3wRiB8%3D&reserved=0).

This means that traditional transitional and open days are unlikely to be feasible this academic year but we are keen not to restrict individual settings from designing events which maintain the integrity of bubbles or consistent groups, and adhere to the system of controls in place.

Singing

If you are planning an indoor or outdoor face-to-face performance in front of a live audience, you should continue to follow the latest [performing arts guidance](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fguidance%2Fworking-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19%2Fperforming-arts&data=04%7C01%7Cdebbie.munday%40buckinghamshire.gov.uk%7C36e1e019bc454770e95008d9309e6157%7C7fb976b99e2848e180861ddabecf82a0%7C0%7C0%7C637594279058143345%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=U%2BDRBd0y1tAHWEcIC6Vh1MbVSKmqesPuKjgpQ4Di3fg%3D&reserved=0), and the guidance on [delivering outdoor events](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eventsindustryforum.co.uk%2Findex.php%2F11-features%2F14-keeping-workers-and-audiences-safe-during-covid-19&data=04%7C01%7Cdebbie.munday%40buckinghamshire.gov.uk%7C36e1e019bc454770e95008d9309e6157%7C7fb976b99e2848e180861ddabecf82a0%7C0%7C0%7C637594279058143345%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=G4T9edWELB2T18P821uIWqdElNnSiWVrw8JHESZEtIM%3D&reserved=0). Registered early years settings, schools and colleges are, however, exempt from the requirement to limit group numbers to 6 for singing indoors.