



Music Unlocked

Whole UK edition

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SUPPORTING
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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

Foreword

Music Unlocked grew out of Music Mark's support to Music Education Hubs in England at the start of the Covid-19 crisis. It has been translated into Welsh and a localised version was published by the music service in Northern Ireland. In Scotland, guidance is provided by the Heads of Instrumental Teaching Services (HITS) and Music Education Partnership Group (MEPG). Latterly, Wales and England supplements have summarised changes to guidance in those countries.

Research continues. The 'Colorado study' has not presented a final report at the time of writing. The 'Costello research', more properly the PERFORM study, has recently released a pre-print of its second stage: this study has been highly influential in England, partly because it was commissioned jointly by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and Public Health England. Other (mostly smaller) studies of interest to our sector are published sporadically but most clinical and epidemiological research now is at a level that is much less likely to influence risk mitigation in music education.

My expectation is that *Music Unlocked* will stand in the medium term as a reference point and my hope is that it will continue to be useful to everyone in the music education sector. I can only advise though, and it is testament to the serious approach and commitment of all those working to help children make and learn music that, to date, Music Mark is not aware of a single infection (let alone an outbreak) that has been conclusively linked back to musical activity.

Gary Griffiths (for Music Mark)
Westcliff-on-Sea
August 2021

Vocabulary note

I make a distinction between a **teacher**, who teaches **pupils** in school, and a **tutor**, who teaches **students** musical instruments, voice or a related discipline, including when they work in a school on a peripatetic basis. The word **school** is used regardless phase or status, for maintained, academy and independent schools, mainstream and special schools and alternative provision.

Out-of-school settings (OOSS) refers to activity, not venue. Many music centres are based in schools and many county or borough ensembles rehearse in school halls but these are still OOSS activities.

Mask in *Music Unlocked* means any ordinary fabric or non-woven face covering which goes over the mouth and nose but emphatically *not* plastic visors.

Guidance is issued by national governments and contains a mixture of statutory and advisory measures. *Music Unlocked* is a **guide** and offers **advice**.

Guidance and restrictions

As education departments and authorities update their guidance, they do not always state explicitly that restrictions are being disappplied. The current guidance document will always outline all restrictions that apply. **You do not need to continue observing an earlier restriction if it is no longer mentioned**, unless it is necessary for mitigation in the particular circumstances of your school. Ceasing or easing a restriction, even when this is in response to a change in the guidance, will usually require you to update your risk assessments.

Where multiple guidance documents may appear relevant to your activity, do not attempt to resolve the differences between them, as this will often be impossible. Choose which guidance is closest in spirit and intention to your activity (not necessarily the most permissive!) and follow that guidance to avoid confusion.

Always refer to the latest guidance document on the relevant education department's website and do not depend on downloaded, e-mailed or printed versions, as these go out of date quickly.

Advice for the four nations

Music Mark will continue to publish **England** and **Wales** supplements on its [Music Unlocked webpage](#) as long as required.

Colleagues in **Scotland** may look to the [Music Education Partnership Group](#) and the Heads of Instrumental Teaching Services for advice.

The [music service](#) of the Education Authority of **Northern Ireland** publishes its own advice.

