

# Music Unlocked

Guidance for Providers

## Important Note from the author

The information in this version of *Music Unlocked* relating to infection control for **aerosol transmission** and **fomite transmission** is reliable and up to date.

Since this version was released, the PERFORM study, the third release of the Colorado data and the UK Government's *Suggested Principles of Safer Singing* have been released. These reaffirm but do not alter the guidance on mitigations outlined here.

Epidemiological and clinical research is also no longer impacting the mitigations that can be put in place for music education activities.

References to the Department for Education guidance for schools and providers in England are **out of date**. The [England Supplement](#) and [Wales Supplement](#) on the [Music Unlocked webpage](#) are aligned to the current guidance applying in each country and supersede any statements about permissible activity in this providers' document.

Scottish and Northern Ireland readers should refer to the equivalent documents produced by MEPG and the EANI respectively.

*Music Unlocked* will be updated to be a long-term resource for Covid-safe music education when we have capacity.

Gary Griffiths  
3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021



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ENGLAND**



# Music Unlocked

## Guidance for Providers

(major update reflecting DfE's 28th August guidance)

*The vital role of music and the wider arts in supporting mental health, social engagement, and learning in children is well recognised globally, backed by high quality scientific data. This role of music is more important now, during a global crisis, than ever, given the wide-ranging challenges being faced by children and families. But it is crucial that activities are promoted in a safe way. The guidance published here provides clear recommendations so is very much welcomed.*

Dr Daisy Fancourt, University College London

This guidance is intended to inform music services and other music education providers in planning and risk assessing musical activity in schools. It is a partner document to our Guidance for School Leaders on Musical Learning and COVID-19.

In formulating this guidance, we have reviewed academic studies, taken account of the latest version of DfE's guidance and consulted our members, national bodies and others. The science of COVID-19 is still developing and new studies are published almost daily. Music Mark will revisit and update this guidance from time to time in the light of the latest scientific understanding. This major update of 1st September 2020 takes account of the DfE's latest guidance for schools, out-of-school settings and FE settings.

This guidance is written from an English perspective. The measures suggested will nevertheless be effective and useful to the wider UK membership but will need to be nuanced to local guidelines.

Whilst every effort has been undertaken to verify the information used to write this document and to relate that specifically to musical learning for children and young people in and out of school, Music Mark cannot be held accountable for any advice given which subsequently is proven to be inaccurate.

**There are unresolvable differences between the schools', OOSS and DCMS guidance. DfE will not comment further on their guidance. We are checking all guidance documents for updates frequently. For now, this is our best understanding and attempt to provide reliable, unequivocal and useable advice, even where this may not be the advice we would prefer to be able to share.**

This guide presupposes that schools and providers are already complying with:

- pupil bubbles and social distancing of adults;
- improved hand hygiene;
- enhanced cleaning of school buildings and other settings;
- normal considerations regarding noise levels;
- maintaining vocal health, i.e. singing safely;
- lifting (manual handling) and posture.

## #CanDoMusic – sharing ideas that work

All UK music educators (and beyond) are invited to share ideas, resources and schemes of work and to learn from colleagues through the [www.CanDoMusic.org](http://www.CanDoMusic.org) website.

## Overall message for the music education workforce

Music Mark and employers in the sector are painfully aware of the nervousness and even fears of some music educators about returning to work in September and we are saddened to hear of colleagues who have concluded that they are not willing to face the risks.

There is nothing that will eliminate entirely the risk of infection but sensible mitigations, tailored to each venue and activity, can make teaching in school very low risk. All schools are taking at least the steps listed above to control infection and these guidelines will help to ensure that musical activity enhances and does not undermine such measures.

Multiple studies from all around the world have found only limited evidence of Covid-19 infection being passed on by children and usually where it has been thought to have happened, it was within the family home. A cup of tea in the staffroom may be more hazardous than teaching in class.

Even if there is an asymptomatic child in a bubble, the infection is only likely to be passed on by prolonged, direct exposure, so distancing from pupils and other adults as best as possible will offer protection, as the relatively low concentrations of airborne virus will be dispersed through the room (and remember that children are unlikely to be passing the infection wholesale to their classmates).

