

## **Member Advice on the Re-Opening of Schools**

### **Additional Guidance on Managing Risks of Covid 19 for Instrumental Music Teachers**

This advice should be read in conjunction with the [EIS Curriculum and Pedagogy Guidance for schools](#) and the updated [EIS Advice to School Reps and Members re Revised Risk Assessments](#) and [Ventilation](#). It is designed to provide additional guidance to reflect the distinct nature of the delivery of Instrumental Music Tuition and ensure that school reps and Instrumental Music Teachers (IMTs) are aware of their entitlements under Health and Safety legislation and of the specific considerations which should be assessed prior to a return to Instrumental Music Tuition in schools.

In terms of risk assessments, the Scottish Government advice is that they need to be conducted by employers in conjunction with trade unions and LNCTs.

Headteacher and Depute Headteacher members should find the guidance useful, also, in supporting their preparations as it will probably fall to them to act on behalf of the Employer at school level. The EIS recommends that Instrumental Music Service Managers, Headteacher and Depute Headteacher colleagues continue to work closely with School Reps, a strongly collegiate approach being the best way to protect the health and safety of all within the school community.

### **Additional Considerations for Health and Safety and Risk Assessments for IMTs**

The general advice to members on Health and Safety and Risk Assessments (referred to above) sets out the legal background to the employer's duty of care, risk assessments and consultation. It makes it clear that your employer is obliged to provide you with a safe place of work through the use of risk assessments. A risk assessment will facilitate the identification of hazards and risk factors that have the potential to cause harm.

The practical nature of teaching voice and instrumental music, together with the increased potential of droplet or air-borne transmission of Covid-19, means that consideration should be given to the implementation of an additional risk mitigation strategy for IMTs. The response from IMTs to the EIS survey, conducted during first period of lockdown, highlighted that there are a number of potential hazards and risks which should be considered as part of the risk assessment process and to ensure that both staff and pupils have confidence in the safe delivery of in-school Instrumental Music Tuition.

In addition to the Safe Workplace Checklist contained in the advice referred to above, the EIS would recommend that the following additional questions, contained in the checklist below, are used when considering Health and Safety issues relating to the control of Covid-19 within the workplace, specifically for the provision of Instrumental Music Tuition.

There should be bespoke risk assessments for vulnerable groups, e.g. older staff, disabled staff, pregnant women, new mothers, staff with underlying health conditions, staff who have been shielding and BAME staff, as well as individual children identified as at greater risk.

**Risk assessments should be kept under regular review and should also reflect and be adapted to respond to local issues, such as local increases in the cases of COVID-19, local outbreaks or a change to the protection level of the area in which the tuition is being delivered.**

## **Covid Secure Workplace**

### **Checklist for Instrumental Music Tuition (April 2021)**

The following checklist should be used as a guide when considering Health and Safety issues relating to the control of Covid-19 within the workplace, specifically in the context of Instrumental Music Tuition. This list is not exhaustive and there may be specific issues relevant to individual settings or circumstances which should also be considered as part of the risk assessment process.

#### **Allocation and Cleaning of Rooms for Instrumental Music Tuition**

- Reflecting the [Scottish Government Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Guidance on Reducing the Risks in Schools](#) and the importance of minimising the movement of individuals between work stations, has a designated room been identified for the provision of Instrumental Music Tuition within the school?
- Has an enhanced cleaning strategy been agreed and adopted in relation to the provision of Instrumental Music Tuition? Have arrangements been put in place to ensure that the room will be cleaned prior to and after use and between use by different pupils and by different staff members?
- Does the cleaning strategy extend to more regular cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched objects and hard surfaces, such as table-tops, chairs, doors, handles, shared technology, light switches, keyboards and staff equipment? Are procedures in place to ensure that such objects are cleaned between use by different groups of pupils and by different staff members?
- Is there adequate ventilation within the room to minimise the spread of Covid-19 through droplet or air-borne transmission?

#### **Hand Hygiene Protocols**

- Is there a hygiene protocol in place, providing for an enhanced hygiene regime for IMTs and pupils, participating in instrumental music tuition? Does this include handwashing (for 20 seconds) with hot water and soap on arrival at the classroom, where necessary, during the lesson or practice session and prior to departure?