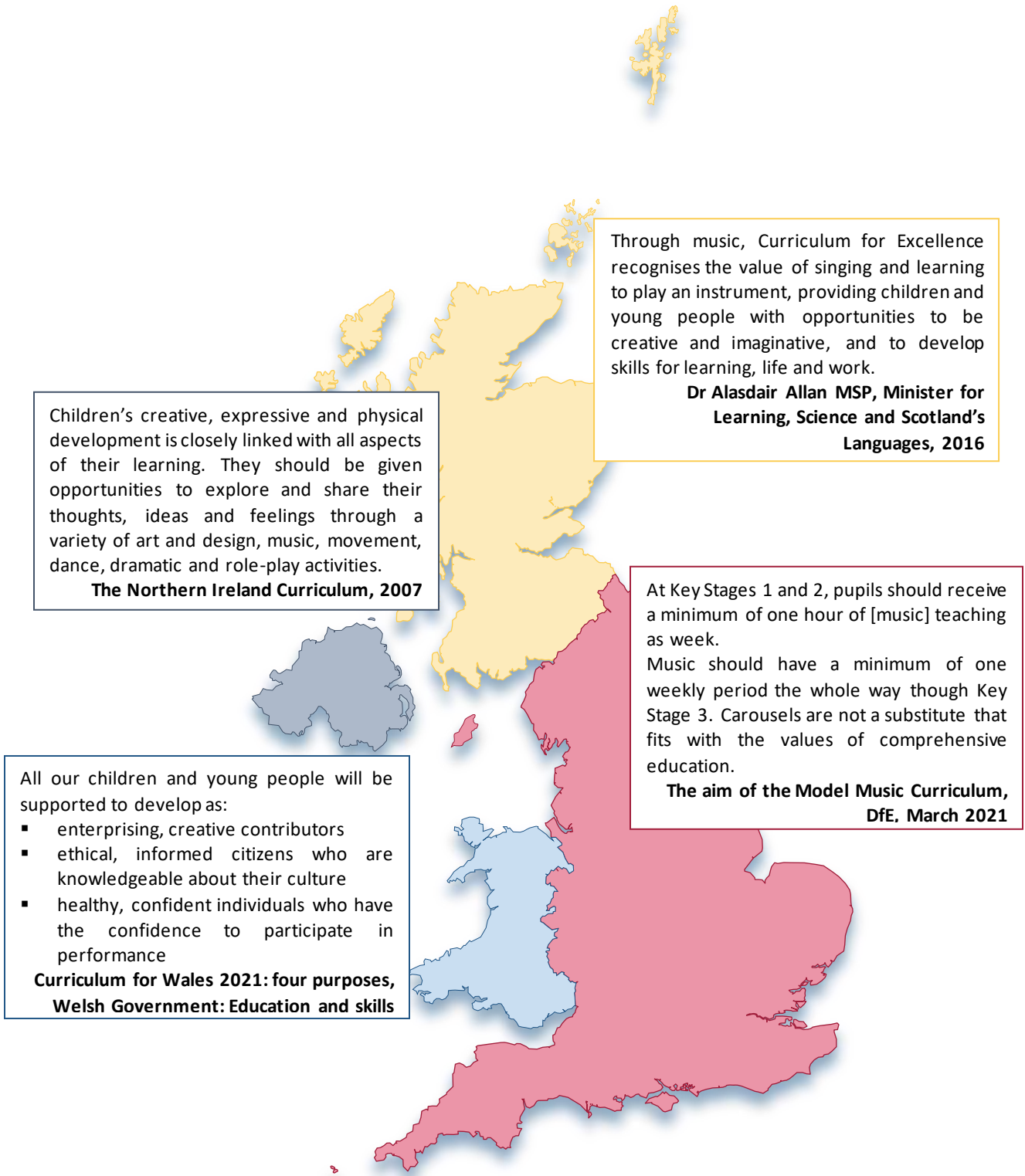
It is important to be aware of local restrictions, as approaches to mitigation may depend on data and variants prevalent in the immediate area, especially for Out of School Settings.

Music Unlocked for school leaders

Headteachers, SLT, Governors and Health & Safety officers

Music is integral to national curriculums everywhere in the UK. Although guidance (particularly around singing) has varied between the four nations, children have continued to take part in music lessons in schools and in extra-curricular musical activity throughout much of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Music in the curriculum



Instrumental and vocal tuition in the classroom

In all four nations and UK territories and dependencies, music can and should be taught as part of the curriculum and (with a few remaining localised exceptions), whole-class instrumental and vocal work can now be resumed. Specific advice is given in the *Teachers and Providers* section of this document but in the main, the considerations for instruments that are not blown are the same as for equipment used for any subject. Blown (“wet”) instruments, while not created equal, still pose manageable hazards, which are controlled by a mixture of distancing, ventilation and hand hygiene. For singing, we additionally advise limiting session lengths and not over-emphasising diction.

Peripatetic (visiting) music tutors

Schools everywhere in the UK can welcome specialist music tutors into school. Tutors may visit multiple sites in one day, without restrictions. If tutors are employed¹ by the school, testing and vaccination policies must follow that for the school’s regular teachers and ancillary staff. If tutors are self-employed or engaged through a third-party such as a Music Education Hub, the school may apply their policy for visitors.

Music Unlocked includes a [recommended code of practice for peripatetic music tutors](#) when visiting schools.

The primary consideration for peripatetic lessons will continue to be the teaching room. A practice room which is suitable for piano, violin or drum lessons may not have sufficient ventilation for blown instruments or singing. This will have to be assessed room by room and mitigations put in place where required.

