

## **Guidance for special schools and specialist settings hosting Covid-secure Live Music Now sessions (Northern Ireland) September 2020 updated June 21**

Live Music Now has resumed delivery of bespoke music sessions in SEN schools, informed by government guidance and research. We have taken steps to ensure that all our musicians comply with arrangements for managing and minimising risk and are able to work with schools in adapting provision to reduce risk of infection. We can respond flexibly to individual school's protocols and provide support and advice on how music can be delivered safely to benefit your pupils.

The EA is clear that within the curriculum 'engaging activities with opportunities for collaboration, play and creativity are critically important'. (Education Restart, 24/9/20). [Music Unlocked](#) (EA, updated May 21) confirms that music activity, including delivery by visiting teachers take place provided they adhere to current public health guidance on minimising the spread of COVID-19, and that "they can teach in multiple schools and across bubbles with mitigations".

Further guidance, literature reviews and risk assessments for schools is available in [Music Unlocked](#) & from Music Mark [here](#).

### **Why music is important**

Music can play a vital role in your recovery curriculum. It can help children and young people with additional needs settle back into a positive learning environment and support their wellbeing.

Research and LMN's own experience shows that regular participation in music:

- Readies children for learning across the curriculum
- Promotes engagement, particularly for non-verbal children
- Builds children's confidence and self-esteem
- Develops listening, turn-taking and socialising skills
- Provides an outlet for self-expression and communication
- Supports children's mental health and PSHE needs

The guidance below should be read in conjunction with Live Music Now's Risk Assessment for Covid-secure Music Sessions in special schools and specialist settings.

### **Guidance for safe Live Music Now sessions**

#### **Live Music Now Concerts (length: 30 – 50 minutes)**

- ✓ Choose a large space eg a hall, which allows for good ventilation and social distancing between the musicians and the audience (at least 2 metres), and between the musicians themselves (2 metres). When appropriate, sessions could take place outside.
- ✓ We recommend no more than 16-20 pupils plus staff in a concert to account for ventilation and to aid pupil engagement dependent on size of hall. We can deliver 2 or 3 shorter concerts (30 minutes each) during our visit to reach more pupils. Concerts could be live streamed to other

classes using Teams or other digital networks, with facilitation of live comments or questions by staff.

- ✓ Many children and young people may respond spontaneously to music by moving, dancing, and vocalising. Agree measures beforehand with the musicians and staff to ensure everyone remains safe during the performance. For example:
  - Set out audience chairs / wheelchair spaces for pupils to face forward, and consider 2 metres distancing for safe singing
  - Ensure there is space available for pupils to move and dance safely, without moving into the musicians' performance area
  - Consider placing a discreet physical barrier (such as a bench) to stop pupils from approaching the performers
  - Where possible, have extra staff available to support pupils' safe participation and engagement in the concert
  
- ✓ Unlike previous LMN concerts, musicians will not move amongst the audience or give out instruments for participatory activities. Instead:
  - Schools could provide a set of hand-held percussion instruments for the audience to join in as directed by the musicians, in which case schools should plan for safe management / sanitising of percussion instruments before and after the sessions.
  - The musicians will adapt their concert programme to keep the performance as engaging as possible without moving from their "performance area".
  - The musicians will avoid encouraging singing or loud vocal call & response activities.
  - If possible, a live feed from a camera operated by a staff member could be projected on a screen to show close-ups of the instruments and musicians.

#### **Live Music Now workshop sessions for small groups including "Musicians in Residence" sessions** (length: 30 – 45 mins)

- ✓ Ensure the classroom is well ventilated (keep the door open if necessary), with space for the musicians to socially distance from the pupils and staff (2 metres) and from each other (2 metres). When appropriate, sessions could take place outside.
  
- ✓ Set up the classroom beforehand to support social distancing between musicians and pupils/staff; this should include seating pupils side-by-side and facing forwards. Staff should actively support pupils, particularly those with complex needs, to maintain social distancing from musicians.
  
- ✓ Arrange a safe space for musicians to leave their instrument cases / equipment in the classroom or elsewhere.
  
