

# **Risk Assessment**

# **Covid 19 – HMS Staff Teaching in Schools**

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| **RISK ASSESSMENT FOR**:  Hertfordshire Music Service | **Risk being assessed:**  Covid 19 – HMS Teachers teaching music in Hertfordshire schools and music centres | |
| **Establishment:**  In Hertfordshire schools and Music Centres | **Assessment by:**  Liz Goscomb and Sue Pettitt | **Date:**  25 February 2021 |
| **Risk assessment ref:** HMS RA: Covid-19 HMS Music Teaching in Schools | **Manager Approval**  Ben Stevens | **Date:**  Updated 28 Feb 2022 |

**Assessment review effective from:** 28/02/2022

**Next assessment review date:** 31/05/2022

In addition, the risk assessment must be reviewed following any significant changes and after update of government advice relating to Covid-19. A review must also take place a year after the risk assessment is produced.

PLEASE NOTE: It is essential that teachers ensure they understand the local control measures and planning with each individual school venue they teach at. Staff should regularly check the HMS school COVID guidance update page on the HMS website [here](https://www.hertsmusicservice.org.uk/schools-area/covid-guidance-for-schools-herts-music-service.aspx).

**Updates to the Risk Assessment:**

V10 – 28/02/22: Updated following the change in national guidance and removal of most restrictions from 24 Feb 2022.

V9 – 9/12/21: Updated following the rise in cases of ‘Omicron’ variant of concern and confirmation of the move to ‘Plan B’ of the government’s COVID-19 response for winter 2021. Guidance for schools and out of school settings has not changed apart from the Omicron variant updates.

V8 – Step 4 of the UK government roadmap out of COVID-19 restrictions are now reflected in this document.

