



Ready to Return: Table Tennis England Guidance for Schools, and Coaches working in Schools

September 2020

Following Government updates, table tennis indoors has been able to take place since 25th July 2020, with certain social distancing restrictions and hygiene requirements in place.

To enable table tennis to return safely to schools, and other indoor venues, we have produced a set of recommendations that can help the restart of table tennis. It is important to note that these will be **recommendations** for schools and for Coaches working in schools, and will need to be adapted for your environment and in line with school policies and risk assessments.

Guidance may well continue to change and be adapted in line with guidance from DCMS and Sport England.

The last updated date is included in the bottom right corner of each page, and any variations from the original document, first issued 18th September 2020 will be highlighted in grey.

Principles to consider pre-activity

Before commencing activity, schools may wish to consider the following points;

- **Has a risk assessment been completed by your school to consider how table tennis can be delivered in line with the operating procedures of your site?** eg. Number of children in a session, handwashing, social distancing requirements etc.

- **What will those participating need to wear?**

The good news for table tennis is that to play recreationally, a change of clothes is not always required. Just some sensible shoes! This makes table tennis an ideal activity for lunchtime and breaktime too.

- **How will equipment be kept clean and sanitised?**

Although minimal equipment is required for table tennis, it will be important to ensure that all equipment (bats, balls and tables) are cleaned between groups of users. Sharing equipment should also be minimised.

Reducing shared equipment can be done by giving all children their own bat for the duration of the session. The ball presents a minimal risk during play however, it is recommended that a box / basket of balls is made available for each session to minimise the amount of time a ball is handled.



- **What activities will be delivered, and by whom?**

The following sections of this document go on to provide ideas for tasks and activities that could be delivered by teachers, or coaches, in schools.

If an external coach is delivering, have they been briefed on your School's COVID procedures, and do they hold a valid Table Tennis England Coach licence?

Ideas for delivering table tennis in your school

Please see supporting documents from both our TT Kidz programme and Teachers Award. Not only will they give you ideas of games and activities but an idea of what is delivered on our workshops.

Information for Coaches delivering in Schools

Getting table tennis back up and running in schools its very much a discussion between both coach and school. To support coaches and schools in the return of table tennis, Table Tennis England have signed the [First Give Charter](#). The charter provides our coaches with guidance when visiting schools to ensure they follow Covid-19 guidance. It also supports coaches and ensure schools will gain confidence to allow external staff members such as our coaches to coach.

Before working in a school:

- Liaise with schools in advance of any visit to schools to understand their own measures and policies
- Adapt your work to meet school policies, e.g. working in smaller groups or amending your workspace and materials
- Ask the school for their Risk Assessment so you're confident it is a safe coaching environment

When at schools:

- Use hand sanitizer on arrival
- Seek a briefing from the contact staff member to ensure we fully understand the school's Covid-19 prevention policy and mitigation measures
- Re-visit the Risk Assessment provided by school
- Always keep at least 2 metres distance from staff and students
- Minimise or stop the use of re-usable resources
- Wash and sanitize hands regularly during time in school
- Take your own lunch and/or refreshments

During session:

- Coaches within a school set up can run sessions for class sizes and bubbles as dictated by the school.
- Clean all equipment before the start of your session and at the end of your session. A cleaning checklist template can be found here; <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/templates-for-clubs-and-coaches/>



- Students do not share equipment during a session
- Consider the length of your session to allow time for additional cleaning and preparation

Please ensure you have your Coach Licence in place before returning to coaching. More information on the Coach Licence can be found here; <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/coach/coaching/coach-licence-scheme/>

Community Clubs operating on School site

Table Tennis England have issued a series of guidance notes and recommendations for community table tennis clubs to follow, to enable the safe return to the sport.

These recommendations, including 'Hygiene and Facility Guidance' and template risk assessment can be found here; <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/our-sport/major-events/ready-to-return/>

It is recognised that many schools are not yet in a position to open up to external hirers. When the time comes, Clubs and Schools are encouraged to work together to find a safe solution that considers Table Tennis England guidelines and meets the operational procedures of the facility.

Competitions

Butterfly Schools Team Championship 2020-21

The impact of the coronavirus pandemic has led to a number of changes to the Butterfly Schools Team Championships, including the removal of the regional stage.

Borough and County rounds for the Championships would ordinarily take place between October and December, progressing through Zone finals and then Regional Finals to the National Final in March.

With the challenges faced by schools in returning following lockdown in mind, and in line with Table Tennis England's competition review framework, the decision has been made to postpone the start of the Team Championships until January 2021.