## Key changes in the guidance for music education providers

- Visiting teachers (including project staff) can be welcomed into schools; they can teach in multiple schools and across bubbles with mitigations (this guidance includes a suggested code of practice for visiting teachers);
- Singing and playing of woodwind and brass instruments are no longer limited to groups of 15 **in class** (the limit does still apply in extra-curricular activity);
- Extended social distancing for these activities appears to have been lifted, although we continue to recommend it as a mitigation, particularly for singing and playing mouth-blown instruments;
- Musical lunchtime and after-school clubs (ensembles) can take place, although additional mitigations are necessary where they involve children from more than one bubble;
- There is a recognised risk from the accumulation of aerosols, so the need to ventilate spaces is heightened;
- Performances can take place with live audiences, subject to sufficient space and ventilation.

## Working within bubbles and across bubbles

Visiting teachers (peripatetics and project tutors) should ensure that they social distance as much as possible from other adults and from older students. Social distancing of pupils within bubbles will not be effective and may be deprioritised unless the school's risk assessment says otherwise, e.g. because of a vulnerable member of class. Sharing of equipment must still be minimised and appropriate cleaning carried out between users. We continue to recommend distancing for singing and playing of woodwind and brass instruments because of the risk from large water droplets. Detailed advice is elsewhere in this document.

## Conflicting guidance documents

Music education providers' activity may fall under any of six sets of Government guidance:

- [Guidance for full opening of schools](#) (DfE);
- [Guidance for full opening of special schools](#) (DfE);
- [Out of School Settings \(OOSS\) guidance](#) (DfE);
- [FE autumn term guidance](#) (DfE);
- [Early years and childcare during Coronavirus](#) (DfE)
- [Working safely in the performing arts](#) (DCMS).

In some circumstances, the *Managing youth sector activities and spaces during COVID-19* guidance may apply (National Youth Agency: the statutory professional body for youth work in England). Although written in consultation with PHE and the HSE, this is not Government guidance.

There is sufficient variation between these documents that providers should decide on a 'best fit' for each activity and tailor risk assessments to this one set of guidance. Best fit should be assessed on the basis of the spirit and intention both of the activity and of the guidance, not on whichever set of guidance best enables the provider to carry out the desired activity.

Note that extra-curricular activity in a school comes under OOSS guidance. This applies to an after-school club just for children at that school and equally to a twilight or Saturday letting which children from other schools can attend.

If you run activity in your own space, it is likely that the venue will come partially under the DCMS guidance and you will have to demonstrate compliance with this to be certified Covid-secure.

Additional government guidance such as that on shared use of community facilities or ventilation may also be helpful in comprehensively identifying, assessing and controlling risks.

## Musical learning reinvented

The lessons learnt by the sector since schools closed on 20th March 2020 and the plethora of online resources developed will permanently inform and influence music education. Some online delivery will be a permanent feature of most providers' offers going forward. Whatever strains schools are under as they return to full opening, the old routines are likely to largely fall back into place. Music education provision will be considerably different and ever better for what has happened.

Few think virtual is best and it continues to be a major barrier for simultaneous rehearsing and music-making. Most music services and other music education providers have learnt to deliver many of their tuition and support services online and will now have plans to revert partially or fully to online provision in response to localised lockdowns or a national second wave.

## A slow return to something like business as usual

While all music services and providers and many schools are keen to return to normality as soon as possible, many are not going into schools for at least a couple of weeks, even though the DfE guidance for the full reopening of schools says that peripatetic teachers can return and teach across bubbles immediately. Some in the education world have stated that they do not expect schools to be fully back to normal before September 2021. The cultural sector expects to feel the repercussions for perhaps two and a half years and all that is without reckoning for a second wave of COVID-19 or the emergence of a completely new infection.



## Making music safely in school

COVID-19 research is ongoing but the big shift in thinking at DCMS and the DfE has been prompted by the publication of the first results of the PERFORM (Particulate Respiratory Matter to Inform Guidance for the Safe Distancing of Performers in a COVID-19 Pandemic) study, supported by Public Health England and the DCMS (and commonly known as the “[Costello research](#)”). This finds that singing and playing mouth-blown instruments poses a similar risk to speaking *at the equivalent volume*, a finding which has been widely misrepresented in media headlines, since singing and playing (particularly brass) instruments are usually louder than speaking.

