



# Summary of Government Guidance (August 2020) for Music and Performing Arts

There are new considerations for all practical subjects, including Music, Drama and Dance following the update to [DfE guidance](#) (28.8.20). See *Appendix a* This guidance also makes reference to the [DCMS guidance](#) for professionals and non-professionals. See *Appendix b*

The aim of this summary is that, in condensing these various government sources into one short document, MTA members will be able to reflect further upon risk assessments, regularly updating and revising these accordingly. The information below will hopefully support colleagues when advocating any or all aspects of Music Education to school management and leaders.

## The case for Music

It is manifestly clear that the government supports the continuation of music and performing arts subjects in schools:

*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. (DfE Guidance)*

The benefits of music in schools are well-documented. The subject, both within and beyond the curriculum makes a vital contribution to the life of every school and should be celebrated, encouraged and promoted. It leads to higher standards across the curriculum and can be a central part of the recovery of schools following the disruption of the COVID pandemic.

For more information see appendix c [The Power of Music](#) and d [Music Education Recovery Curriculum](#)

DfE and DCMS guidance is consistent, where measures of mitigation include:

- Reduced contact
  - o social distancing (2m) between staff and pupils
  - o keeping consistent groups (or bubbles) of pupils socially distanced
  - o even within bubbles, social distancing (2m) in certain circumstances (see below)
- Using as large a space as possible for rehearsing and teaching
- Regular ventilation of the space
- Hand and respiratory hygiene
- Individual handling of instruments, equipment and sheet music
- Cleaning protocols, including instrument hygiene

In a development from previous guidance, **children and young people can now engage in singing, wind and brass** in line with the protective measures outlined and paying strict attention to the DCMS guidance for the Performing Arts. This is to mitigate any cumulative risks of aerosol transmission. Although singing and playing wind and brass instruments do not present a higher risk than speaking, for example, studies have indicated that there may be a cumulative risk that can increase in certain contexts. With appropriate safety considerations, singing, wind and brass teaching can take place.



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## Classroom Music

- Where students are in class bubbles, **singing as part of the curriculum is permitted** as long as it is for a short period of time (see mitigating circumstances above) and that the volume level is gentle.

*Musical organisations could consider treating speaking and singing equally, with more attention focused on the volume at which the vocalisation occurs, the number of participants (source strength), the type of room in which the activity occurs (i.e. air exchange rate) and the duration of the rehearsal and period over which performers are vocalising.*

[PERFORM study commissioned by PHE](#) see appendix e

- Keyboards and other instruments can be used in lessons. If there is no alternative to sharing keyboards, then students should have an allocated area of the keyboard (e.g. below and above middle C) and the instruments should be cleaned at the beginning and end of each lesson in line with DfE guidance.

## Extra-curricular Music

The amount of active music-making within a musical ensemble is likely to be significantly greater than it is within a class music lesson. Additional measures should therefore be taken. These include:

- Activities within consistent groups in line with DfE and DCMS guidance
- Even within consistent groups, appropriate social distancing to be observed at all times wherever possible whilst playing wind or brass instruments, or singing
- Other mitigating actions include:
  - side-to-side positioning (rather than face-to-face)
  - the use of screens
- Activities which create aerosol are discouraged, such as shouting or singing loudly. Providers are advised to:
  - use microphones where possible
  - encourage children to sing (or play wind or brass instruments) quietly
- Singing or playing of wind or brass instruments to be outdoors, wherever possible
- If singing or playing wind or brass instruments indoors, the number of participants/attendees should be limited to account for ventilation of the space and the ability to social distance
- Considering the duration of the extra-curricular activity
- Taking steps to improve ventilation as far as possible and whenever possible, either through the use of mechanical systems and/or opening windows and doors

## Visiting Music Tutors/1-2-1 provision

Schools can continue to engage peripatetic teachers during this period, including staff from music education hubs, providing that they:

- Maintain distancing requirements with each pupil or group they teach, avoiding any situation where distancing requirements are broken, for example during demonstrations
- Make efforts to reduce the number of groups taught and locations worked in, to reduce the number of contacts made

## Performances:

- Performances can take place as is the case across the performing arts sector
- Limit as far as possible the number of performers and audience members
- Steps should be taken to encourage audiences to support the overall safety of the event, including seating individuals rather than allowing them to stand (to help maintain social distancing) and other mitigations as outlined in this guidance
- Continue to take the other vital steps outlined in DCMS guidance, including preventing unwell people from attending, maintaining cleanliness, supporting contact tracing and other mitigating measures

## Processes around equipment:

- 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](#). See Appendix f
- Instruments should be cleaned by the pupils playing them, where possible.
- 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.
- 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



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## Appendix

- a [www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools#music-dance-and-drama-in-school](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools#music-dance-and-drama-in-school)
- b [www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/performing-arts](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/performing-arts)
- c [www.musicmark.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/power\\_of\\_music\\_full\\_report.pdf](https://www.musicmark.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/power_of_music_full_report.pdf)
- d [www.triboroughmusicclub.org/school-services/music-education-recovery-curriculum](https://www.triboroughmusicclub.org/school-services/music-education-recovery-curriculum)
- e [https://chemrxiv.org/articles/preprint/Comparing\\_the\\_Respirable\\_Aerosol\\_Concentrations\\_and\\_Particle\\_Size\\_Distributions\\_Generated\\_by\\_Singing\\_Speaking\\_and\\_Breathing/12789221](https://chemrxiv.org/articles/preprint/Comparing_the_Respirable_Aerosol_Concentrations_and_Particle_Size_Distributions_Generated_by_Singing_Speaking_and_Breathing/12789221)
- f [www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/factories-plants-and-warehouses#factories-5-5](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/factories-plants-and-warehouses#factories-5-5)

## Further Links

PHE/EMG: Aerosol and droplet generation from singing, wind instruments and performance activities, 13 August 2020  
Published 4 September 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pheemg-aerosol-and-droplet-generation-from-singing-wind-instruments-and-performance-activities-13-august-2020>

Protective measures for holiday and after-school clubs, and other out-of-school settings during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak

Updated 20 August 2020

<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#consider-group>

[www.musicteachers.org](https://www.musicteachers.org)

[www.candomusic.org](https://www.candomusic.org)