

Covid-19 Generic Risk Assessment

Teaching in Schools

Guidance

Purpose

This document 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 but it is a working document and as so it is subject to change and being updated as new guidance is issued from the Government. It is designed to compliment and be used in conjunction with the Risk Assessments produced by schools and not to replace them.

Legal responsibility for any activity rests with the person or organisation in charge.

Assessing the risks

Remember that assessing risk is about understanding hazards and 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 spread 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.

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.

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 classroom 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:	Thurrock Music Services		
Consultees:	TMS peripatetic tutors		
Version:	2		
Date of assessment:	7 th July 2020 – updated 2 nd September 2020 second update 10 th September 2021	Review date (max 1 yr):	1 st July 2022

Description of activity

This Risk Assessment is designed to cover Individual, small group and whole class activity in schools. It is not site-specific to a group, school or situation.

References to related risk assessments

Schools Covid-19 operational Guidance updated 27th August 2021 (pub DfE).

Existing control measures

These are the things you already do, or are inherent in the activity, that reduce the risks.

	Hazard	Who is at risk?	Control measure(s)	Who is responsible?	Risk rating
1	Transmission of coronavirus between staff and pupils – where symptoms are evident	Everyone	<p>Anyone who has Coronavirus symptoms (new cough, high temperature, loss or change in the normal sense of taste and smell) or who has someone in their household who does, must not attend any schools. They should self-isolate in line with current government guidance and should arrange to have a test.</p> <p>Individuals are not required to self-isolate if they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, or are a close contact of someone with COVID-19, and any of the following apply:</p>	TMS Teacher	1

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they are fully vaccinated • they are below the age of 18 years and 6 months • they have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial • they are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons <p>Instead, they will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace, informed they have been in close contact with a positive case and advised to take a PCR test. We would encourage all individuals to take a PCR test if advised to do so.</p> <p>TMS tutors will need to inform the Music Service as soon as possible in the event of a positive test or if they have been contacted by NHS Test and Trace</p>		
2	Airborne transmission between staff and pupils where individuals are asymptomatic	Teacher / pupil	<p>TMS tutors should continue to take lateral flow tests twice a week until the end of September when the policy will be reviewed.</p> <p>Teachers no longer need to be at least 2m from the nearest pupil.</p> <p>Ventilation is still important. All teaching spaces should continue to have good ventilation including windows that can be opened and doors that can remain open.</p>	TMS Teacher	10

			<p>Airconditioning can be used so long as it does not use centralised ventilation systems that remove and circulates air to different rooms.</p> <p>Face coverings are no longer advised for pupils, staff and visitors either in classrooms or in communal areas, however, TMS tutors should check with their schools before their first session to ensure they are aware of current school procedures.</p> <p>Tutors may wish to continue wearing face masks / shields if they wish to do so but they cannot insist that pupils do the same.</p>		
3	Airborne transmission caused by singing	Everyone	<p>There is no longer any guidance on singing in schools in the Schools Covid-19 operational guidance.</p> <p>Music Mark has recommended the following in their Music Unlocked v3.0 published in September 2021:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	TMS Teacher	10

			<p>a focussed, valuable and musical way.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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 <i>mezzo piano</i> (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 		
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			<p>most music under the Schools' Printed Music Licence, which the DfE funds.</p> <p>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.</p>		
4	Airborne transmission due to other respirators conditions	Everyone	<p>Ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, kill it, bin it' approach.</p> <p>If tissues are used they should be placed in a pedal bin as supplied by the teaching establishment.</p>	Class Teacher	5
5	Surface transmission via hands	Everyone	<p>Clean hands thoroughly (for 20 seconds) more often than usual. Teachers should wash hands on entering and leaving a school. Bring own pen to sign in.</p>	TMS Teacher	5
6	Surface transmission via printed music	Pupils	<p>Songs mainly taught by ear. If required, words are projected.</p> <p>Pupils should bring their own copy of any music to lessons. Students should mark their own music where appropriate.</p>	TMS Teacher	5
7	Surface transmission via equipment used for playing backing tracks or accompanying	Teacher	<p>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.</p>	TMS Teacher	5

			Electric guitars can be cleaned according to advice above. The teacher must only use their own instrument for demonstration purposes.		
8	Changes to emergency procedures	Teacher	Teacher to find out from the school any changes to emergency procedures including fire routes and assembly points.		1

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)	5

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

Additional control measures

These are new measures identify to reduce the risk rating. It is usually easier (and it is 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?	Risk Rating
1	Transmission of virus between staff.	Teachers	Minimise contact with other staff and maintain social distance always. Try to remain in the same teaching space throughout and minimise the amount of time spent wandering around the school. Staff can, however, access other spaces including staff rooms if they wish to do so.	TMS Teacher	5

