

Updated FAQs 10 July 2020

Out of School / Holiday Childcare FAQs

I have a parent contact me to care for their child in year 3, can I offer childcare from 4th July or do I have to wait until the 22nd July?

The new guidance says when state schools close at the end of the summer term. Therefore, it is our understanding that when the school which the child would normally attend closes the child is able to access holiday care.

The holiday club guidance refers to groups of 15 children. EY states 16 children per group.

This is because the Holiday Provision guidance is for school aged children, and the bubble sizes for schools is a maximum of 15, whereas for early years it is for a maximum of 16 (although it is recommended that a maximum of 8 children per bubble should be implemented where possible)

For holiday club can we mix staffing within the bubbles? It is not mentioned at all within holiday club guidance; just mentions children in bubbles.

In the absence of any different guidance, the bubble guidance for early years and school settings should continue to be followed for out of school in the same way you would for early years. Therefore, you should not be mixing adults between the bubbles (extract below of the current bubbles guidance) and recommend you plan around that. We also think you might need to have smaller bubbles to keep consistency of children in different bubbles. You will also need to consider that if you were to mix children or staff and someone became symptomatic in any of the bubbles, all bubbles that have the child / staff member in will need to be sent home to isolate

Keeping children and staff together in small groups Keeping group sizes to a maximum of 8 children, while adhering to EYFS ratios, is preferable so groups are as small as possible. Providers are expected to ensure that there are no more than 16 children in a group in early years settings. Further information on planning these groups once you have worked with parents to identify the children who will be returning to your setting is set out in [section 8](#) of this guidance.

Physical distancing between groups

While it is not expected that children and staff within a group will keep 2 metres apart, it is important for settings to consider how they can reduce contact between groups of children and staff as far as possible, for example by ensuring children and staff mix in a small consistent group and that small group stays away from other groups.

Settings should ensure:

- *physical distancing between groups of children and staff as far as possible*

- *that individual groups use the same area of a setting throughout the day as much as possible*
- *that the sharing of toys and resources is reduced*
- *that any toys or resources that are shared can be easily cleaned between different groups' use*

As far as possible, the same members of staff should be assigned to each group and these should stay the same during the day and on subsequent days. Keep your staffing arrangements as consistent as possible. In instances where you do need to use staff from other settings or agency staff, ensure that this is agreed on a weekly basis, not daily, to limit contacts.

We are the after school and breakfast club in the grounds of a Primary School. Guidance for September will see all classes / years of children remaining in their own bubble with no social distancing and no cross over of classes with staggered lunch and playtime. We take children (or were) from every class therefore we cannot see how we can open as we were operating. Could you please advise us further as at present I can only see us opening in September by taking children from one class each day obviously not ideal (no mixing the bubbles)

In the first instance, we would recommend you contact the school to discuss options that would allow children to be cared for in a way that meets both the school and setting risk assessments as the school may have decided to operate on a whole year bubble model that might help seek options

Funding FAQs

Do you know if from September if a child attends 2 or more settings they will still be able to do this or will it still be the same as now, only being able to attend one setting?

The updated guidance states:

From 20 July, early years settings will no longer be required to keep children in small, consistent groups within settings.

Settings should still consider how they can minimise mixing within settings, for example where they use different rooms for different age groups, keeping those groups apart as much as possible.

All other protective measures must remain in place.

Parents and carers should be encouraged to limit the number of settings their child attends, ideally ensuring their child only attends the same setting consistently. This should also be the same for staff.

Therefore, the guidance does still suggest children attending only one provider is most preferable. Each provider should reflect their decision with regards to children only attending one setting in their risk assessment.

I have a child who wishes to split their claim between ourselves and another provider. Normally this would be actioned with no issues at all, but I am very aware of the current need for bubbles and not mixing groups. If we get to September and we, or the other provider, cannot take the child in for the allocated hours due to the 'bubbles' what happens? Would you redistribute hours as necessary or would it be an agreement between the settings?

Current guidance recommends that children do not attend more than one setting as follows:

5. Minimise contact between individuals where possible

From 20 July, early years settings will not be required to arrange children and staff in small, consistent groups.

Settings should still consider how they can minimise mixing within settings, for example where they use different rooms for different age groups, keeping those groups apart as much as possible.

Removing the groups approach is based on the fact that the overall risk to children from coronavirus (COVID-19) is low. It also recognises that early years settings are typically much smaller than schools. Adopting the system of controls set out here in a robust way will ensure there are proportionate safeguards for children as well as staff and reduce the chance of transmission.

Until 20 July, providers are expected to ensure that there are no more than 16 children in a single group in an early years setting. Providers can have several groups of 16 children if EYFS ratios and EYFS space requirements allow. While 16 children is the maximum in a group, keeping groups to 8 children, while adhering to EYFS ratios, is preferable, so groups are as small as possible.

Parents and carers should be encouraged to limit the number of settings their child attends, ideally ensuring their child only attends the same setting consistently. This should also be the same for staff.

*If, however, a child does attend 2 settings **and both providers and parent** are in agreement with this following a risk assessment by both providers, then they should be able to claim the appropriate funded hours as signed on the parent/carer declaration form.*

However, if in September it became apparent that the funding had been claimed by both settings and the child was in fact only attending one of the settings, ECC would request that the setting that did not have the child attending adjusted their claim on the portal to reflect this.

Please can you confirm if we must open to provide full funded hours from September?
Currently we are open on reduced hours.

Each provider must decide for themselves whether they are able to offer the full funded hours for children in September following their own risk assessment. Providers should only put on their interim headcount what they are able to offer parents and it has been agreed with the parent. If hours increase throughout the term, then an adjustment can be made at actual headcount and due to COVID-19 we are allowing additional hours to be claimed at amendment task as well if needed.

However, you should bear in mind that if parents are not able to access their full entitlement, they may consider using an alternative provider, giving the relevant notice period as detailed in your contract.