

## COVID-19: Return to educational establishments

### Dance Guidelines

Version 3.0

Published 2 November 2020

Version	Date	Summary of changes
V 1.0	21/09/20	First version of the document.
V 2.0	30/10/20	Updates for clarity.
V 3.0	02/11/20	Various updates in line with Coronavirus (COVID-19): Guidance on reducing the risks from COVID-19 in schools document (30 October 2020). The revised text is highlighted in yellow

### Contents

1. Overview and purpose .....	1
2. How to use these guidelines .....	2
3. Key Messages from the COVID-19 Sub-advisory Group.....	2
4. Practical Considerations.....	3
5. Risk assessment.....	8
6. Physical Activity and Expressive Arts.....	8
7. Conclusion .....	8

### 1. Overview and purpose

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Guidance on preparing for the start of the new school term in August 2020](#), Para 136 states: ‘Practical, “hands-on” learning and activities, experiments and investigations are an important part of the curriculum across all subject areas’. This document focusses on the practical, experiential nature of learning in, through and about dance. Dance provides a critical learning opportunity for children and young people as they re-connect and adapt to the new learning environments in schools. The practical and interactive nature of the subject will lend itself well to supporting nurturing conversations with learners following the period of

school closure. This document will assist teachers and school leaders with risk assessment and decision making, leading to the provision of learning through dance in a safe and carefully considered way.

## 2. How to use these guidelines

This document reflects the latest scientific evidence and advice, and aims to minimise transmission of the virus. A risk-benefit approach to decision making can be helpful while understanding that no risk can be reduced to zero.

This document is designed to promote a consistent and equitable approach against the context of the current pandemic. Local authorities and schools will understand best how these guidelines can be applied in their settings. They should do so in a way that prioritises the health, safety and wellbeing of all children, young people and staff, and ensure that the risk mitigation measures set out in this document are implemented effectively. It has been written to stimulate conversations on how dance can be safely and effectively delivered.

## 3. Key Messages from the COVID-19 Sub-advisory Group<sup>1</sup>

Considering the changed position on infection and transmission rates, the evidence and experience of school re-opening between August and October 2020, and recent scientific evidence, the sub-group has concluded that its advice on indoor physical activity should remain broadly in line with advice in the community going forwards, in order to ensure consistency and better support compliance.

From 2 November 2020, if staff complete risk assessments that reflect the most current advice (all risk assessments should be proportionate to the relevant protection level of the local area), and mitigations are in place, dance can take place both indoors and outdoors as follows:

### Levels 0-3

	Indoors	Outdoors
Primary	Children can participate in contact and non-contact activities.	Children can participate in contact and non-contact activities.

---

<sup>1</sup> This advice is current on this date. The advice is reviewed periodically and may change as evidence is published and more about the virus is understood.

	<b>Indoors</b>	<b>Outdoors</b>
<b>Secondary</b>	Young people can participate in contact and non-contact activities.	Young people can participate in contact and non-contact activities.

**Level 4 – Children and young people within school settings can only participate in activities that are non-contact and outdoors.**

All dance practitioners, including external and private providers working within schools, and individuals and organisations working with children and young people outwith schools, should follow these guidelines.

#### 4. Practical Considerations

<b>1</b>	<p><b>Minimising contact between individuals and groups</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a precautionary approach schools should encourage physical distancing where possible between adults, and between children and young people, particularly in the senior phase.</li> <li>• There should be an enhanced focus on activities that do not involve close physical contact. This will contribute to further lowering of any risk involved.</li> <li>• During contact activities, physical distancing does not need to be maintained, but should be applied at all other times.</li> <li>• Schools should ensure young people wear face coverings, if indoors, before and after activity, or when in non-participating areas of the dance spaces, for example, changing-rooms. There is a legislative exemption for exercise in respect to wearing a face covering. This is consistent with the advice from WHO.<sup>2</sup></li> <li>• Where possible, efforts should be made to keep children and young people within the same groups.</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Changing Rooms</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changing rooms are an area of increased risk of transmission and should be avoided where possible.</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/myth-busters#exercising>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consideration should be given to the needs of children and young people who require additional support.</li> <li>• When considering the use of changing rooms, schools should ensure that they implement pragmatic and proportionate control measures which reduce risk to the lowest reasonably practical level. They should have active arrangements in place to monitor that the controls are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ effective;</li> <li>○ working as planned;</li> <li>○ updated appropriately considering any issues identified and changes in public health advice.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Following a risk assessment, if the use of changing rooms is considered necessary, schools should ensure mitigating actions are in place. This includes ensuring that changing rooms are as well ventilated as possible, used only by small numbers at any point in time to maximise physical distancing, and that close attention is paid to cleaning surfaces after use.</li> <li>• If changing rooms are not used: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ consideration should be given to alternative places for storing learners' belongings, for example, assigning each learner their own space;</li> <li>○ young people should be encouraged to arrive at school in their dance attire on days when dance lessons will take place and, where possible, wait until they get home to change.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>Equipment &amp; the Theatre Arts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities where there is no sharing of equipment are safer than those that do, therefore activities that minimise the use of equipment should be delivered.</li> <li>• There should be no sharing of costume, or hair &amp; make-up products.</li> <li>• If any equipment has been shared as part of the activity, this should be carefully sanitised before next use/between each lesson.</li> <li>• Learners should wash their hands before and after touching shared equipment such as, mats, props, set, lighting desk, sound desk and other music equipment.</li> <li>• Consider keeping extra equipment on hand so that teaching time is not lost to re-clean equipment.</li> <li>• One person should take responsibility for controlling the music during the lesson, rather than multiple people.</li> </ul>