| **What are the hazards?** | **Who might be harmed and how?** | **What are you already doing?** | **What further action is necessary?** | **Action by who?** | **Action by when?** | **Done** |
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| **Transmission via asymptomatic carriers** | Everyone  Spread of COVID-19 | From 21 February, staff and pupils in mainstream secondary schools will not be expected to continue taking part in regular asymptomatic testing and should follow asymptomatic testing advice for the general population. Further information is available in the [NHS get tested for COVID-19) guidance](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing/get-tested-for-coronavirus/).  SEND and specialist settings do still require regular asymptomatic testing – further advice can be found here: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1057037/20220223_SEND_guidance.pdf>.  **Close contacts and isolation**  Close contacts are no longer required to self-isolate or advised to take daily tests and contact tracing has ended. If you live with someone with COVID-19, follow this advice: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-people-with-covid-19-and-their-contacts/covid-19-people-with-covid-19-and-their-contacts>. | Continue to inform central HCC of any positive test results.  Update all HMS staff on this update at CPD events in early September in person, via the website and by email. | Michael Mabbitt and MusicHR team | Ongoing |  |
| **Expectant mothers – particularly those with existing underlying health conditions** | Pregnant employees  Increased risk of becoming severely ill and of pre-term birth if they contract COVID-19. | **Pregnant employees**  Any employee who is pregnant at any stage of gestation should have completed an individual risk assessment and will not be expected to undertake any work that isn’t considered safe following the introduction of control measures.  Pregnant workers should consider continuing to take regular LFD tests.  If in person work isn’t considered safe, working from home should be considered and failing that, suspension on full pay should be implemented.  Full updated guidance is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-pregnant-employees/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-pregnant-employees> | Review individual risk assessments in light of the new guidance.  Continue to follow recommendations from this assessment. | Line manager or HR team | As required |  |
| **Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV)** | Employees/ Pupils  Spread of COVID 19 | **Employees**  CEV staff are no longer advised to shield. From 19 July 2021, social distancing guidance no longer applies in England and UK government are no longer advising people to work from home if they can.  Clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) people are advised, as a minimum, to follow the same guidance as everyone else. It is important that everyone adheres to this guidance, but CEV people may wish to think particularly carefully about the additional precautions they can continue to take.  HMS staff will be invited to review their risk assessment and have a 1:1 discussion with their HMS Performance Manager/Line Manager to discuss return to work and safe working practices where necessary. Support will be discussed and provided.  Staff are encouraged to raise any concerns with their Line Manager.  Additional advice on supporting CEV staff is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>  Staff with weakened immune systems can also review this advice: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-people-whose-immune-system-means-they-are-at-higher-risk/covid-19-guidance-for-people-whose-immune-system-means-they-are-at-higher-risk> | Review individual risk assessments for CEV staff where requested or advised – especially if they are not able to work from home. Implement these measures based on the risk assessments. | Performance Managers (1:1 discussion)  Line Managers (Individual Risk Assessment, where required) | Before teaching resumes at a school |  |
| **Suspected case of Covid 19 before attending or whilst working on site** | Employees/  Visitors/ Pupils  Spread of COVID-19 | HMS will continue to update guidance and brief staff in new/ updated requirements as and when new government guidance is introduced.  It is anticipated that schools will further reinforce these messages through local information and highlighting messages via signage (e.g. sign at the entrance of the building advising that symptomatic people must not enter the premises.  There is no longer a legal requirement for people with coronavirus (COVID-19) infection to self-isolate, however if you have any of the main symptoms of COVID-19 or a positive test result, the public health advice is to stay at home and avoid contact with other people.  This includes people with any of the main symptoms of COVID-19, people who have received a positive COVID-19 lateral flow device (LFD) or polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test result and people who live in the same household as, or who have had close contact with, someone who has COVID-19.  **COVID symptoms present or positive case before leaving home:**  When self-isolating you should:   * not attend work. If you are unable to work from home, you should talk to your employer about options available to you. You may be eligible for [Statutory Sick Pay](https://www.gov.uk/statutory-sick-pay) * ask friends, family, neighbours or [volunteers](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-people-with-covid-19-and-their-contacts/covid-19-people-with-covid-19-and-their-contacts#volunteers) to get food and other essentials for you * not invite social visitors into your home, including friends and family * postpone all non-essential services and repairs that require a home visit * cancel routine medical and dental appointments. If you are concerned about your health or you have been asked to attend an appointment in person during this time, discuss this with your medical contact and let them know about your symptoms or your test result * if you can, let people who you have been in close contact with know about your positive test result so that they can follow this guidance   **COVID symptoms present or positive case whilst at a school site (staff):**  If you develop COVID-19 symptoms, however mild, whilst at a school site you should go home immediately and follow public health advice on self-isolation and testing.   * Immediately advise a contact at the school and go home – following any school specific instruction. Take care to minimise walking through the school. * wear a well-fitting [face covering](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own) made with multiple layers or a surgical face mask * avoid close contact with anyone you know who is at higher risk of becoming severely unwell if they are infected with COVID-19, especially those with a [severely weakened immune system](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-people-whose-immune-system-means-they-are-at-higher-risk) * avoid crowded places. If you need to take public transport, avoid busy times, for example by using off peak services * avoid large social gatherings and events, or anywhere that is poorly ventilated, crowded, or enclosed * limit close contact with other people outside your household as much as possible. Meet outside and try and stay at least 2 metres apart from them * take any exercise outdoors in places where you will not have contact with other people * be especially careful with your hand and respiratory hygiene * Notify your Line Manager; * Follow [national guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-people-with-covid-19-and-their-contacts/covid-19-people-with-covid-19-and-their-contacts).   **Line Manager Actions**  The Line Manager will maintain regular contact during this time and follow the HCC guidance:  [https://hertfordshire.interactgo.com/Interact/Pages/Content/Document.aspx?id=5785]( https://hertfordshire.interactgo.com/Interact/Pages/Content/Document.aspx?id=5785 )  The Line Manager’s actions will include reassuring and supporting employees.  **If a Pupil in a music lesson becomes unwell with Covid-19 symptoms**  The Music Teacher must let a member of school staff know immediately and will follow the school’s instructions. | Staff who are tested for Covid-19 to inform their line manager of a positive result.  Managers to follow process [here](https://hertfordshire.interactgo.com/Interact/Pages/Content/Document.aspx?id=5785). | All Staff  Line managers | As required following a positive result.  As required following a positive test result. |  |
| **Being able to implement personal hygiene measures** | Employees  Visitors/ Pupils  Spread of COVID-19 | **Hand hygiene**  Frequent and thorough hand cleaning should now be regular practice. You should continue to ensure that pupils clean their hands regularly. This can be done with soap and water or hand sanitiser.  **Respiratory hygiene**  The ‘catch it, bin it, kill it’ approach continues to be very important.  People are reminded not to touch their eyes, nose and mouth before washing their hands.  **Cleaning touch points**  Staff advised to put in place and maintain an appropriate cleaning schedule. This should include regular cleaning of areas and equipment (for example, twice per day), with a particular focus on frequently touched surfaces.  Cleaning guidance here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>  **Food and Drink**  Staff will be encouraged to bring their own food, drinks and water container (with a reminder not to bring allergen foods (e.g. nuts etc) to continue to minimise emergency risk.  It is recommended that face to tap water fountains **are not used**, even if available at schools. |  | All staff | Ongoing |  |
| **Minimising Contact and Maintaining Social Distancing** | Everyone  Spread of COVID-19 | **Social Distancing**  Whilst all social distancing guidance has been removed, HMS still advise to keep a minimum distance of 1m in spaces where adequate ventilation can be achieved.  **Face Coverings**  Face coverings are no longer advised for children, staff and visitors in classrooms, during indoor activities, or in communal areas.  Staff should be aware that as part of any temporary outbreak management plan, face coverings may be reintroduced for a temporary period where advised by a director of public health.  HMS will support anyone who still wishes to wear a face covering in schools or music centres.  **Bubbles**  It is no longer necessary to keep children in consistent groups (‘bubbles’). This means that bubbles will not need to be used in schools from the autumn term.  Staff should be aware that as part of any outbreak management plan, bubbles may be reintroduced for a temporary period where advised by a director of public health.  **Group Teaching and Ensembles**  As social distancing rules and the use of bubbles in schools has been removed, there are no longer any restrictions on the number of pupils that can take part in group lessons or which pupils can take part in any session. In cases of local outbreaks, some restrictions may be temporarily reintroduced as a last resort.  Consideration should be given to the number of pupils in a room with reference to the ventilation of the space, sensible distancing between pupils and ensuring pupils continue to practice good personal hygiene.  **Sharing equipment**  Any shared equipment (e.g. drumsticks, kits or piano keyboards) should be cleaned between students, using basic detergent wipes or sprays.  Any background or accompanying music should still be kept to levels so teachers and pupils are not encouraged to raise their voices unduly.  It is sensible to ask pupils to be positioned side-to-side when playing or singing and not facing each other.  Wind and brass players must be positioned so that the air from their instrument does not blow into another player. | Arrange briefing update with School(s)  Staff to keep up to date on any restrictions in each school site they work.  Staff to keep up to date on any restrictions in each school site they work.  Staff to keep up to date on any restrictions in each school site they work. | All staff | Before resuming teaching at site for first time |  |
