

Swindon Music Service Not-for Profit Charity

**Swindon Music Service:  
Main changes since this guidance was last updated**

**Guidance for full opening schools – updated 28th August 2020**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools#music-dance-and-drama-in-school>

**We have extracted the section (pages 50 -55) outlining the updated guidance for music**

**Music, dance and drama in school**

All pupils should have access to a quality arts education. Music, dance and drama build confidence and help children live happier, more enriched lives, and discover the joy of expressing themselves. There may, however, be an additional risk of infection in environments where singing, chanting, playing wind or brass instruments, dance and drama takes place.

Additional mitigations, such as extended social distancing, were previously required for singing, and playing of wind and brass instruments given concerns that these were potentially higher risk activities. Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) has commissioned further scientific studies to be carried out to develop the scientific evidence on these activities, which has allowed the government to reconsider appropriate mitigations and further research is continuing.

Singing, wind and brass instrument playing can be undertaken in line with this and other guidance, in particular guidance provided by the DCMS for professionals and non-professionals, available at [working safely during coronavirus (COVID-19): performing arts](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/performing-arts). However, these studies have also indicated that it is the cumulative aerosol transmission from both those performing in and attending events is likely to create risk. DCMS is continuing to develop a more detailed understanding of how to mitigate this potential aggregate risk, but in that context, organisations should follow the guidance set out below.

Schools that offer specialist, elite provision in music, dance and drama may also wish to consider this guidance alongside the DCMS guidance on the performing arts.

**Minimising contact between individuals**

You must do everything possible to minimise contacts and mixing. Your overarching objective should be to reduce the number of contacts between pupils/students and staff. This can be achieved through keeping groups separate (in bubbles) and through maintaining the social distance between individuals. These are not alternative options. Both measures will help, but the balance between them will change depending on the age of pupils, the layout of the building, and the feasibility of keeping groups separate from each other while offering a broad curriculum. If staff need to move between classes and year groups, they should try and keep their distance from pupils and other staff as much as they can, ideally 2 metres from other adults.

You should take particular care in music, dance and drama lessons to observe social distancing where possible. This may limit group activity in these subjects in terms of numbers in each group. It will also prevent physical correction by teachers and contact between pupils in dance and drama.

Additionally, you should keep any background or accompanying music to levels which do not encourage teachers or other performers to raise their voices unduly. If possible, use microphones to reduce the need for shouting or prolonged periods of loud speaking or singing. If possible, do not share microphones. If they are shared, follow the guidance on [handling equipment](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools#handling-equipment).

**Performances**

If planning an indoor or outdoor face-to-face performance in front of a live audience, schools should follow the latest advice in the DCMS [performing arts](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/performing-arts) guidance, implementing events in the lowest risk order as described. If planning an outdoor performance they should also give particular consideration to the guidance on delivering [outdoor events](https://www.eventsindustryforum.co.uk/index.php/11-features/14-keeping-workers-and-audiences-safe-during-covid-19).

**Peripatetic teachers**

Schools can continue to engage peripatetic teachers during this period, including staff from music education hubs.

Peripatetic teachers can move between schools, for instance, but you should consider how to minimise the number of visitors where possible. They will be expected to comply with arrangements for managing and minimising risk, including taking particular care to maintain distance from other staff and pupils. To minimise the numbers of temporary staff entering the premises, and secure best value, you could consider using longer assignments with peripatetic teachers and agree a minimum number of hours across the academic year.

If a teacher is operating on a peripatetic basis, and operating across multiple groups or individuals, it is important that they do not attend a lesson if they are unwell or are having any symptoms associated with coronavirus (COVID-19) such as fever, a new and sustained cough, loss of sense of taste or smell. In addition, they should:

1. Maintain distancing requirements with each group they teach, where appropriate.
2. Avoid situations where distancing requirements are broken; for an example demonstrating partnering work in dancing.
3. Make efforts to reduce the number of groups taught and locations worked in, to reduce the number of contacts made.

Further information on the music education hubs, including contact details for local hubs, can be found at [music education hub](https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/music-education/music-education-hubs#section-1), published by the Arts Council England.

**Music teaching in schools and colleges, including singing, and playing wind and brass instruments in groups**

When planning music provision for the next academic year, schools should consider additional specific safety measures. Although singing and playing wind and brass instruments do not currently appear to represent a significantly higher risk than routine speaking and breathing at the same volume, there is now some evidence that additional risk can build from aerosol transmission with volume and with the combined numbers of individuals within a confined space. This is particularly evident for singing and shouting, but with appropriate safety mitigation and consideration, singing, wind and brass teaching can still take place. Measures to take follow in the next sections.

**Playing outdoors**

Playing instruments and singing in groups should take place outdoors wherever possible. If indoors, consider limiting the numbers in relation to the space.

**Playing indoors**

If indoors, use a room with as much space as possible, for example, larger rooms; rooms with high ceilings are expected to enable dilution of aerosol transmission. If playing indoors, limiting the numbers to account for ventilation of the space and the ability to social distance. It is important to ensure good ventilation. Advice on this can be found in Health and Safety Executive guidance on [air conditioning and ventilation during the coronavirus outbreak](https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/equipment-and-machinery/air-conditioning-and-ventilation.htm).