Hitherto, American and German researchers have tended to reach more cautious conclusions from their own measurements. Some of the advice in *Music Unlocked* tends towards these more cautious conclusions in recognition of the workforce’s peripatetic nature and the preponderance of small and poorly ventilated spaces in which many instrumental lessons take place.

Very nearly all of the research available has looked at professionals, music students and skilled adult amateurs. The outstanding exception is a study led by Dr Shelly Miller at the University of Colorado – Boulder (the “[Colorado research](#)”), which is funded by a US/European coalition led by the US National Federation of High Schools among others, although their preliminary results for grade school singing and recorder have not yet been released publicly.

From the time of the first version of these guidelines, the author has taken account of the differences between music made by the typical research group and music made by children and young people:

- Children have smaller lungs than experienced, adult musicians and less developed diaphragmatic muscles (**less puff**);
- Children make music for relatively short periods of time, actually singing or blowing in a lesson for maybe ten or twelve minutes, albeit they may be fully engaged in learning for the whole period (**less stamina**);
- They are together as a bubble for 26-28 hours a week, maybe more, and the *additional* risk of a music lesson compared to any other activity is relatively low (**already exposed**);
- They are less likely to catch Covid-19, are less ill when they do and are not known to spread it widely to adults or to other children (**less risk**).

This is less true of older and more accomplished students but KS4 and KS5 classes are often smaller than, say, year 4 Whole-Class Ensemble Tuition cohorts. It will not apply in schools offering “specialist, elite provision in music” (i.e. those funded through the Music and Dance Scheme).

Each music education provider will need to make their own risk assessments, potentially for each setting in which they work. Music Mark members may wish to use the [outline risk assessments](#) on our guidance pages as starting points. The information in this guidance will provide some scientific basis, but risk assessments will need to take account of specific local context and be kept under review.

### This section contains:

- Information about the current scientific understanding of the new health risks of music-making and how you can make music as safely as possible;
- Links to reliable guidance on cleaning instruments;
- Guidance in managing risks faced by peripatetic tutors and project staff visiting schools and a recommended code of practice.

We repeat that the advice in this document presupposes general guidelines on frequent hand washing, more rigorous cleaning and normal social distancing are being followed. Note that this information only relates to the **additional** risks of COVID-19. Risks that you would previously have controlled for still exist and need to be considered. Indeed, controls introduced to mitigate Covid-19 risks may introduce new hazards: e.g. using a microphone to avoid shouting in a large space may entail manual handling and trailing wires, not to mention that microphones are difficult to sanitise.

## The science and what to do about it

### How people catch COVID-19

COVID-19 is transmitted through water droplets which contain the virus. Approximately 1,000 virus particles are needed to start an infection. A sneeze can release 200 million particles, albeit a proportion of these will not be viable. There are thought to be two routes to infection (vectors) and both are significant in schools:

- Airborne water droplets (aerosol transmission);
- Contact with contaminated surfaces (fomite transmission).

In some special education situations or where a pupil has high physical care needs, direct person-to-person transmission is a risk. In such cases, transmission is still by contaminated water droplets.

The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health say that children are 59% less likely to contract COVID-19 than adults and, as previously noted, numerous studies worldwide have found very little evidence of transmission from children to other children or to adults.

COVID-19 has a relatively long incubation period, with 97.5% of people showing symptoms by day 12. It is contagious before symptoms show, although incubation varies from person to person and it is unclear when it becomes contagious.

It is thought that a proportion of children and working age adults who contract COVID-19 are either asymptomatic or experience only mild symptoms. Deaths among children and working age people are rarer, although they increase from about age 45. Around 90% of people who have died already had known and serious underlying health conditions.

It is important to understand that you cannot completely eliminate the risks of COVID-19 transmission for anyone but there are reasonable measures that can be taken.

### Singing and choirs

Singing releases potentially hazardous bioaerosols in proportion to volume: the louder the singing, the more aerosols are released. Decibel for decibel, aerosol release is comparable whether singing or speaking, so prioritising quiet singing, a beautiful sound and good technique will help control this. Certain consonants further increase aerosol release, so not insisting on musical theatre levels of diction will also help. Humming is safe.