Ensembles and choirs

The size of the room and effectiveness of ventilation remain key to controlling infections. String groups, guitar ensembles and percussion do not need to be distanced; the need for rock bands to distance will depend on how many vocalists there are. For woodwind and brass ensembles, it is wise to allow more space than usual. The less effective the ventilation and the longer the session, the more distance should be allowed.

Music around the school

Individual and small group lessons are permitted with no restrictions on instruments or singing. Numbers have dropped off in the last 18 months, partly because students have not been replaced as they have moved on at transition points. Your peripatetic tutors will appreciate your support in promoting musical learning. Demonstrations and sharing sessions (e.g. in assemblies) may take place now.

Performances are still subject to some restrictions, mainly in respect of audience numbers. Local guidance must be followed, with procedures in place to control numbers admitted and to prevent mixing above any gathering limits in force. It is important to take steps to avoid audience and performers mixing, including providing separate toilets.

Music as part of external lettings

Third-party providers usually fall under different guidance (e.g. Out of School Settings or early years), so they may not be planning to follow the same procedures as you do for music in school. Early discussions about how lettees are managing their activity and their measures for infection control will help provide reassurance to both you and them, as well as being an opportunity to ensure that they understand and follow the general procedures in place for your site and buildings.

¹ They are actually likely to be workers in employment law rather than full employees, at least in England and Wales. For more information, see the guide to employment status published jointly by the Musicians' Union and Music Mark.

If your lettee is an adult group, they will most likely be following the advice on the Making Music webpage, which covers all four nations: <https://www.makingmusic.org.uk/resource/can-group-get-back-in-person>

Risk assessment and mitigation

The remainder of this publication provides detailed advice on making music safely in schools. It is intended for teachers with responsibility for the subject in your school and for organisations like Music Education Hubs, National Youth Music Organisations and private providers. It includes a risk assessment template that can help with planning mitigations for Covid-19 and is designed to sit alongside other risk assessments for activities and spaces.

Music Mark schools are able to use more detailed risk assessment templates on the Music Unlocked page of the website and can contact Music Mark direct for specific advice.

We hope that this information enables your music staff and partners to reassure you that their approach to teaching and making music is safe.

If making music really is not safe

Following the advice in *Music Unlocked* and guidance in force locally will nearly always enable musical activity to go ahead and even if some forms of music (e.g. singing) are not permitted, others (such as percussion) will generate no more risk than many other classroom activities. In any case, active listening, music appreciation, music theory and aural skills (ear training) can still provide valuable music education but practical music making should be reintroduced at the earliest possible opportunity.

Further information

<https://www.musicmark.org.uk/resources/music-unlocked-guidance-for-schools-and-music-providers/>
Supplementary advice to this document, including England and Wales supplements.

www.CanDoMusic.org.uk

Practical examples of activities and resources for Covid-safe making music.

<https://www.musicmark.org.uk/getplaying/>

The online home of Music Mark's campaign to encourage children and families to get back to learning music in all its forms.

For teachers and providers

How Covid-19 is spread

Covid-19 is transmitted by contaminated water droplets which are exhaled. The volume of water droplets increases when we vocalise (speak, exclaim or sing) and proportionately with increasing volume.



Smaller water droplets (those below 5μ in diameter) are caught in air currents and become aerosols; larger droplets, those above 10μ fall under gravity within 2m (hence the distancing guidance). Between 5μ and 10μ , droplets may behave as aerosols for a while before they succumb to gravity.

There are two infection routes (vectors) to consider:

- Airborne transmission (aerosol)
- Surface contact transmission (fomite)

In some circumstances, especially early years and SEND, direct person-to-person transmission is a hazard but infection is still by water droplets.

Risk assessment must therefore take account of these transmission risks and control for those present.



In a class which includes an undetected Covid case, the risk to everyone in that class resides in their exposure over the whole of a school week, more than in a particular activity. *Any* activity which increases respiration rates or noise levels in the class, including paired discussion work irrespective of subject, raises the risk of transmission.

Space and ventilation

Having sufficient space for the activity and ventilating it well remain the top two mitigations against transmission of Covid-19 and the more aerosol is created by any activity, the more important both become. Allowing more space between participants enables larger droplets to fall safely to the floor but crucially, it also allows aerosol to spread and dilute in the air in the room before another person breathes it in. If strict distancing rules are in place, these cannot be relaxed on the basis of a higher ceiling.