2	Airborne transmission – to and from lessons	All	Where possible pupils should continue to make their own way to the practice rooms. However, pupils no longer have to remain in ‘bubbles’ so tutors can collect children from their classes if this is in line with school policy.	School / Class teachers / TAs	5
3	Airborne transmission (vulnerable teacher)	Teacher	State any extra measures if the teacher is more vulnerable (older, underlying health issues).	TMS Teacher	3
4	Airborne transmission (vulnerable pupils)	Pupil or pupils	Follow the school risk assessment on how to engage with vulnerable pupils. Request information from the class teacher so that additional measures can be implemented for children with health and SEND issues, e.g. asthma	Class teacher	3
5	Airborne transmission 1:1 and small group lessons (all pupils)	Pupils	Practice rooms no longer have to be of a size where two metre social distancing has to be observed. However, practice rooms should be of a suitable size to accommodate small group tuition comfortably. Additional measures such as placing dots on floors to show pupils where to stand and allowing additional time between lessons are no longer required. In primary schools lessons should no longer be taught in 10 minute individual sessions and do not need to be timetabled to take note of class ‘bubbles’ as these should no longer exist. Group lessons may now be offered on woodwind,	School admin and TMS Teacher	10

			<p>brass, singing, or keyboard instruments.</p> <p>Pupils should still unpack and pack their own instruments.</p> <p>It is still recommended that Pupils in 1:1 lessons should wash their hands before the lesson but music tutors are not expected to verify this before the lesson starts.</p>		
6	Surface transmission – whole class lessons – general	Pupils	<p>It is still recommended that for whole class sessions staff should wash / sanitise hands between whole class sessions. Wash / sanitise hands on leaving the school.</p> <p>Pupils in whole class lessons should wash hands before the session starts and after the session.</p> <p>Staff must not physically correct pupils ie moving fingers to the correct position on a string or over a hole on a woodwind instrument.</p>	Class teacher and TMS Teacher	10
7	Aerosol transmission – whole class lessons – general	Pupils and Teachers	Any background or accompanying music must be kept to levels which do not encourage teachers or or pupils to raise their voices.	TMS Teacher	5
8	Aerosol transmission – whole class lessons – blown instruments and singing.	Pupils	<p>Whole class lessons using brass and woodwind instruments or singing can resume from Autumn 2021.</p> <p>TMS will ensure that there are enough mouthpieces / reeds etc. for woodwind instruments so that no pupils share a mouthpiece.</p>	TMS Teacher	5

			<p>Brass instruments and mouthpieces will be thoroughly sanitised between use.</p> <p>Where possible pupils should still be positioned side-to-side in such a way that the air from instruments does not blow into another player. Players must not be positioned facing each other.</p>		
9	Surface transmission – whole class lessons – non blown instruments	Pupils	For whole class lessons that use non blown instruments eg violins / guitars/ ukuleles/ tuned percussion steel pans, tutors must still make sure any shared resource is wiped down in between sessions. This includes sticks and beaters and (African) drum heads.	TMS Teacher	5
10	Surface Transmission – shared instruments	Pupils	Where shared school instruments are used in 1:1 lessons eg in keyboard / piano lessons liaise with the school regarding cleaning procedures. It is strongly advised to keep some wetwipes / sanitising wipes handy to give the keys a wipe between use. Wetwipes should be disposed of into a plastic bag which is then sealed and disposed of in accordance with the schools risk assessment. Normally this would be a pedal bin which the school has placed in the teaching area. Hands should be sanitised / washed immediately after placing items in the bin.	School site staff and TMS Teacher	10
11	Surface transmission - where group teaching	Teachers	If working in a group teaching environment (eg two staff delivering Wider opps) consider carefully allocating tasks, for	TMS Teachers	10

			example who uses the audio / IT equipment. Where possible avoid using shared equipment. Liaise with schools on how equipment is cleaned before and after use.		
12	Surface transmission – personal instruments and cases	Everyone	Pupils should only bring their instruments into school on the day they need them. Cases and in particular the case handles should be cleaned regularly, particularly before coming into schools. Instruments should be taken home on the same day. Sharing of instruments and shared handling of instrument cases should be avoided. Pupils must unpack and pack their own instruments.	Pupils and parents	5
13	Surface transmission – instrument maintenance	Everyone	Tutors and students must not share instruments. If a tutor needs to handle a student instrument eg for tuning, assessing damage or repair then they should use disposable gloves. Use disinfectant before undertaking any repair and before returning to the pupil. For wind and brass instruments tutors must not play a student's instrument even to diagnose and problem.	Tutors and pupils	5
14	Surface transmission through use of practice diaries	Pupil and teacher	Use of paper-based practice diaries are now recommended for use from the Autumn Term of 2021. However, where possible, pupils should write in the information themselves rather than the tutor doing it.	Pupils / tutors/ parents	1

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)	5

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: 10th September 2021

Signed: R Dignum

Date: 10th Sept 2021

Name: R Dignum

Position: Acting Head of Service

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.