For singing activity within a class bubble, the DfE no longer recommends limiting group sizes to 15. Social distancing of children is not necessary within bubbles however Music Mark still recommends some distancing (as the room allows) and not singing face-to-face, to control the risk from large water droplets.



Choirs can take place in a well-ventilated room but 2m distancing must be respected. Note that the area of the room is critical here: a higher ceiling does not mean singers are safe to stand closer together. The DfE guidance states a minimum ventilation of 10l per second per person but it is unclear how this could be verified or assured in most schools. A more practical approach is to limit rehearsal to a maximum of 40 minutes and then ventilate the empty room for at least 15 minutes.

Be cautious of fans and systems that just recirculate stale air: you are probably safer leaving such systems off. If air filtration is used, only HEPA filters, regularly replaced, can be relied on.

Early in the new term you might consider singing outdoors but be aware of wind direction for both the singers and the leader. There are no safe face coverings for singing: all fabric masks leak air and bioaerosols around the sides and bottom.

In class, particularly at primary level where the teacher is present with the class all week, they should remain at least 2m from the nearest singer. For any other singing, the person leading the singing and any accompanist should be 3-5m from the front row as they will, of course, be facing the singers. They may want to consider a plexiglass screen.

Each singer should have their own music and should ideally keep it between rehearsals. If words or music are projected, that is ideal.

Further guidance on singing can be found in Professor Martin Ashley's paper [Children and School Singing During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#).

#### Large instrumental ensembles and whole-class instrumental tuition

The guidance here states how these activities may be managed safely but there are still constraints within the guidance. In most cases, school, music centre and county/borough groups will be covered by the OOSS guidance which states:

*Providers could do this, for example, by ensuring that: they are limiting the number of children singing or playing together as far as possible and ensuring that children attending are in small groups of no more than 15, with the same children each time wherever possible and at least one staff member;...*

Providers are also referred to the DCMS guidance, which is more permissive in respect of community (adult) ensembles. This is at odds with the OOSS guidance but we understand that the DfE are unlikely to change the guidance significantly this term.

For ensembles or classes that do not include mouth-blown instruments, teachers may follow current classroom practices for social distancing and resource use (books, stands, pencils).

For woodwind and brass ensembles, including class work, distancing should continue to be observed (as with singing, this is Music Mark's recommendation for class work and not DfE guidance). For most instruments, 2m in both directions is recommended. Flutes will need at least 1.5m in front of the player and 0.8m from the end of the flute. Allow 3m x 2m for trombones. These recommendations are based on measurements by the Freiburg Institute for Musicians' Medicine.

The Colorado research shows that bell covers are very effective at filtering aerosols from the airstream of brass instruments and some woodwind; stretchy material is less effective but anything

is better than nothing.

Players should be discouraged from lifting their bells high, as contaminated water in the instrument can run back into the player's mouth. This is particularly important when using specialist instruments like soprano saxophones that are typically owned by music services or schools and shared (see advice on sharing instruments, below).

Water keys should not be vented directly onto the floor. Two American studies cultured a surprising variety of bacteria from both woodwind and brass instruments<sup>1</sup>. Newspaper, paper towels or puppy pads should be provided to soak up water (in Norway, anti-bacterial paper is recommended); a small pot containing detergent would also be effective. Players should deal with their own.

Conductors, leaders or tutors should stand 3-5m beyond the front row of wind or brass and may wish to consider a plexiglass screen or similar. For strings and orchestras, 2m will suffice.

### Rock groups

The backline of rock groups should minimise moving and face mostly forwards. Singers should face forwards; tutors should stay at least 2m distant and not move directly in front of them while they are singing. Use and cleaning of shared equipment is covered below.

### Stands and music

Social distancing may mean that each player will require their own music stand, particularly for non-class-based ensembles. Ideally, each player should keep their own music. Photocopies of most music can be made under the [Schools' Printed Music Licence](#) and the [Music Service Printed Music Licence](#). N.B the schools' licence does not cover peripatetic instrumental and vocal lessons. Hub partners and commissioned organisations will not be covered by these licences.

### Peripatetic instrumental and vocal lessons

As far as possible, individual and small group lessons should be held in rooms that can be ventilated well. Minimum recommended social distancing (or 2m distancing for brass, flute and saxophone) must be maintained for tutors' protection and groups may have to be split up to fit into the teaching room and to maintain bubbles.