The full statement can be found here; <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/pandemic-leads-to-new-format-for-schools-championships/>

Table Tennis England support available to Schools

Table Tennis England welcome conversations with schools regarding the safe return of table tennis – for their pupils, staff, and community. Please get in touch via help@tabletennisengland.co.uk.

We also offer a number of products and programmes to enable the delivery of table tennis to both primary and secondary age children.



Schools Membership: Our Schools Membership packages support schools to access resources and information to develop high quality table tennis provision for their pupils. Registering will also ensure you are kept up to date with the latest news and competition updates. Find out more about our Schools Essential (free!) and Schools Plus Memberships here;

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/clubs/schools/schools-memberships/>

Schools Equipment Offers: Table Tennis England's affordable schools' packages are designed to help schools introduce table tennis or expand their existing provision;

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/clubs/schools/our-schools-offer/>

TT Kidz for Schools: TT Kidz for Schools is an exciting new programme that introduces the great game of table tennis to Key Stage 2 students from any educational facility. The programme aims to deliver fun, inspiring and engaging sessions to allow young people to have positive experiences in table tennis. **TT Kidz staff training is also completed online.** Find out more about this here;

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/schools/tt-kidz-for-schools/>

Training Courses: Table Tennis England run a number of courses for schools. Courses range in skills and outcomes, whether it a pupils first step into coaching or officiating, or up-skilling teachers in how to engage students through table tennis. **Our Junior Umpire Award may be ideal for this Autumn Term, as delivery is online.** Find out more about this, and all of our courses, here;

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/clubs/schools/courses-for-schools/>



Frequently Asked Questions

Are schools required to adhere to the same court size restrictions as Clubs?

Schools will be able to set their own requirements for court sizes, bubble sizes and hall layout based on their COVID risk assessments and school operating procedures.

Table Tennis England have developed a series of venue layouts to guide Table Tennis Clubs – these may also be a useful reference point for Schools looking at how to set up their space;
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/key-guidance-documents/>

Are schools required to separate courts using barriers?

No, schools are not required to use barriers to separate courts.

Do Table Tennis England have any ideas or recommendations for socially distanced table tennis activities?

There are some example activities provided in the Schools section of the Ready to Return website.

Can students in a year group bubble play table tennis at breaks on outside tables?

Yes, playing table tennis outdoors could be a great way to get children active during break and lunchtime. Schools are encouraged to consider their COVID protocols and complete a risk assessment for outdoor activity, which includes how shared equipment will be cleaned between groups, and how group sizes / bubbles will be managed.

How can we best clean our indoor (rubber) bats and tables without damaging them?

Tables and rubber bats should be cleaned and wiped dry using 2-3 sprays of a diluted soapy water solution. Avoid using alcohol-based products, astringent cleaners such as floor cleaners or wipes that may contain other substances that can leave a residue and alter the matt finish on tables

When can we resume inter/intra-school fixture matches?

This will be down to individual schools to make the decision as to when they can host or participate in competition. On 1st September, Table Tennis England moved to Stage 4 of the Ready to Return roadmap enabling local competition to take place in line with Ready to Return Guidelines. This includes introducing a bubble of 6. This would mean that a school can play a 2v2 or 3v3 match with another school but nothing more.

Are children required to play table tennis in bubbles of 6 in school, like Clubs?

No, in school, the bubble size can vary depending on the procedures that the school has in place. It is down to the individual school to set the bubble sizes for table tennis sessions.

Are Coaches allowed back into Schools?

This decision will be down to the individual school.

Table Tennis England have signed up to First Gives 'Charter for providers working in Schools in England and



Wales'. This will be shared with all Table Tennis England Licenced Coaches, and seeks to give Schools confidence in allowing external providers back on site.

More about the charter can be found here; <https://firstgive.co.uk/providers-charter/>

Can a coach run multiple sessions a day within a school?

Coaches can run multiple sessions throughout the day for different bubbles providing they follow all the safety and cleaning procedures.

Why should Schools use a Licenced Coach?

The Table Tennis England Coach Licence Scheme is a register of more than 600 coaches that we are confident are active and knowledgeable in current coaching methods and hold an up to date Safeguarding Qualification and a clear DBS. It aims to establish a kite mark for the coaching of table tennis in England and to support the professional development of active coaches.

All coaches registered on the Coach Licence Scheme receive up to £10 Million Public Liability insurance as well as benefiting from discounts and offers exclusive to our coaches.

To find a licenced coach in your area please [click here](https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/coach/coaching/find-a-coach/).
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/coach/coaching/find-a-coach/>