

Stage One – Guidance for the Safe Return to Rehearsals

Updated 5 April 2021, in accordance with the following guidance:

- DfE – [Protective measures for out-of-school settings during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#) [updated 26 March 2021]
- National Youth Agency – [Managing youth sector activities and spaces during COVID-19](#) [March 2021, Version 5.1]

About this guidance

Stage One Youth Theatre is an out-of-school provision for children and young people, and we follow the protective measures set out by Government guidance and the National Youth Agency (NYT). The NYT is the Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body for youth work in England and has, in consultation with Public Health England and the Health and Safety Executive, developed youth sector specific advice and guidance.

The following guidance sets out the practical steps Stage One will take to minimise the risk to members, staff and volunteers who attend rehearsals by reducing the risk of infection and transmission of the virus.

Who is this guidance for?

This guidance is for Stage One staff, volunteers, parents and members.

Risk Assessment

Stage One has conducted a risk assessment in line with the [Health and Safety Executive guidance](#), identifying protective measures. In doing so, we have consulted with Mayfield School to ensure our practices are consistent with the school's approach. A copy of the Risk Assessment is available for all staff, volunteers, parents and members.

Stage One Groups

To reduce the risk of transmission Stage One members will be placed into small groups of no more than 15 children, with the same children each time wherever possible (we will not mix groups unless absolutely necessary) and at least one staff member. As far as it is possible, groups will not mix whilst in the rehearsal venue.

Parents and members will be notified of group allocations. Where possible, these will take into account members from the same household, existing school bubbles and lift-share arrangements. However, there may be practical reasons why individuals are allocated to a particular group.

Each group will be given a specific arrival and departure window, this will ensure that entry and exit areas and corridors do not become congested. Drop-off and collection points will be at the specified entry/exit point – parents should not enter the school unless this has been arranged in advance.

Multiple groups of 15 plus staff can use the same shared space, if that is necessary, with distancing between the groups. Where this is the case the other protective measures within this guidance will be even more important to minimise the risk of infection and transmission of the virus.

Stage One will keep a written or electronic list of the children in each group for at least 21 days for Test and Trace purposes.

Effective infection protection and control

Stage One has effective infection protection and control measures in place to reduce the risk of transmission. The controls are grouped into 'prevention' and 'response' that creates an inherently safer system, where the risk of transmission of infection is substantially reduced.

Prevention

- 1) minimising contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does or have had a positive test and/or have been advised by NHS Test and Trace to self-isolate, do not attend rehearsals;
- 2) Ensuring face coverings are used in recommended circumstances.
- 3) cleaning hands more often than usual - wash hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with running water and soap and dry them thoroughly or use alcohol hand rub or sanitiser ensuring that all parts of the hands are covered;
- 4) ensuring good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach;
- 5) cleaning frequently touched surfaces more often than usual using standard products, such as detergents and bleach;
- 6) minimising contact and mixing by altering, as much as possible, the environment (such as layout) and timetables (such as staggering start and finish times to ensure areas do not become overcrowded);
- 7) where necessary, wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), such as First Aid;
- 8) where possible all spaces will be well ventilated using natural ventilation (opening windows and doors) or fans.
- 9) promote and engage in asymptomatic testing, where available.

Response to any infection

- 10) engage with the NHS Test and Trace process;
- 11) manage and report confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the Stage One community;
- 12) contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice.

Music, dance and drama provision

Stage One will ensure the following measures are put in place:

- Social distancing is observed at all times during rehearsals (2 metres, wherever possible, or 1 metre with robust risk mitigation where 2 metres is not viable);
- Back-to-back or side-to-side positioning (rather than face-to-face) is used whenever possible;
- Activities which can create aerosol (such as shouting or singing loudly) are either discouraged or strictly controlled;

- Limit the number of children attending to account for ventilation of the space and the ability to social distance, ensuring that children attending are in small groups of no more than 15, with the same children each time wherever possible and at least one staff member;
- Take steps to improve ventilation as far as possible and whenever possible, either through the use of fans and/or opening windows and doors;
- Continue to take the other vital steps outlined in this guidance, including preventing unwell people from attending, maintaining cleanliness, supporting contact tracing and other mitigating measures.

By considering and adopting these cumulative risk mitigation measures, the overall risk will be reduced.

Managing toilet usage

Where possible, there will be a limit of one child within the toilet area at any one time. Good hand hygiene remains the norm.

Clinically vulnerable

Clinically vulnerable staff and members can attend rehearsals. They should follow the measures in this document in conjunction with any measures that have been detailed in relation to their status or condition. As for all people, this includes continuing to observe good hand and respiratory hygiene, minimising contact and maintaining social distancing in line with the latest [Government guidance](#).

Face coverings

Face coverings must be worn by adults and children when moving around the premises, outside of rehearsal rooms, such as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing cannot easily be maintained. Notwithstanding national guidance, Mayfield School may require additional face coverings measures, which we will adhere to.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

The majority of staff will not require PPE. PPE is only needed in a very small number of cases:

- First Aid treatment;
- PPE should be worn if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained from any child, young person or staff displaying coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms.

Test and trace

The NHS Test and Trace service will help to manage the risk of the virus re-emerging as restrictions on everyday life are eased, as far as it is deemed safe to do so. Stage One will play its part by:

- making rehearsals as safe as possible for staff, children and parents;
- promoting the need to get tested if anyone is symptomatic;
- promoting and engaging in asymptomatic testing, where available;
- supporting staff and members when in isolation;

- keeping records of which children and staff are in which groups and saving this information securely for at least 21 days;

Displays of Coronavirus symptoms

If anyone becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), parents will be contacted to collect their child and will be advised to follow the [COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection guidance](#).

If a child is awaiting collection indoors, they will be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door with appropriate adult supervision. Ideally, a window should be opened for ventilation. In the unlikely event it is not possible to isolate them, the child will be moved to an area which is at least 2 metres away from other people.

PPE will be worn by staff caring for the child while they await collection if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained.

If a member of staff has helped a child with symptoms, they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves (and in which case, they should be tested) or the child subsequently tests positive. They should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell. Cleaning the affected area of the setting with normal household disinfectant after someone with symptoms has left will reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.

What happens if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19)

When a child, young person or staff member develops symptoms compatible with coronavirus (COVID-19), they will be sent home and advised to follow guidance on self-isolation ([NHS - when to self-isolate and what to do](#)). The child, young person or staff member with symptoms should arrange to have a test to see if they have coronavirus (COVID-19). They can do this by visiting [NHS.UK](#) to arrange or contact NHS 119 by telephone if they do not have internet access.

Where the child, young person or staff member tests negative, they can return to rehearsals. If they remain unwell, they should not return until they are recovered.

Where a child, young person or staff member tests positive, NHS Test and Trace will speak directly to those they have been in contact with to offer advice. This advice may be that the rest of their group within Stage One should be advised to self-isolate. To support NHS Test and Trace in reaching close contacts, Stage One will keep a record of:

- children and staff in specific groups/rooms
- close contact that takes places between children and staff in different groups/rooms and
- the timing of the activities and interactions

This will be a proportionate recording process but detailed enough to support the Test and Trace process and records need to be kept for at least 21 days.