If piano tutors cannot maintain current recommended social distancing and see students' hands, they may need to ask the school to rearrange the room but they should not move pianos or other furniture on their own initiative and they should not ask students to help them. For the tutor to demonstrate, the student will need to move at least 1m away from the piano. Cleaning keys before and after each change of player is recommended.

Bell covers (or popscreens) are strongly recommended for woodwind and brass instruments to reduce aerosol release. Tutors should teach proper cleaning of instruments and encourage this at the end of lessons but should not allow students to blow or tip water out of instruments onto the floor of the teaching room. Newspaper, paper towels, puppy pads or pots containing detergent should be provided for venting of water keys and players should always remove and dispose of their own.

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<sup>1</sup> Smaller brass instruments and all woodwind instruments harboured oral bacteria. Larger brass instruments were found to harbour fewer oral bacteria but "all [brass] instruments have *Alcaligenes faecalis*." (Mobley & Bridges, Sinton and Corpus Christi TX, 2015). This strain was also found in one clarinet.



Students come and go but tutors are often in the teaching room for extended periods. Their exposure to multiple people and to the same air possibly for some hours puts them at greater risk. A plexiglass screen may help and they may wish to consider a mask (albeit singers, woodwind and brass players will have to remove it to demonstrate). It would also be sensible to timetable additional breaks to ventilate rooms periodically.

It should hardly need saying that nobody should ever play anyone else's mouth-blown instrument.

The DfE guidance says that teaching can now take place in private homes (whether the tutor's or the student's) but any other employment contract(s) or school agreement(s) will still apply. Private tutors must still mitigate Covid-19 risks to protect themselves, colleagues and all their students.

### Educational visits and residentials

Non-residential educational visits in the UK can take place, subject to risk assessment of all risks including mitigations to control for Covid-19 infection. Overnight stays are still strongly advised against as they would draw from multiple bubbles and create unnecessary contact and exposure. Boarding schools are allowed to operate for their own pupils because they are regarded as households.

### Cleaning instruments

All instruments present a risk of contact transmission. This is similar to the risk of transmission via door handles, handrails etc around the school. Instruments that are only used by one person should be cleaned as usual but with additional care. If instruments are used by more than one person (e.g. classroom percussion), or taken in and reallocated (e.g. at the end of a whole-class programme or hire period), meticulous cleaning is called for.

This advice may be shared with schools and contextualised as needed. Some processes are not intended to be taught to or carried out by pupils. Not all will be practical or even desirable every time an instrument is played.

The guidance is written with normal school and student instruments in mind. It is not intended for higher quality or antique instruments.

COVID-19 virus particles are believed to survive for two to five days on hard surfaces<sup>2</sup>. Disinfectant wipes and/or sprays are effective but bear in mind that most instruments contain multiple materials. Some disinfectant products will damage the pads of woodwind instruments and varnished or polished finishes.

Hot, soapy water is just as effective as disinfectant wipes. Instruments or parts of instruments made entirely from plastic may be submersed. The same applies to brass instruments but take the valves out first (YouTube video [here](#)) and set them aside. Recorders can even be dishwashed in the top rack.

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<sup>2</sup> Copper-zinc alloys (i.e. brass) have good viricidal properties and can kill COVID-19 in four hours but lacquers may interfere with this process. In any case, student instruments are often made of other alloys for reasons of economy and weight, and these may be less effective than brass. Silver needs a wet environment for its antimicrobial properties to work, so silver-plated instrument bodies and keywork still need cleaning.

Do not immerse or soak woodwind instruments with cork joints or with keywork as it may damage pads: this includes flute headjoints, as it will damage the headcork.

After playing, woodwind instruments should at minimum be dried in and out with swabs or pull-throughs to limit microbial growth. Fully drying even small brass instruments is not practical but it is extremely important to clean the mouthpiece using an appropriately sized mouthpiece brush, to ensure that all dirt and debris are removed.

Plastic piano and electronic keyboards can be sanitised with disinfectant wipes (unplug electronic equipment first). Do not spray them as residues may harm key mechanisms. It is a good idea to dry keys off afterwards. Ivory keys will be damaged by most disinfectant products. Clean them with a cloth dipped in soapy water and wrung out; leave the residue on for thirty seconds and wipe with a dry cloth.