- ✓ Agree a protocol for safe management of classroom instruments including:
  - allowing time for staff to sanitise instruments before and after sessions
  - only using instruments which can be easily sanitised, particularly as some pupils may put instruments in their mouths

- don't share instruments or equipment (eg microphones) between pupils during the session
- ✓ Musicians should email a session outline beforehand to aid staff preparation; musicians should brief staff verbally (and socially distanced) before the session starts.
- ✓ Classroom staff can support pupil participation by demonstrating and leading activities with individual pupils, guided by the musicians.
- ✓ Musicians will wear face masks/visas whilst moving around the corridors of the school (and may choose to wear these during the workshops if their instrument allows)

## For schools

In order to deliver LMN sessions in a safe way your school will ....

1. Provide a full and detailed risk assessment which includes measures in relation to external visitors and support LMN musicians to complete their On-site Risk Assessment checklist.
2. Respond to [LMN's schools booking checklist](#) and support LMN musicians to complete their [On-site Risk Assessment checklist](#).
3. Provide an adequate and well-ventilated space/classroom/hall for sessions and support with the agreed set-up of the space.
4. Brief the musicians about the needs of pupils they will be working with to promote engagement and keep everyone safe during activities.
5. For "Musician(s) in Residences", allow time for musicians to brief classroom staff about session content and requirements.
6. Ensure adequate staff in sessions to support pupil participation in musical activities.
7. Provide sanitised instruments and equipment as required (discussed in advance with musicians).
8. Keep LMN 'Musician(s) in Residence' up to date with any additional measures and expectations for safe delivery of music sessions.

## For Live Music Now

In order to deliver music sessions in a safe way Live Music Now and its musicians will ...

1. Provide a full and detailed risk assessment with specific measures in place to deliver music where managing and minimising risk of infection is at the core of all provision.
2. Communicate clearly with school staff to plan and deliver safe music sessions.
3. Abide by all school control measures for safe working practices in relation to COVID-19.
4. Require musicians to do a lateral flow test within 24 hours of their visit to your school.
5. Complete an [on-site dynamic risk assessment](#) on arrival at the school.
6. Offer advice and guidance on appropriate and practical measures for safe practice.

## FAQs for schools

### Are we allowed to sing in school?

Research shows that singing does not appear to represent a significantly higher risk than routine speaking and breathing at the same volume. However, only outdoors singing is allowed at the moment (May 2021), although one-to-one singing lessons can take place indoors. *[20/5/21: Indoor singing in groups currently remains paused however 1:1 singing lessons may now resume for all pupils with appropriate mitigations in place.]*

### Is it safe for LMN musicians to perform on wind or brass instruments in our school?

Yes! Wind and brass instruments are safe to be performed in schools by following the guidance "position wind and brass players so that the air from their instrument does not blow into another players" and "Observing social distancing at all times whilst playing."

### What happens if we have to cancel our session at the last minute due to a COVID-19 related issue?

Please let us know asap so we can contact the musicians before they travel to your school. We will discuss options with you to re-arrange the concert or music session.

Guidance taken from:

Music Unlocked <https://musicservice.eani.org.uk/schools-teachers/music-unlocked-guidance-schools>

DCMS guidance on performances <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/performing-arts#arts-4-7>

Music Mark Guidance [https://www.musicmark.org.uk/resources/music-unlocked-guidance-for-schools-and-music-providers/?utm\\_source=Master+Audience+List&utm\\_campaign=8ad59a6c1b-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2020\\_02\\_26\\_11\\_44\\_COPY\\_01&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_acb48a8f0a-8ad59a6c1b-451746237&mc\\_cid=8ad59a6c1b&mc\\_eid=b50cc8bcfc](https://www.musicmark.org.uk/resources/music-unlocked-guidance-for-schools-and-music-providers/?utm_source=Master+Audience+List&utm_campaign=8ad59a6c1b-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_02_26_11_44_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_acb48a8f0a-8ad59a6c1b-451746237&mc_cid=8ad59a6c1b&mc_eid=b50cc8bcfc)

If you have any other questions, please do get in touch with us: [schools@livemusicnow.org.uk](mailto:schools@livemusicnow.org.uk)

24.9.20 Updated 30.6.21

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With thanks to Resonate, the music education hub for Liverpool; Paul Exton-McGuinness; and Music Mark.