**Singing, wind and brass playing**

Singing, wind and brass playing should not take place in larger groups such as choirs and ensembles, or assemblies unless significant space, natural airflow (at least 10l/s/person for all present, including audiences) and strict social distancing and mitigation as described below can be maintained.

**Social distancing**

In the smaller groups where these activities can take place, schools should observe strict social distancing between each singer and player, and between singers and players, and any other people such as conductors, other musicians, or accompanists. Current guidance is that if the activity is face-to-face and without mitigating actions, 2 metres is appropriate.

**Seating positions**

Pupils should be positioned back-to-back or side-to-side when playing or singing (rather than face-to-face) whenever possible. Position wind and brass players so that the air from their instrument does not blow into another player.

**Microphones**

Use microphones where possible or encourage singing quietly.

By considering and adopting these cumulative risk mitigation measures, the overall risk will be reduced.

**Handling equipment and instruments**

Measures to take when handling equipment, including instruments, include the following.

**Handwashing**

Requiring increased handwashing before and after handling equipment, especially if being used by more than one person.

**Avoiding sharing instruments**

Avoid and equipment wherever possible. Place name labels on equipment to help identify the designated user, for example, percussionists’ own sticks and mallets.

If instruments and equipment have to be shared, disinfect regularly (including any packing cases, handles, props, chairs, microphones and music stands) and always between users, following government guidance on cleaning and handling equipment available at [hygiene: handwashing, sanitation facilities and toilets](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/factories-plants-and-warehouses#factories-5-5).

Instruments should be cleaned by the pupils playing them, where possible.

**Handling scores, parts and scripts**

Limit handling of music scores, parts and scripts to the individual using them.

**Suppliers**

Consider limiting the number of suppliers when hiring instruments and equipment. Schools should agree whose responsibility cleaning hired instruments is with the suppliers. Clean hire equipment, tools or other equipment on arrival and before first use. Equipment and instruments should be stored in a clean location if you take delivery of them before they are needed, and they should be cleaned before first use and before returning the instrument.

**Pick up and drop off points**

Pick up and drop off collection points should be created where possible, rather than passing equipment such as props, scripts, scores and microphones hand-to-hand.

**Individual lessons and performance in groups**

Individual lessons in music, dance and drama can resume in schools, FE colleges and organisations providing out of school childcare. This may mean teachers interacting with pupils from multiple groups, so you will need to take particular care, in line with the measures set out above on peripatetic teachers.

If there is no viable alternative, music lessons in private homes can resume, following the same guidelines, and additionally following the government guidance for working in homes, and the guidance for out-of-school provision.

In individual lessons for music, dance and drama, social distancing should be maintained wherever possible, meaning teachers should not provide physical correction.

Specific safety measures for individual music lessons are set out in the following sections.

**Social distancing**

Measures should include specific social distancing between pupil and teacher (current guidance is that if the activity is face-to-face and without mitigations, 2 metres is appropriate), accounting for ventilation of the space being used. Pupil and teacher should be positioned side by side if possible.

**Avoid sharing instruments**

Avoid sharing instruments and equipment wherever possible and place name labels on equipment to help identify the designated user, for example, percussionists’ own sticks and mallets

If instruments and equipment have to be shared, they should be regularly disinfected (including any packing cases, handles, props, chairs, microphones and music stands) and always between users, following government guidance on [cleaning and handling equipment](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/performing-arts). Instruments should be cleaned by the individuals playing them, where possible

**Scores, parts and scripts**

Limit the handling of music scores, parts and scripts to the person using them.

If there is no viable alternative, music lessons in private homes can resume, following the same guidelines, and additionally following the government guidance for [working in homes](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/homes), and the guidance for [out-of-school provision](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protective-measures-for-holiday-or-after-school-clubs-and-other-out-of-school-settings-for-children-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/protective-measures-for-out-of-school-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak).

**Observations:**

1. The removal or brass, woodwind and singing tuition should be redistricted to 15 pupils, has been removed and replaced with:

***“Singing, wind and brass playing***

*Singing, wind and brass playing should not take place in larger groups such as choirs and ensembles, or assemblies unless significant space, natural airflow (at least 10l/s/person for all present, including audiences) and strict social distancing and mitigation as described below can be maintained.*

***Social distancing***

*In the smaller groups where these activities can take place, schools should observe strict social distancing between each singer and player, and between singers and players, and any other people such as conductors, other musicians, or accompanists. Current guidance is that if the activity is face-to-face and without mitigating actions, 2 metres is appropriate.*

***Seating positions***

*Pupils should be positioned back-to-back or side-to-side when playing or singing (rather than face-to-face) whenever possible. Position wind and brass players so that the air from their instrument does not blow into another player.*

***Microphones***

*Use microphones where possible or encourage singing quietly.*

*By considering and adopting these cumulative risk mitigation measures, the overall risk will be reduced.”*