Handles and straps of percussion instruments and beaters should be wiped similarly.

Primary school percussion trolleys may not be practical for now unless all instruments and the trolley can be cleaned after each use. Instruments might be allocated to classes (or even individual pupils) or set aside for 72 hours between uses to avoid cross-contamination. Schools will need to respond according to their stocks, circumstances and needs. Another recommended idea is to ask children to bring 'found percussion' items (usually small junk percussion) in from home.

For wooden instruments, follow manufacturers' instructions or test your cleaning product on an inconspicuous surface. You may want to wipe the chinrests of violins or violas but it probably is not necessary (pure sweat is not thought to carry viruses). The neck and fingerboard and the lower end of the bow of all bowed strings may also be wiped.

Knobs, buttons, sliders etc on ICT equipment, amplifiers, CD/MP3 players and so forth should be wiped with antiseptic wipes. Do not use sprays or soaked cloths, to avoid liquids getting inside equipment. Areas such as the home button on iPads and the mesh of microphones are particularly bad for harbouring microbes. As prevention is better than cure, using a popscreen with microphones will reduce contamination. Always unplug equipment from the mains before cleaning.

After five days of not being played or used, normal cleaning of any equipment or cases will suffice.

### Personalising instrument cases

To avoid sorting through and handling multiple, near-identical cases, it is a good idea for players to mark their case uniquely, e.g. with a ribbon around the handle.

### Further advice on cleaning instruments

More advice on cleaning different instruments is available from this American website:  
<https://www.nfhs.org/media/3812235/covid-19-instrument-cleaning-guidelines.pdf>

In the UK, the Music Industries Association is gathering relevant information on its website:  
<https://www.mia.org.uk/covid-19/> (scroll down to Musical Instrument Hygiene).

## Sharing instruments

Good hand hygiene and wiping handling surfaces when changing players controls risks for most keyboard, percussion and string instruments.

Sharing mouth-blown instruments is not considered safe. Risks may be mitigated if the following points can be **fully** and **consistently** applied **every** time:

- Every brass and woodwind pupil should have their own mouthpiece<sup>3</sup>;
- Reeds must **never** be shared: that includes for specialist instruments such as soprano saxes or A and E flat clarinets;
- Mouthpieces and upper tubing, crooks or headjoints must be thoroughly washed before and after playing and dried before putting back in the case.

However, Music Mark does not recommend these measures and we repeat for clarity that sharing mouth-blown instruments is not considered safe. Tutors should also impress on students that they should not share instruments even with family members.

## If practical music making really is not safe

There may occasionally be good reasons why playing or singing is not safe in particular schools and special circumstances. One school consulted for these guides was planning to change emphasis to music appreciation and music theory until they are able to restart practical classroom music. You can point schools to a plethora of online resources and courses to enliven this learning including resources collated by Music Mark [here](#) and the [Can Do Music](#) website.

## Considerations for music services and other music education providers working with schools

Music Mark's guidance to schools lays out a number of things that schools should consider as they look to welcome visiting teachers back into their buildings. Music education providers may wish to refer to this in agreeing protocols with their schools. However, in addition to that guidance and the following suggested code of practice, it is more important than ever to be aware of and respect each school's individual arrangements and risk assessment for safeguarding pupils and visitors.

Remember that all the risks that previously existed (manual handling, electrical equipment, trailing wires, education safeguarding) must still be considered and controlled.

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<sup>3</sup> Schools with Pbone instruments can request extra free mouthpieces from Pbone so that every student can have their own: <https://blog.pbone.co.uk/coronavirus-free-resources-for-teachers-students-and-parents>