#### **Singing and Woodwind/Brass Musical Instruments**

- Scientific and medical advice around how activities such as singing and playing wind/brass instruments can be managed safely is still being developed. Whilst this is under review, the Scottish Government Guidance (referred to above – paragraph 236) adopts a precautionary approach and refers directly to [Education Scotland's Music Guidelines](#). These guidelines make it clear that 'young people should not engage in singing, or playing wind and brass instruments with other people, given these activities pose a potentially higher risk of transmission'.
- There is one exception to this principle and that relates to tuition for pupils in the senior phase who are preparing for practical assessments in brass, wind and singing. Advice on the risk assessment procedure for these circumstances is detailed below under the heading 'Preparation for Assessment in Brass, Wind and Singing'.
- In line with the general guidance, however, no other provision should be made for the provision of practical teaching in relation to these activities at this time.

- Additional EIS guidance on the face-to-face provision of practical teaching in these areas will be issued when further scientific and medical advice has been received.
- In the interim period, has consideration been given to the use of alternative approaches outwith school in these areas? Have arrangements been made to ensure that the curriculum is reviewed to allow the delivery of theory or composition to be taught at this time? Could the use of digital technology assist in enabling learning in these areas to continue?

### **Social Distancing**

- Are social distancing measures being implemented? At the moment, any distancing measure will require strict 2 metre physical distancing between adults and between staff and pupils at all times.
- In exceptional circumstances when adults cannot keep 2 metres distance, face coverings (or where appropriate, PPE and other protective barrier measures) should be worn at all times.
- Has provision been made to ensure that staff and pupils are wearing face coverings in classrooms during lessons?
- The practical nature of the subject may mean that there are exceptional situations in which the 2 metres distancing cannot be observed for a short period of time for a specific purpose. What additional risk mitigation measures have been put in place for those situations and to ensure that the period in which the distance is breached is kept to a minimum?
- Has the school provided clear guidance for staff and pupils on how to put on, remove, store and dispose of face coverings to avoid inadvertently increasing the risk of transmission in the setting?

### **Establishment Operations**

- Have sufficient steps been taken to ensure that the movement between classrooms of children, young people and staff involved in Instrumental Music Tuition has been minimised?
- Have timetables been reviewed to reduce the movement around the school estate of groups of pupils, receiving Instrumental Music Tuition, as much as possible?
- What arrangements have been put in place to ensure that the number of children and young people with whom IMTs come into contact in the provision of Instrumental Music Tuition is kept to a minimum?
- Given that IMTs may be teaching a range of different pupils in one room for extended periods, what measures have been put in place to mitigate the risk from their exposure to multiple pupils, sharing the same air over long periods of time? Has consideration been given to the use of plexiglass screens or of face coverings? Has consideration been given to timetabling additional breaks to ventilate rooms periodically? Is personal protective equipment ('PPE') required? Is it adequately provided to staff?
- Has the layout of the teaching space been adapted to support physical distancing between pupils where possible, between staff and pupils, and between staff and other staff?

## **Sharing and Cleaning of Instruments**

- Has clear guidance been given to prevent the sharing of mouth-blown instruments and mouthpieces?
- Has an assessment been made of the types of instruments and associated equipment which may be safely shared by pupils and IMTs in schools?
- Is there an enhanced, before & after use cleaning provision in place for all instruments and equipment, assessed as capable of being shared safely by pupils and IMTs in schools?
- Has provision been made to ensure that where sheet music is being used, each pupil has their own copy of the music? If this is not possible, consideration should be given to projecting words or music onto a screen.
- If instruments or equipment are used by more than one person (e.g. stringed instruments, keyboard, piano, drum kit, tuned percussion, CDs, audio equipment, beaters and music stands), or taken in and reallocated (e.g. at the end of a whole-class programme), enhanced cleaning is required. Has this been included in the risk assessment?
- What provision has been made to ensure that all instruments and equipment are effectively cleaned & maintained on a regular basis?

