

Singing Safely In Your School



When you consider how valuable an asset music and singing are in their contribution to positive mental health, building school communities and physical health and wellbeing of children, finding a way to recreate and maintain a musical life for pupils in school will help them to recover some sense of normality and overall well being. We have collated information from DfE and DCMS to help give you a clearer picture about singing in schools. We hope that this guidance will enable you to feel confident about singing with your classes in school.

Research carried out by the DCMS has allowed the government to reconsider previous guidance and allow singing to restart in schools and community groups. This has come as very welcome news for those of us who have been anxiously awaiting concrete evidence of the nature of the risks associated with singing since early on in the pandemic and now allows us to sustain a musical life for children in school whilst taking appropriate account of risks specific to singing.

Whilst risk cannot be eliminated, there is no unique case against class singing provided the risk is properly understood and adequately managed. It is important to get the risk into perspective alongside the other risks that schools are already well-prepared to manage.

Most risks associated with singing are equally risks that can be found in a maths lesson or a staff meeting.

Here are some important points to consider to enable safe and successful singing in your classroom:

- There is no longer a limit on the number of singers, singing in a class of 30 with adequate space is perfectly ok.
- Ensure that you are using a space which allows for social distancing. A large classroom is great, the hall is even better.
- Make sure there is good ventilation. Open all the windows and doors during and after singing. Schedule your singing session just before a break so the room can be well ventilated afterwards.
- Make sure your singers are all facing the front of the room. This directs the airflow away from other singers.
- Limit singing sessions to 30 minutes.
- Music, lyrics and resources should be displayed on the whiteboard where possible, rather than having physical copies.
- Keep the volume low - we always encourage softer, natural singing to protect young voices. This also produces a smaller airflow the same as speaking vs shouting. Avoid whispering as this is a more concentrated airflow.
- If working with a partner, ensure that hands are washed both before and after the activity.
- As a singing leader, make sure there is at least 2m between you and your singers.

These points have been taken from DfE and DCMS guidance. Further reading can be found here:

[Governments Performing Arts guidelines for schools](#)

[Children and School Singing During the COVID-19 Pandemic paper by Professor Martin Ashley](#)

[Music Mark - Back to School. Back to Singing](#)

[ABCD - Revised guidelines to allow non-possession singing](#)

We are always here to support you to give the best music education to every child in our city. If you have any questions or just want to chat through your ideas please get in touch with your music leader.