Frequent air changes in the room replace stale, potentially contaminated, air with fresh air from outside (the risk of taking in contaminants with fresh air is very low). Schools built before the Building Schools for the Future programme will generally be ventilated by windows and doors. BSF schools and later will probably have mechanical ventilation. Ideally this should take in completely fresh air but if there is any element of air recirculation, the only acceptable standard is HEPA filtration, with filters changed according to the manufacturer's specification. If you cannot verify this, turn fans off and open windows and doors.

Where there is no mechanical system, there is no practical way for most people to measure ventilation rates accurately but our paper [Ventilation of Teaching Spaces](#) provides practical advice. Where possible, taking activity outdoors reduces risk of aerosol transmission considerably.

Other mitigations

The following measures are effective in reducing transmission risk:

- Limiting numbers of participants;
- Setting up rehearsal spaces before participants arrive;
- Setting up ensembles to allow more space between players/desks;
- Playing one to a stand;
- Managing arrival and departure times and breaks to limit mingling;
- Issuing copies of music² to individuals to reduce parts being handed around;
- Shorter sessions between ventilation breaks;
- Keeping the volume down when playing blown instruments or singing;
- Not insisting on music theatre levels of diction when singing;
- The group leader using a microphone to avoid shouting to be heard;
- Enhanced cleaning of the venue and equipment;
- Frequent hand washing and use of viricidal hand gels.

It is unlikely that you would ever apply all these measures to an activity. The mix of mitigations will depend on the circumstances of each activity. It may also change over time, depending on the prevalence of infections in the local area and the perception of the underlying risk.

Music in class

Restrictions are either lifted or are easing in all four nations and local guidance (where it still exists) must be followed. MusicMark are noticing that local Public Health departments and Health & Safety officers are not always up to date with education guidance and, in respect of singing especially, will often quote performing arts guidance. This is aimed at the profession and adult amateur groups: it does not apply to curriculum music unless local schools' guidance specifically says so.

School ensembles and choirs, where provided only for pupils at the school where they take place, fall under the same guidance as classroom music. Again, where any specific restrictions remain, they are generally easing.

² The Schools' Printed Music Licence and Music Service Printed Music Licence allow legal photocopying of most music, provided the school or music service possesses an original copy.

The guidance for music in class (or in school) applies in the same way, whether it is led by a classteacher or an external provider, such as a private tutor or Music Education Hub tutor.

Peripatetic instrumental and vocal lessons in schools and colleges

Instrumental and vocal lessons may take place in the normal way. It is still necessary to consider the suitability of the teaching space. Some rooms may only be suitable for individual lessons; others only for non-blown instruments. Rooms without direct ventilation may still not be considered suitable at all or may require frequent breaks with a fan blowing fresh air in from a nearby open window.

In some circumstances, a transparent pull-up screen may still be beneficial (e.g. for brass lessons in a small room). Move it to one side when the room is being ventilated

Peripatetic (visiting) tutors are not limited to visiting a given number of sites in any day or week. They may however be encouraged to wear masks in enclosed, common spaces like corridors (especially during lesson changeovers), in case they bring an infection from another school. It may also be wise for them to maintain distance from school staff and pupils for the same reason.

Ensembles and choirs as OOSS activity

Where an ensemble or choir includes participants from multiple schools, e.g. at a music centre, this is an out-of-school activity, even if the activity takes place in a school building. Local gathering rules and guidance must be adhered to but be aware that children's activities may not be subject to rules for social events.

There is increasingly less emphasis on distancing in children's activity. If some distancing is possible, prioritise blown instruments and singers over non-blown instruments.

Conductors and accompanists may continue to keep their distance from the ensemble, as they are likely to come into contact with large numbers of students over time. Our previous recommendation of 3m or more may be relaxed however. If distancing is not possible or practical, a transparent pull-up screen may be used.

Performances in professional venues

Guidance for children's activity is separate to that for adult and professional music making. Theatres and concert halls may try to impose inappropriate restrictions on children's activity, as they will often be more familiar with the performing arts guidance. This makes robust risk assessment and early discussions with venues all the more important.

Even in the absence of a clear statement in the guidance – and notwithstanding references in schools' and OOSS guidance to performing arts guidance – Music Mark is confident in advising the sector that its ensembles and choirs may perform within the same guidance as they rehearse, irrespective of venue.