## **Choirs, Orchestras and Ensemble Work**

- The Education Scotland Guidelines, referred to above, makes it clear that 'choirs, orchestras and ensemble performances should not recommence at this point'.

## **Health**

- What arrangements have been put in place to ensure that IMTs are aware of the protocol in their school(s) for situations in which an individual develops Covid-19 symptoms, including isolation arrangements?
- What arrangements have been put in place to ensure that IMTs are aware of the Test and Protect protocol in place in their school(s) in relation to the testing of staff who have symptoms, as well as any contingency arrangements for dealing with self-isolation?
- Is there a need for any additional control measures to be put in place to reduce the risk of IMTs inadvertently bringing the virus into school?
- Is personal protective equipment (PPE) required? Is it adequately provided to IMTs?

## **Travel**

- Moving between schools should be kept to a minimum. For peripatetic IMTs, what consideration has been given to the reduction in the amount of travel across different schools and to consolidating the provision delivered by the IMT in one school?
- In circumstances where provision cannot be limited to one school, what efforts have been made to minimise the number of schools in which the IMT will teach? Has consideration been given to the continued delivery of Instrumental Music Tuition through lower risk methods such as digital/virtual means?

- Where movement across locations is necessary, what arrangements have been adopted to minimise the number of interactions which IMTs will have in each setting? Has provision been made to ensure that the 2 metre distancing between adults and between IMTs and pupils is strictly adhered to?
- Where an IMT is working across local authorities, this should be made known to each of the respective Heads of Instrumental Music and consideration should be given to minimising the number of schools in which the IMT will teach and to the delivery of Instrumental Music Tuition through lower risk methods such as digital/virtual means. Consideration should also be given in each local authority to any additional risk mitigation measures which may be necessary given the nature of these working arrangements.
- Are car parking spaces clearly set out to ensure that IMTs have a dedicated space for the day on which they will be in attendance at a particular school?

### **Preparation for Assessment in Brass, Wind and Singing**

- Following the provision of further scientific and clinical advice to the Scottish Government, Education Scotland's Music Guidelines have been updated to provide an exception to the general prohibition against the teaching of brass and wind instruments and voice in schools.
- The Guidelines provide that *one-to-one* lessons and practice sessions can go ahead for pupils in the senior phase, preparing for assessments in brass, wind, piping and singing.
- They also state that 'the recording of brass, wind, piping and singing by individual learners for assessment purposes can take place in school with a teacher present'.
- If, after collegiate discussion, it is determined that it is necessary' to provide 'in-school' teaching and learning for senior phase learners in these areas, one-to-one lessons, practice sessions and recording can only go ahead after:
  - the completion of a 'very robust local risk assessment',
  - the implementation of identified risk mitigation measures and
  - with the agreement of senior school leaders.

Have these three elements been secured prior to the activity taking place?

- In undertaking the risk assessment, has consideration been given to the individual circumstances (including any vulnerabilities, specific health issues or anxieties) of the IMT and pupils involved? Have appropriate risk mitigation measures been put in place?
- Has provision been made to ensure that the length and frequency of the lessons has been kept to a minimum?
- What arrangements have been made to ensure that the number of interactions which the IMT will have in these circumstances has been kept to a minimum?
- In addition to bespoke mitigations identified, all risk assessments for the provision of tuition in these circumstances should include the following risk mitigation measures:
  - The activity should take place in a large, well-ventilated room;

- There should be a clearly defined space of at least 2 metres between the pupil and the IMT;
- We would recommend that a clear screen is positioned between the pupil and the IMT;
- The teacher should wear a mask at all times;
- The pupil should wear a mask, whenever they are not performing,
- Arrangements should be in place to ensure that the room is sanitised carefully at the end of each performance and after and between use;
- There should be a delay between pupils using the room to allow aerosol particles to dissipate.
- Arrangements should be in place to minimise the general flow of all learners as they enter and leave music facilities

Does the risk assessment adequately make provision for these essential mitigations?

### **Consultation**

- Have IMTs been consulted on and involved in all of the above?
- Instrumental Music Service Managers and School Leadership Teams should involve union reps at the outset and consult IMTs as widely as possible and practicable. Has this happened, involving union workplace reps and health and safety reps?