4

## Hygiene measures

- Senior leaders should ensure that spaces being used for dance activity are linked to the enhanced cleaning programme across the school.
- Commonly touched objects: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Guidance on reducing the risks from COVID-19 in schools](#) Para 33 states: 'Local authorities and schools should ensure that an enhanced environmental cleaning regime is in place. The regime put in place should be in line with Health Protection Scotland Guidance for Non-Healthcare Settings'.  
This specifies in particular: 'Ensuring regular (at least twice daily) cleaning of commonly touched objects and surfaces (for example, desks, handles, dining tables, shared technology surfaces etc)'.
- Use of areas/facilities by shared groups:  
Para 34 states; 'There should also be more frequent cleaning of rooms/areas that must be used by different groups...(for example, classrooms, toilet blocks, changing rooms and staff areas)'.
- Para 35 states; 'Movement of children, young people and staff between classrooms should be minimised wherever possible. Where this cannot be avoided, the provision of appropriate cleaning supplies to enable them to wipe down their own desk/chair/surfaces before leaving and, especially, on entering the room should be considered as part of overall hygiene strategies for secondary schools'.
- Equipment:  
Para 36 states: 'Careful consideration should be given to the cleaning regime for specialist equipment (for example, in practical subjects or for children with additional support needs), sensory rooms, practical subjects with specialist equipment... etc. to ensure safe use'.
- Personal Hygiene:
  - Hand-washing facilities or hand sanitiser stations should be available and easily accessible at entry/exit points, when children and young people move between groups and when entering or leaving a facility.
  - Hands should be washed and dried thoroughly or sanitised before and after the activity.
  - There should be no sharing of water bottles.
  - Trainers or dance shoes should be worn at all times. In situations where dancers may be asked to rehearse or perform in bare feet or foot thongs for a specific dance style, like contemporary, it is advised