| **Airborne transmission** | Employees  Visitors/ Pupils  Spread of COVID-19 | **Ventilation**  Ventilation guidance is [here](https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/equipment-and-machinery/air-conditioning-and-ventilation.htm). An useful video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hkK_LZeUGXM&t=149s>  When your school is in operation, it is important to ensure it is well ventilated and that a comfortable teaching environment is maintained.  Schools should identify any poorly ventilated spaces as part of their risk assessment and take steps to improve fresh air flow in these areas, giving particular consideration when holding events where visitors such as parents are on site, for example, school concerts.  HMS advice is to not teach in any room with no ventilation. Minimum ventilation should be agreed with the school as part of their site risk assessment; however a basic guide of adequate ventilation would be a room with natural ventilation (open window and/or door) or mechanical ventilation (not systems that simply recirculate the same air in the room though).  Mechanical ventilation is a system that uses a fan to draw fresh air or extract air from a room. These should be adjusted to increase the ventilation rate wherever possible and checked to confirm that normal operation meets current guidance and that only fresh outside air is circulated.  If possible, systems should be adjusted to full fresh air or, if this is not possible, then systems should be operated as normal as long as they are within a single room and supplemented by an outdoor air supply.  Where mechanical ventilation systems exist, schools should ensure that they are maintained in accordance with the manufacturers’ recommendations.  Opening external windows can improve natural ventilation, and in addition, opening internal doors can also assist with creating a throughput of air. If necessary, external opening doors may also be used (if they are not fire doors and where safe to do so).  Consideration should be given to balance the need for increased ventilation while maintaining a comfortable temperature.  **Singing**  Whilst there are no longer any restrictions on singing in schools, singing should still favour quality of sound and quieter singing which would generate fewer airborne particles. | Staff to discuss the ventilation of their teaching space with each school. | All staff | Ongoing |  |
| **Transmission of Covid-19:** **Contact Points** | Employees  Visitors/ Pupils  Spread of COVID-19 | Wash hands before and after handling any instruments.  **Cleaning touch points**  Staff advised to put in place and maintain an appropriate cleaning schedule. This should include regular cleaning of areas and equipment (for example, twice per day), with a particular focus on frequently touched surfaces.  Cleaning guidance here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>  Staff and pupils will use their own instruments in schools, with the exception of drums, percussion and keyboards. Drummers will use their own drumsticks.  Staff will wipe down their instrument, stand any other equipment using disinfectant wipes or soapy water before and after lessons. Pupils will be asked to do the same.  At the end of the session, teachers will wipe down all equipment and also the teaching room’s door handle and light switch.  Pupils will bring their own music and pencil.  Tuning pupil’s instruments - Staff should wash hands before and after handling any pupil instruments.  Pupils to have their own music, or music could be projected.  A school instrument can only be shared provided if this is agreed with the school. It must be cleaned before and after the use.  *Additional/ highlighted measures by teaching activity:*  **Face to Face Teaching**  Where possible, pupils should write in their own practice books using their own pencils and pens. However, this might not always be possible, if a teacher needs to write in a practice book they can but staff must continue to practice good hand washing.  **Ensembles**  If equipment, such as microphones are used, they should not be shared. Equipment should be cleaned before and after use and between users / groups  **First Access lessons**  Class Teachers will take any notes re pupils.  Sharing of woodwind / brass instruments should not take place, including using a different mouthpiece on the same brass instrument. However individual pupils and staff can still use their own, individual instruments.  Sets of ‘non-blown’ instruments (e.g. violin, cello, guitar, djembe etc.) can be used by another class, as long as they are cleaned appropriately before and after use, preferably by the pupil using the instrument.  Avoid sharing instruments and equipment wherever possible - name labels can be used on equipment to help identify the designated user, for example, a violin case or Djembe drum.  **Singing**  If needed, words could be projected or if issued to pupils, they must retain their own copy of any music – it could be kept in individual, named bags. | . | All staff | Ongoing |  |