Performing in professional venues largely removes the burden of managing the audience from the promoter.

Singing

Singing has had a bad press during the Covid-19 pandemic, based mainly on a handful of well-documented choral concerts which turned out to be ‘super-spreader’ events. These all occurred very early in the pandemic, before mass testing was available and before social distancing and masking were required. At the time of writing, there are still restrictions on singing in schools in several parts of the UK and these must be observed while they remain in force.

Nevertheless, where children’s singing has happened with mitigations in place, it has been shown to be possible to manage the risks. It remains the case that all major studies (including Colorado, with its explicit education focus) have only measured aerosol production in adult singers, overwhelmingly professionals and HE-level singing students. The context of children’s singing is very different however:

- Children have smaller lungs and less developed musculature than adults, so move less air;
- Children are not physically capable of singing for as long at a time;
- When children are not singing, they are still in their class or bubble and remain exposed to each other’s aerosol, whereas adults will generally disperse.

All these points remain true to a greater or lesser degree throughout statutory education and into the sixth form. Secondary teachers will however need to take account of the physical development of their pupils.

Spaces for singing

Singing outdoors reduces risk to very low levels but is weather dependent. Some schools will have rooms and spaces that are not suitable for group singing, either because they are too small for a class or choir to fit in comfortably or because the ventilation cannot be assured, although these rooms are likely to be in the minority. Very few schools, if any, will have no spaces in which groups can sing, albeit finding time to use school halls and gymnasias may be difficult.

Managing singing for aerosol production

Since the first version of *Music Unlocked*, we have recommended the same control measures for singing. None of the research or guidance published since, nor the *Suggested Principles for Safer Singing*³, have prompted a change in our recommendations. We are confident that a well-managed singing lesson which follows these recommendations will create no more risk (and quite probably less) than many other subjects.

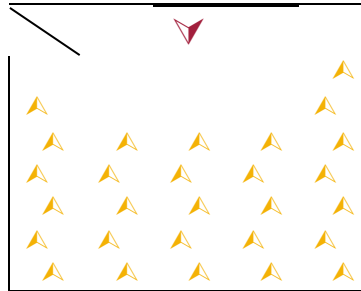
1. **Schedule singing sessions before a break** if possible, so the empty room can be ventilated immediately afterwards.
2. **Limit singing sessions to no more than 40 minutes.** Children will only actively be singing for a fraction of this, even though the time is being used in a focussed, valuable and musical way.
3. **Ventilate the room** as best you can during the session. If there are higher windows, opening these provide clean air without making the room uncomfortably cold.
4. **Face all children in the same direction** so that nobody is singing directly at another person’s face. It may help to offset rows, placing singers in a checkerboard pattern.
5. **Keep the dynamic (volume) down**, generally to no more than *mezzo piano* (moderately soft). Focus on making a beautiful sound, not a loud one.
6. **Do not insist on musical-theatre levels of diction.** Emphasising consonants creates additional water droplets ranging from visible to aerosol size (below 5µ) and increases risk of transmission.
7. **Project words and music** onto a whiteboard if possible. If you must distribute paper copies, have children name theirs and retain it for future sessions. All state schools in England can make copies of most music under the Schools’ Printed Music Licence, which the DfE funds.
8. **Ventilate the empty room after the session** for a good fifteen minutes. This is especially important if you sing in a shared space (like a school hall) and another group will use it after you.

³ Public Health England 20th November 2020, withdrawn 19th July 2021.

Distancing

Distancing while singing has two benefits: firstly it enables air to mix, so diluting any contaminated aerosol; and secondly it allows larger water droplets to fall to the ground rather than landing on someone else. If distancing is not possible (and moving around the school to a larger, shared space like the hall might introduce additional hazards), just do the best you can.

Remember that the adult(s) in the room are more susceptible to Covid-19 and are at greater risk if they do contract it, so adults should definitely maintain at least 2m distancing, preferably more. This may mean leaving more space immediately in front of the adult leading the singing for example:



Singing incidentally to other activities

If you are only singing one song in a lesson, for example a times table song, just do it. Keep the volume low and don't spit out the words. If there is any amount of class discussion during the lesson, that will probably create more aerosol than one short song, sung quietly.

Singing the register is fine but we would recommend against singing while moving around (e.g. tidying up songs), as children can pass closer to each other or sing into each other's faces.

