



Singing in Schools

Covid-19 Guidance & Risk Assessment

Key guidelines

- BM staff advised to wear face mask and/or visor at all times
- BM staff to have roll-up banner/plexiglass screen to provide a barrier
- Retain group size of 15 students or 30 students in a large, suitably ventilated space
- Sessions to have a 15 minute gap between them to air and ventilate the space
- Maintain 2m distance at all times
- Alternatively singing can now take place within a classroom context, at low volume, for a maximum of 10 -15 minutes within a class lesson, provided there is good ventilation and the teacher is distanced from the class.

Introduction

Recent research has shown that singing is no more dangerous than speaking. Berkshire Maestros want children to be able to resume face to face music making whilst ensuring the safety of both young people and staff. This guidance and risk assessment is intended to support schools to so that we can safely engage in face-to-face learning where appropriate from April 2021. We are delighted that the updated DfE guidance supports Music Education Hub teachers to resume attending schools from April.

This guide presupposes that schools are already complying with:

- Social distancing
- Improved hand hygiene
- Enhanced cleaning of school buildings

This document is not intended to cover all risks associated with any activity; it looks only at additional measures to minimise transmission of Covid-19.

Guidance – Singing in Schools (classroom or assembly)

We have taken account recent studies including the most recent Perform study by the University of Bristol that is backed by Public Health England and the latest guidance issued by Music Mark. Our advice is given in the context of the following circumstances and observations.

1. Almost all research has focussed on professional, university-level and a tiny number of amateur adult singers. While some year 11 and above pupils may approach these standards (and risk assessment will need to take account of these), in the main, most school singing happens in KS1 and KS2. Children in these age groups will have lower lung capacity and less strength in the diaphragm. They will not move as much air or project it as far.

2. For singing activity within a class bubble, the DfE no longer recommends limiting group sizes to 15. It is recommended however that you use a room with as much space as possible, for example, larger rooms (rooms with high ceilings are expected to enable dilution of aerosol transmission) or to take rehearsals outside. Keeping a distance of 2 meters is still advised and we suggest that singing either takes place in a group of 15, outside or in a large, well ventilated space such as a hall.
3. An alternative to point 2 is that singing can now take place within a classroom context, at low volume, for a maximum of 10 -15 minutes within a class lesson, provided there is good ventilation and the teacher is distanced from the class.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. 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 2m from the front row as they will, of course, be facing the singers. They may want to consider a plexiglass screen.
7. Each singer should have their own music and should ideally keep it between rehearsals. If words or music are projected, that is ideal.

Guidelines – BM teaching staff

Our teaching staff will all be given refreshed guidance and training at CPD days at the start of the Summer Term. They will be informed of the following expectations surrounding their work in schools:

1. Do not attend school if you suspect that you (or any of those you live with) may be coming down with Coronavirus symptoms: follow self-isolation procedures. Request a test-kit from <https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test>.
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. You are advised to wear a mask at all times within a school unless you are demonstrating an instrument during a lesson/rehearsal.
5. 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.

6. Ask for the school's risk assessments for COVID-19; ask about anything you do not understand and abide by the control measures specified i.e. toilet or break provision.
7. 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.
8. Find out, before you need to know, what to do if you or pupils fall ill.
9. If you think that a child may be showing symptoms of Coronavirus, stop the lesson and report your concerns to the school immediately.
10. Maintain 2m or more distance from other people at all times, including pupils.
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: i.e. do not move heavy furniture.
12. Allow time in your timetable to wipe down in between each session and for you to have a break and air the room whilst you do so.
13. Wash your hands thoroughly before leaving the school, preferably as the last thing you do before signing out.

Covid-19 Risk Assessment

Singing in Schools (Classrooms/assemblies)

Owner:	Berkshire Maestros		
Version:	3		
Date of assessment:	14.05.21	Review date:	01.09.2021

Risk

Covid-19 is an illness that can affect your lungs and airways. It is caused by a virus called Coronavirus. Symptoms can be mild, moderate, severe or fatal.

We are heavily minimising the risk of transmission of the virus, both airborne and surface, by adhering to the Government Education & Performing Arts guidance and have taken the measures outlined in the Risk Assessment below. Government guidance continues to be followed and the risk assessments will be reviewed and updated as and when required in relation to the Governments "Roadmap out of lockdown".

Rapid lateral flow tests help to find cases in people who may have no symptoms but are still infectious and can give the virus to others. All our teaching staff are requested to have regular Covid19 tests prior to face to face teaching in schools & music centres. You can order test kits for free via the Government website: <https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests> Please ensure that you take the Covid19 test every 72 hours (twice a week) and ensure you upload your results within 24 hours on the Government website <https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result> Please ensure you keep a copy of the results (text or email from the NHS) and have the results available to show should this be required.

Singing as part of class activity and music teaching across Berkshire.

Control measures

	Hazard	Who is at risk?	Control measure(s)	Who is responsible?
1	Airborne transmission	Teacher	Conductor/leader to be 2m from the nearest student when facing them. Conductor/leader must wear a mask/visor throughout the session unless demonstrating.	Teacher
2	Airborne transmission	Everyone	Ventilation is key. Keep the windows open even if you have to wear a coat. Ventilate the room frequently after each session. Sessions should be no longer than 40 minutes and ideally around 30 minutes to ensure aerosols don't build up in the room.	Teacher

			Consider singing outside if you can. Where singing takes place within a classroom context this should be for a maximum of 10 -15 minutes	
3	Airborne transmission	Everyone	Keep any background or accompanying music to levels which do not encourage teachers or other performers to raise their voices unduly. Teachers should avoid raising their voice or singing loudly.	Teacher
4	Airborne transmission	Teacher	The use of masks is advisable to ensure the safety of staff.	Teacher
5	Surface transmission via printed resources	Pupils	Songs should be mainly taught by ear. If required, words should be projected. Pupils should have their own copies of any music/books required. If tutors are using their own handout material these should be emailed to parents for printing at home and then go into individual, named, plastic pouches. Pupils will be responsible for bringing their own copies to the lesson/rehearsal.	Teacher
6	Surface transmission via equipment used for playing backing tracks or accompanying	Teacher	Cleaning of PC or CD player for backing track or piano/keyboard.	Teacher

Additional control measures

	Hazard	Who is at risk?	Control measure(s)	Who is responsible?
1	Airborne transmission (vulnerable teacher)	Teacher	Where BM staff have informed us that they are vulnerable, we will endeavour to send a replacement teacher.	Berkshire Maestros
2	Airborne transmission (vulnerable pupils)	Pupil or pupils	Precautionary measures will be taken as per the above however it is at the parent's discretion as to whether they are happy for their child to resume lessons in this manner.	Parent



Signed:

Date: 17.05.2021

Name: D. Wren

Position: CEO