	<p>that dancers wear dance shoes for the majority of rehearsals and only switch to bare feet or foot thongs closer to practical assessments.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p><b>The Dance Space</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dance can take place indoors in well-ventilated spaces such as assembly halls, games halls, gym halls, dance studios and general purpose areas around the school.</li> <li>• Consideration should be given to ventilation in all indoor spaces. Staff should liaise with senior leaders and follow local/school guidelines.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): Guidance on reducing the risks from COVID-19 in schools</a> Para 50 – 54.</li> <li>• Introduce ‘home spaces’: a space allocated to each learner, physically distanced from others, while also having enough room to move around, where they go to at the beginning of every lesson and where they will do their warm-up.</li> <li>• The teacher should have an assigned area for teaching choreography, to ensure they are able to maintain a 2 m distance from learners. This should be clearly marked. Staff should wear a face covering out with this designated area when interacting with young people or supporting practical tasks. <a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): Guidance on reducing the risks from COVID-19 in schools</a> Para 92: where adults cannot keep 2 m distance and are interacting face-to-face with other adults and/or children and young people, face coverings should be worn at all times. This applies to all staff including support staff and classroom assistants.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): Guidance on reducing the risks from COVID-19 in schools</a> Para 183: Every child and young person will have different levels of required support. It will be important as part of the risk assessments carried out to consider the individual needs of a child or young person. Where there is a need to work in close proximity with adults and children and young people the safety measures to protect adults and children and young people alike should be followed. Staff should wear a face covering or PPE (where appropriate), and regularly wash their hands before and after contact. <a href="#">Guidance on supporting children and young people with additional support needs</a> is published by the Scottish Government.</li> <li>• Areas should be marked out within the dance space for group work. Each area should be big enough so that each group is able to move within their area easily. Groups should be limited to a maximum of four dancers plus one choreographer.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider using physical and visual aids to define space and modify layouts, for example, tape or chalk on required surfaces/walls.</li> </ul>
6	<p><b>Learning, Teaching &amp; Assessment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During dance activity, solo dancing should be conducted within ‘home spaces’.</li> <li>• Group choreography, or working in teams, should be limited to a maximum of four dancers plus one choreographer.</li> <li>• For group choreography, learners should stay within the area they have been allocated and should not cross into another group’s area.</li> <li>• Where possible, learners should face either the same direction or away from each other, to mitigate the risk of breathing on each other.</li> <li>• Teacher demonstrations/explanations could be done from an assigned area to ensure they stay an appropriate distance from learners.</li> <li>• While rehearsing and performing choreographic devices involving contact, physical distancing does not need to be maintained. However, a focus on activities that do not involve close physical contact will contribute to further lowering of any risk involved.</li> <li>• Instructions should be given to choreographers that remind them to avoid shouting or speaking to their dancers with a loud volume over music, as shouting or speaking loudly is a higher risk activity.</li> <li>• All learners should be encouraged to use a quiet volume or normal voice. As a result, music might need to be adjusted to play at a quieter volume.</li> <li>• Where the remainder of a class form an audience to watch a group perform, they should also physically distance from each other.</li> <li>• In-class performances, including solo dance technique rehearsals, duet or group choreography rehearsals, and rehearsals utilising theatre arts at Higher, should continue to be recorded as part of normal learning and as part of a virtual portfolio. This can provide support for the development of dance skills and provide latest and best evidence of the level achieved by a learner.</li> <li>• Establish and clearly communicate the rules involving the dance space and designated areas within it.</li> <li>• Use learner voice to reflect on how well protocols are being followed and how practice can be improved.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Careful consideration should be given to the selection of appropriate activities for indoors and outdoors taking into account local circumstances.</li></ul>
--	--

## 5. Risk assessment

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Guidance on reducing the risks from COVID-19 in schools includes information on risk assessment.](#)

It is a legal requirement that local authorities and head teachers ensure that risk assessments are conducted or updated to reflect the revised planning assumption of a full return to school. All risk assessments should be reviewed regularly as circumstances change to ensure that the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and adults is not compromised.

## 6. Physical Activity and Expressive Arts

Physical activity and expressive arts bring many benefits to children and young people – including for health and wellbeing; social, physical and cognitive development; creativity, communication, team working, and discipline. These activities are also important routes to equity and inclusion, and are the basis of further education and employment for many. For all these reasons, it is important to find safe ways of undertaking some form of these activities within dance wherever possible, until they can be recommenced safely in full.

### **The provision of activities or clubs outside the usual school timetable**

Please note for Level 4, the following mitigation:

**Suspension of activities or clubs outside the usual school timetable.**

## 7. Conclusion

Changes in incidence of COVID-19, and the potential impact on the practical, experiential learning in dance will be kept under review and updated when necessary. Local authorities and schools will also need to be able to adapt to local issues, for example, outbreaks or local increases in cases of COVID-19, and follow any locally-determined advice and guidance.

**Dance is now permitted both indoors and outdoors, with appropriate mitigating actions outlined in this document to ensure the safety of all children, young people and staff.**

**External and private providers working within schools should follow these guidelines.**



Individuals and organisations working with children and young people outwith schools should consider the relevant Scottish Government guidance available through the links below.

Safer workplaces guidance can be found on our returning to work safely webpage: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-returning-to-work/pages/employers/>

In particular, providers are encouraged to follow the relevant links below:

- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Guidance on reducing the risks from COVID-19 in schools](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-reducing-the-risks-from-covid-19-in-schools/)
- The Coronavirus ( COVID -19 ) guidance for sport and leisure: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-sport-and-leisure-facilities/>
- The Coronavirus (COVID-19): general guidance for safer workplaces: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-general-guidance-for-safer-workplaces/>;
- the Coronavirus (COVID-19): small and micro businesses guidance: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-small-and-micro-businesses-guidance/>;
- the Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance for the performing arts and venues sector: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-the-performing-arts-and-venues-sector/>;
- Where children are being taught, the Coronavirus (COVID-19): organised activities for children provisional guidance: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-organised-activities-for-children/>

These sets of guidance will be updated in response to changing circumstances and scientific advice and providers are advised to check the guidance regularly.