| **Cleaning** | Employees/  Visitors/ Pupils | The schools will have in place a cleaning schedule will support thorough cleaning and enhanced cleaning of toilets, flushes, locks and handles, as well as other items like touchpoints.  Any concerns should be reported to the school.  Instruments, stands and any other shared equipment must be cleaned before and lessons.  HMS recommend not sharing instruments wherever possible, particularly instruments that are more difficult to clean regularly – many instruments are not designed to be cleaned regularly in the ways described below and the useable life of the instrument may be significantly impacted.  **Instrument/ equipment cleaning:** Further guidance on cleaning instruments can be found here: <https://www.ism.org/advice/instrument-hygiene-preventing-the-spread-of-covid-19-when-performing-or-teaching>  **Woodwind:**  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. Instruments or parts of instruments made entirely from plastic may be submersed.  The same applies to brass instruments but take the valves out first and set them aside. Recorders can even be cleaned in the dishwasher 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 head joints, as it will damage them, woodwind instruments should at minimum be dried in and out with swabs or pull-throughs to limit microbial growth.  **Brass:**  It is extremely important to clean the mouthpiece using an appropriately sized mouthpiece brush, to ensure that all dirt and debris are removed.  **Piano:**  Piano keyboards must be cleaned before and after each use. Plastic piano and electronic keyboards can be wiped with disinfectant wipes (unplug electronic equipment first). Do not spray them as residues may harm key mechanisms. Ideally 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 the residue on for thirty seconds and wipe with a dry cloth.  **Percussion:**  The handles and straps of percussion instruments and beaters should be wiped. Primary school percussion trolleys may not be practical for now unless all instruments and the trolley can be cleaned after each use. Instruments might be allocated to classes or set aside for 72 hours between uses to avoid cross-contamination if they local stocks, circumstances and needs allow.  **Strings/Guitar:**  For wooden instruments, follow manufacturers’ instructions or test your cleaning product on an inconspicuous surface. Chinrests, the neck and fingerboards of violins and violas should be wiped, along with the lower end of the bow.  **Music Tech:**  Knobs, buttons, sliders etc on ICT equipment, amplifiers, backlines, CD/MP3 players and so forth should be wiped with antiseptic wipes. Do not use sprays or soaked cloths, to avoid liquids getting inside equipment.  Pop screens should be used with microphones to reduce contamination.  Always unplug equipment from the mains before cleaning. |  | All staff | Ongoing |  |
| **Access/ Egress to site** | Staff / wider contacts  Public  Spread of COVID 19 | THIS SECTION SUMMARISES THE MEASURES THAT ARE LIKELY TO BE IN PLACE FOR ACCESSING AND LEAVING THE SCHOOL. THE TEACHER SHOULD ARRANGE A BRIEFING WITH ALL THE SCHOOLS THEY TEACH AT TO UNDERSTAND SITE SPECIFIC COVID-19 WAYS OF WORKING. THEY MAY HAVE BEEN REFERENCED IN EARLIER SECTIONS OF THE RISK ASSESSMENT.  On arrival at a school Staff should use sanitiser provided at the entrance to the building or if this is not possible, they must wash their hands thoroughly.  Check with the school whether a one-way system in operation in the building or there are any other requirements, such as restrictions with entering/ exiting the building.  Follow directional signage when moving round a school. |  | All staff | Ongoing |  |
| **Evacuation of the Building** | Employees/  Contractors/  Visitors/ Pupils | The Teacher should understand site specific arranges in place part of the Covid-19 Ways of Working briefing from the school(s) they teach at. |  | All staff | As required |  |
| **Staff mental health** | Staff | Line managers to maintain contact with staff working remotely during this time to monitor wellbeing and maintain team connections.  Awareness and focus on the importance of mental health at times of uncertainty. The government has published <https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/>  Regular reminders of the Employee Assistance Programme and other wider support available are provided in HMS Bulletins and Huddles by COO. | Line managers or performance managers are to perform staff 1-2-1’s and keep team in contact with each other | All Managers | Ongoing |  |
| **Staff physical health** | Staff  Upper limb disorders | Provision of computer peripherals (mice, keyboards) can be made available to staff working remotely.  Staff to put into place principles of the office set up at home, raising any specific concerns or equipment needs as part of their DSE assessment and then with their Line Manager  Staff must follow any risk assessments that apply to their role and/ or any activity they undertake. | Teacher to complete DSE and raise any concerns with their Line Manager. | Teacher | 30th September 2020 | Done |

**Guidance/ documents used:**

Schools Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/schools-covid-19-operational-guidance>

SEND school guidance: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1057037/20220223_SEND_guidance.pdf>

Out of School Settings Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protective-measures-for-holiday-or-after-school-clubs-and-other-out-of-school-settings-for-children-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/covid-19-actions-for-out-of-school-settings>

DCMS Guidance for events: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-covid-19/events-and-attractions>

HSE Ventilation Guide: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/equipment-and-machinery/air-conditioning-and-ventilation.htm>

NHS Guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-people-with-covid-19-and-their-contacts/covid-19-people-with-covid-19-and-their-contacts>

Testing advice: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing/get-tested-for-coronavirus/>

Pregnant worker guide: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-pregnant-employees/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-pregnant-employees>

CEV Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/working-safely/protect-people.htm>

HCC Manager Guide: <https://hertfordshire.interactgo.com/Interact/Pages/Content/Document.aspx?id=5785>

Cleaning guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

<https://www.ism.org/advice/instrument-hygiene-preventing-the-spread-of-covid-19-when-performing-or-teaching>

See also HMS RA – Stress in the Workplace – V1

Health and safety guidance and information is available on the intranet