



2020-0062282POGibb

Rt Hon Nick Gibb MP
Minister of State for School Standards

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Ms Bridget Whyte, CEO,
The UK Association for Music Education,
Music Mark
By email: bridget.whyte@musicmark.org.uk

20 January 2021

Dear Ms Whyte,

Thank you for your email of 4 November, addressed to the Secretary of State and myself, on behalf of the Incorporated Society of Musicians, the Music Teachers' Association, and the Musicians' Union, regarding guidance for music education hubs, local authorities and private instrumental teachers about the provision of instrumental music lessons during the national lockdown.

I note your concerns about how the national restrictions introduced on 5 November limited some aspects of music teaching. In introducing tiered restrictions on 2 December, steps were taken to define the education and training exemption in regulations to include the teaching of children and young people who were studying to take graded music exams, and/or preparing them for auditions as part of entry requirements for further study at college or university. This exemption applied to any business or charity undertaking this activity, and not only to schools and colleges.

As you will be aware, the restrictions have since changed in line with the national lockdown announced on 4 January 2021. Schools, colleges, children's activity providers such as supplementary performing arts and/or music schools, and private music tutors who teach those under the age of 18, should read the relevant guidance for their respective sector. During the period of national lockdown, schools, alternative provision, special schools, colleges, and out of school institutions should allow only vulnerable children and young people and the children of critical workers to attend. In all other circumstances, music teaching should be undertaken remotely.

Our collected guidance for schools, including regarding remote education, is available at: tinyurl.com/YddlQobk. Our guidance for out of school clubs is available at: tinyurl.com/Y7eh7QvQ.

Peripatetic teachers and music hubs can continue to work in schools with the children able to attend in person, according to the restrictions. When planning music provision for eligible children, out of school clubs 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. Appropriate safety mitigation and considerations should be put in place in line with the protective measures outlined in our guidance, paying strict attention to the working safely in performing arts guidance, which is available at: tinyurl.com/Y8Qf22ut.

I hope that music hubs will be working closely with schools during the national lockdown to support them with remote music education, including online music tutoring.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nick Gold". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "N".