## A recommended code of practice for peripatetic tutors in schools

1. Do not attend school if you suspect that you (or anyone you live with) may be coming down with Coronavirus symptoms: follow the current self-isolation procedures.
2. Keep an eye on the school's website, news links, diary and newsletters to anticipate disruptions to your teaching programme. It may save you a journey and unnecessary risk.
3. Sign in at the school reception on arrival and immediately wash your hands thoroughly before going to the teaching room.
4. Remember that this way of working is as new to school staff and pupils as it is to you. Accept that there will be slips and honest mistakes on both sides and take the opportunity to learn from them.
5. Ask for the school's risk assessments for COVID-19 and for music teaching; ask about anything you do not understand and abide by the control measures specified.
6. Find out what the school's infection control procedures are; follow them and make use of anything the school is good enough to provide for your safety.
7. Find out, before you need to know, what to do if you or pupils fall ill.
8. If you think that a child may be showing symptoms of Coronavirus, stop the lesson and report your concerns to the school immediately.
9. Teach outside if it is practical and weather permits.
10. Observe current social distancing guidelines at all times (but don't use your instrument cases to enforce this in narrow corridors!). Even if not required, you may wish to consider wearing a mask when moving around the school.
11. If you can control layout and ventilation in the teaching room, set it up to direct airflow away from both you and the pupil(s) but not at the expense of normal safeguarding or health and safety considerations: e.g. do not move heavy furniture or equipment.
12. If the teaching room does not allow for sufficient distancing, explain this to the school. If no reasonable alternative is offered, politely decline to teach that session for the benefit of both you and pupils. If you have one, raise the issue with your manager or equivalent immediately.
13. You may consider wearing a face mask while you are teaching (of course singing, woodwind and brass teachers will need to remove theirs to demonstrate).
14. Avoid touching pupils' instruments, particularly mouthpieces. Carry disposable gloves and hand sanitiser in case you absolutely have to touch a mouthpiece, e.g. to set a reed.
15. Never play on a pupil's mouthpiece or allow them to play on yours.
16. Stick to the agreed timetable as closely as you reasonably can but understand if it has to change at short notice.
17. Wash your hands thoroughly before leaving the school, preferably as the last thing you do before signing out.

## Conclusion

Music is more necessary than ever to children's broad and balanced education. The wellbeing benefits seen by many music education providers during lockdown will be ever more needed as children return to school and process their experiences.

Schools may be planning to narrow their curriculum – even with Ofsted's limited blessing – to make up lost progress and simply for the practical purposes of delivering within unfamiliar constraints. If music is to become and remain part of this recovery curriculum, there is a strong onus on music services and other music education providers to demonstrate that they are delivering safely and consistently. We hope that this guidance and successive revisions support you in doing this.

Even after assessing and controlling for foreseeable risks, it is not possible to eliminate all possibility of COVID-19 transmission. The Costello research is still ongoing and both DCMS and the DfE are likely to update guidance in light of emerging conclusions. Similarly, the Colorado research may influence Music Mark's thinking when the grade school singing and recorder playing findings are released. Better understanding of fomite transmission (how and even if the virus is transferred by surface contact) and more real-world measurement of the effect of moisture evaporation on transmissibility may change the advice we have given here.

It is likely that music education providers will deliver a blend of face-to-face and online services for the foreseeable future and potentially permanently. The sector has shown that it has the creativity and drive to turn this to students' educational advantage.

The innovative practice by providers all over the UK has led the way for the cultural education sector and if you are wondering how to approach any aspect of your offer, ask your contacts, your Music Mark Regional Representative, the Music Mark team and even (in England) your Arts Council Relationship Manager. Someone, somewhere will have learnt something that can help you.

Music Mark will revisit this guidance as more research is published. Please feed back your experiences to us and we will reflect what you find useful in future versions of this document.

## Further reading

Links are provided for further information and no endorsement of named products is implied or should be inferred.

<https://www.musicmark.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Literature-Review-August-2020.pdf>

[https://www.ism.org/images/files/ISM-Updated-Global-Literature-Review\\_Aug-2020\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.ism.org/images/files/ISM-Updated-Global-Literature-Review_Aug-2020_FINAL.pdf)

<https://www.musicmark.org.uk/news/back-to-school-back-to-singing>

<https://www.CanDoMusic.org>

<https://www.ism.org/advice-centre/coronavirus-listing>

<https://www.mia.org.uk/covid-19/>

#CanDoMusic #MusicEd

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- Musicians' Union
- Music Industries Association

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- Our Regional Representatives and Board members
- Dr Gregory Place of Nottinghamshire LMC
- Stephen Wick of the Royal Academy of Music and Purcell School