Music Mark published a paper on singing in Spring 2021 which included an outline risk assessment. It is still available [here](#).

Instruments and equipment

Advice here assumes that you are using standard student and classroom instruments. If you are lucky enough to have older and/or advanced instruments, be aware that they may be made of materials that react badly to modern cleaning products, so test on an inconspicuous area first or seek specific advice.

There are a number of specialist products for cleaning musical instruments. Some of these are not effective against virus, in which case they are of little use.

Electronic instruments and equipment

Knobs, buttons, sliders etc on electronic equipment, amplifiers, mixing desks and so forth should be wiped with antiseptic wipes. Do not use sprays or soaked cloths, to avoid liquids getting inside equipment: residues can prevent controls working properly, even if they do not cause electrical issues. Electric guitars can be cleaned according to advice above.

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.

Sharing

Ideally blown instruments should not be shared but where it is unavoidable, individual mouthpieces will help reduce the risk. Reeds must never be shared, including for specialist instruments like baritone saxes, A clarinets, cors anglais, which are typically borrowed from the music service or ensemble.

Other musical instruments may be shared with reasonable cleaning in place between users and continued good hand hygiene. Pianos, drum kits and large percussion, which are inherently shared, should be cleaned proportionately between users.

Risk can be reduced if users have some items of their own equipment: for example, electric and bass guitarists can have their own instrument and lead (even if amps are shared) and drummers can use their own sticks.

The percussion trolley

Primary school percussion trolleys present the same sort of risks as sports equipment or lab equipment. Good hand hygiene is therefore important and some cleaning before and after use may be advisable. If local restrictions are introduced in response to an outbreak, schools may wish to allocate one or two items of percussion to each pupil or ask pupils to bring 'found percussion' items (usually small junk percussion) in from home.

Cleaning

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

COVID-19 virus particles are believed to survive for two to five days on hard surfaces⁴. 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.

Warm, 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. Plastic recorders can even be dishwashed in the top rack.

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 for thirty seconds and wipe with a dry cloth.

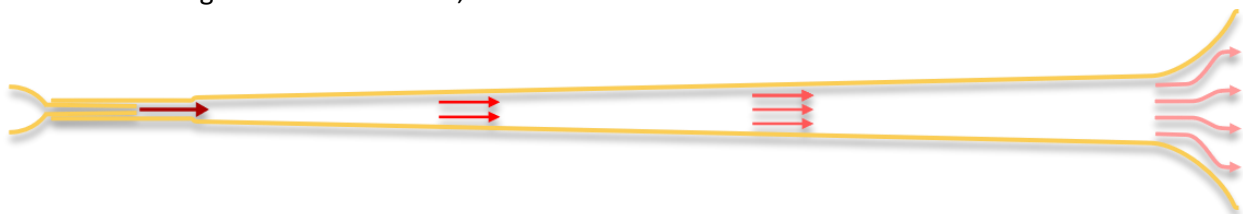
Handles and straps of percussion instruments and beaters should be wiped similarly.

For wooden instruments, follow manufacturers' instructions or test your cleaning product on an inconspicuous surface. Clean the main touchpoints, including the neck and fingerboard of guitars, violins, cellos etc. 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 lower end of the bow of all bowed strings should also be wiped.

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

Special considerations: blown instruments

All mouth-blown instruments distribute water droplets, large and small, into the environment. Wet air, from the player's lungs, is forced into the instrument under pressure and this displaces air already in the instrument. Most woodwind and brass instruments are larger at the bell than at the mouthpiece, so air decelerates throughout the instrument, in accordance with the Venturi effect.



The area of a trumpet's bell, for example, is around 120 times that of the leadpipe and that of a trombone around 250 times, so the air current leaving the instrument is very weak (as a number of people have demonstrated online) but water droplets in the airstream pose the same aerosol and fomite hazards.

⁴ 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.

The speed of the air current leaving the instrument is not the issue: the aerosols are picked up and dispersed by air movement in the room. The louder and longer the instrument is played, and the more participants there are, the more water droplets are produced and the greater the potential transmission risk.

Bell covers

The Colorado research found that bell covers are effective at reducing aerosol production, particularly for brass instruments. They are an inexpensive measure and can be home-made. The best are made from material with a MERV rating of 12 or above.

Water in the instrument

Water condenses in all blown instruments (and most water in instruments is condensed from the player's breath, not saliva). Whether it drips from the bell or is expelled from a water key, this should not be left on the floor but collected on a wad of newspaper, a puppy pad or in a small pot. If the latter, a drop of washing up liquid may be added. Each player should dispose of his or her own.

Water in the upper part of the instrument can run back into the player's mouth, so discourage holding instruments too high (as is sometimes seen during jazz solos). Saxophone and bassoon crooks should be very frequently and carefully cleaned, as the mouthpiece is lower than the highest part of the crook.

Mouthpieces and reeds

Ideally, mouthpieces should not be shared at all. If sharing is necessary, then very good cleaning is required between players. Brass mouthpieces and the hard plastic parts of clarinet or sax mouthpieces may be cleaned in a bowl of water with washing up liquid. Never immerse a flute (or piccolo) mouthpiece in water, as this will affect the headcork and the instrument will play out of tune.

Reeds cannot be cleaned satisfactorily and must never be shared.

Recorders, fifes and ocarinas

The breath required for these instruments is little more than exhaling. In the primary classroom, the amount of 'blow' time is likely to be quite low. This may be taken into account when planning mitigations. Plastic instruments may be immersed in soapy water for cleaning and plastic recorders can even go in the top rack of a dishwasher.

Flutes

Although they create air movement both directly in front of the player and to the right, the Colorado study found that they do not create significantly more aerosol than non-blown instruments (probably because there is no wet, vibrating surface which would break up the water droplets). If allowing extra distance, remember that flutes (along with piccolos and fifes) produce air streams both in front and to the right.

All woodwind

As well as air which exits the end, woodwind instruments leak air, and therefore water droplets, through fingerholes, contaminating players' hands. This can be mitigated with good hand hygiene.

Special considerations: non-blown instruments

Players will generate 'resting' levels of aerosol and larger water droplets through breathing and speaking. Larger droplets will fall onto instruments and be transferred onto players' hands, so surface contact transmission is the main risk here, particularly with instruments which are used by multiple people, such as pianos and large percussion. Good hand hygiene will reduce the risk.

As noted in the section on sharing instruments, it will help to mitigate risk if players use their own smaller items like leads and sticks.

Appendix A: Covid-19 Supplementary Risk Assessment template

Guidelines and template

How to use this risk assessment template

This risk assessment template is intended for anyone who has responsibility for music-making in education settings. It provides suggested control measures and prompts to think about specific local circumstances. Please note that it is not intended to cover all risks associated with any activity: it looks only at additional measures to minimise transmission Covid-19. Existing risk assessments still apply.

This is not a complete document: users must adapt the content to fit local circumstances and to comply with individual organisations' safety management systems. Legal responsibility for any activity rests with the person or organisation in charge.

Assessing the risks

Remember that assessing risk is about understanding and controlling hazards, and that it can never expect to eliminate all possibility of harm.

The standard is to identify **reasonably foreseeable** risks. We know that the extreme outcome of this infection is death or long-term health detriment but both are unusual outcomes in children and younger adults. The reasonably foreseeable risk here is the transmission of Covid-19 virus.

If the activity happens in a health setting or participants are known to have underlying health (particularly respiratory) issues, you will need to account for this at an activity or individual level.

Control measures should be **reasonable** and **proportionate**. Remember that the person most at risk may be the adult leading the activity: this is not just about the children. As death rates increase with age, it may be reasonable and proportionate to have more or fewer controls depending on their age and definitely depending on their general health.

You may not need to answer every prompt given here; equally there may be other factors to consider in your unique circumstances, so adapt the tables accordingly.

Control measures

Many control measures need cost little, if anything, to put in place, so consider behavioural or procedural measures (a Safe System of Work) before specifying equipment. Do bear in mind the cost of staff time however, and whether people will realistically apply measures consistently in the long-term.

Enable and encourage

Risk assessment is a positive process which enables activity. Music Mark and its members want children to be able to make music. The safest music-making is no music-making but that is deeply undesirable and it still does not mean nobody will catch the virus. Music Mark hopes this document will help music educators to make the case for playing musical instruments and singing in education, whatever the setting's risk appetite and local circumstances.

Covid-19 Supplementary Risk Assessment

Owner:			
Consultees:			
Version:			
Date of assessment:		Review date (max 1 year):	

Description of activity

- What is the activity?
- Who leads it and who supports? Consider all staff and adults present.
- Who is responsible for the adults? Are they employees, from a third-party agency or volunteers?
- Who is it for? Approximate number of participants; age range; other considerations, e.g. SEND
- Where does it take place? Capture the size of the space and ventilation arrangements.
- What equipment and resources are used?

References to related risk assessments

If there is a pre-existing risk assessment for this activity, refer to it here.

Existing control measures

These are the things you already do, or are inherent in the activity, that reduce the risks. Sufficient space and ventilation are the first things to consider; for more suggestions, see [Other mitigations](#) above.

	Hazard	Who is at risk?	Control measure(s)	Who is responsible?
1	Airborne transmission		Space and distancing	
2	Airborne transmission		What control is there over ventilation? Gentle through-ventilation is preferred. Fans that recirculate stale air should not be used.	
3	Airborne transmission		Lessons may need to be shortened or split for older, more advanced players in smaller rooms or with poor ventilation.	
4	Airborne transmission			
5	Surface transmission		How are handling of equipment (instruments, stands, music...) by both students minimised or eliminated?	
6	Surface transmission			
7	Person-to-person transmission		Is this a risk in your context? It is most likely in early years and SEND settings where there personal care is required.	
8				

Initial risk rating

How likely is the activity to result in actual harm (1-5)?	
How severe would the consequences be (1-5)?	
Risk rating (likelihood x severity)	

Likelihood	more	5					
		4					
		3					
		2					
	less	1					
			1	2	3	4	5
		better			worse		
		Severity					

Additional control measures

These are new measures identified to reduce the risk rating. If the initial risk rating is green, it is not necessary to put additional measures in place. It is usually easier (and perfectly acceptable) to reduce the likelihood of harm rather than the severity.

It is not necessary to implement additional control measures for every hazard identified. Prioritise the hazards you have identified and ensure that control measures are reasonable and proportionate.

	Hazard	Who is at risk?	Control measure(s)	Who is responsible?
1	Airborne transmission		Is a plexiglass or transparent pull-up screen required? If used, it must be placed to the side of the room during ventilation breaks and it must be cleaned regularly.	
2	Surface transmission		Cleaning of handling and playing surfaces will depend on the instrument – see <i>Music Unlocked</i> . Bear in mind that pianos and drum kits are shared instruments. If relevant, state how risks from reeds and venting of water keys will be mitigated.	
3	Airborne and surface transmission		How are lesson changeovers managed? 5mn gaps so that groups do not overlap? Or is the space large enough not to worry?	
4	Airborne and surface transmission		Is it appropriate to adopt or adapt the suggested Code of Conduct for visiting staff ?	
5	Airborne and surface transmission			
6	Person-to-person transmission			

Residual Risk rating

How likely is the activity to result in actual harm (1-5)?	
How severe would the consequences be (1-5)?	
Risk rating (likelihood x severity)	

Likelihood	more	5					
		4					
		3					
		2					
	less	1					
			1	2	3	4	5
			better			worse	
			Severity				

Risk rating:	1-6	Green	Monitor to ensure control measures are implemented consistently and that the rating remains valid.
	8-12	Amber	Try to identify additional controls to reduce the risk. Ensure that control measures are implemented consistently and look to improve by the next review.
	15-25	Red	Cease this activity until additional controls can be put in place to manage the risk.

Date communicated to staff/volunteers: _____

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Name: _____ **Position:** _____

Remember:

- This is a legal document: you must do (or ensure that people working for you do) what you say in it.
- Risk assessments must be reviewed at least annually or when there is an incident, i.e. in this case, if someone falls ill after taking part in the activity.
- For the purposes of Health & Safety, if you have not recorded it, you have not done it.

Appendix B: A recommended code of practice

for peripatetic (visiting) music 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 sanitise your hands thoroughly before going to the teaching room.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. Find out, before you need to know, what to do if you or pupils fall ill.
7. If you think that a child may be showing symptoms of Coronavirus, stop the lesson and report your concerns to the school immediately.
8. Teach outside if it is practical and weather permits.
9. Maintain social distancing from school staff and pupils as much as reasonably possible (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.
10. 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.
11. 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.
12. 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).
13. 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.
14. Never play on a pupil's mouthpiece or allow them to play on yours.
15. Stick to the agreed timetable as closely as you reasonably can but understand if it has to change at short notice.
16. Wash your hands thoroughly before leaving the school, preferably as the last thing you do before signing out.

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