

## Guidance for Languages Teachers August 2020

This is for Language Teachers who are in schools in England, this does not include private tutors. Towards the end of this briefing, on P3 and 4 there is guidance for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

**This document is based on guidance at the time of writing. Please always check the latest guidance from the Government that may apply Nationally or Regionally.**

On June 23<sup>rd</sup> 2020 the Prime Minister [announced](#) that primary and secondary education will recommence in September and full attendance is expected where schools will provide a full educational experience for children and young people that enables pupils to thrive and progress. Guidance for schools was published [here](#).

Although Ofqual are analysing the feedback given from their recent consultation on proposed changes to the assessment of GCSEs, AS and A levels in 2021 there has not been specific guidance given for the languages classroom and the teaching of modern foreign languages and languages provision in schools.

There has been some guidance with reference to the teaching of music:

*Schools should note that there may be an additional risk of infection in environments where you or others are singing, chanting, playing wind or brass instruments or shouting. This applies even if individuals are at a distance. Schools should consider how to reduce the risk, particularly when pupils are playing instruments or singing in small groups such as in music lessons by, for example, physical distancing and playing outside wherever possible, limiting group sizes to no more than 15, positioning pupils back-to-back or side-to-side, avoiding sharing of instruments, and ensuring good ventilation. Singing, wind and brass playing should not take place in larger groups such as school choirs and ensembles, or school assemblies. Further more detailed DfE guidance will be published shortly.<sup>1</sup>*

Although not specific to the MFL classroom this is certainly to be considered for language teachers specifically:

*there may be an additional risk of infection in environments where you or others are singing, chanting... or shouting. This applies even if individuals are at a distance. Schools should consider how to reduce the risk... Singing should not take place in larger groups...<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Guidance for full opening: schools <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

<sup>2</sup> Guidance for full opening: schools <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

There are other areas which will be of use to language teachers:

**Guidance specific to resources:**

Minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distancing wherever possible. Measures in the classroom and other considerations.

*Equipment and resources are integral to education in schools. During the summer term, their use was minimised, many were moved out of classrooms, and there was significant extra cleaning. That position has now changed for the autumn term, because prevalence of coronavirus (COVID-19) has decreased and because they are so important for the delivery of education. For individual and very frequently used equipment, such as pencils and pens, it is recommended that staff and pupils have their own items that are not shared. Classroom based resources, such as books and games, can be used and shared within the bubble; these should be cleaned regularly, along with all frequently touched surfaces. Resources that are shared between classes or bubbles, such as sports, art and science equipment should be cleaned frequently and meticulously and always between bubbles, or rotated to allow them to be left unused and out of reach for a period of 48 hours (72 hours for plastics) between use by different bubbles.<sup>3</sup>*

**Guidance specific to student's own resources and equipment:**

*It is still recommended that pupils limit the amount of equipment they bring into school each day, to essentials such as lunch boxes, hats, coats, books, stationery and mobile phones. Bags are allowed. Pupils and teachers can take books and other shared resources home, although unnecessary sharing should be avoided, especially where this does not contribute to pupil education and development. Similar rules on hand cleaning, cleaning of the resources and rotation should apply to these resources.<sup>4</sup>*

**Guidance specific to Educational visits**

*We continue to advise against domestic (UK) overnight and overseas educational visits at this stage see [coronavirus: travel guidance for educational settings](#). In the autumn term, schools can resume non-overnight domestic educational visits. These trips should include any trips for pupils with SEND connected with their preparation for adulthood (for example, workplace visits, travel training etc.). This should be done in line with protective measures, such as keeping children within their consistent group, and the COVID-secure measures in place at the destination. Schools should also make use of outdoor spaces in the local area to support delivery of the curriculum. As normal, schools should undertake full and thorough risk assessments in relation to all educational visits to ensure they can be done safely. As part of this risk assessment, schools will need to consider what control measures need to be used and ensure they are aware of wider advice on visiting*

<sup>3</sup> Guidance for full opening: schools <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

<sup>4</sup> Guidance for full opening: schools <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

indoor and outdoor venues. Schools should consult the [health and safety guidance on educational visits](#) when considering visits.<sup>5</sup>

### **Guidance on Extra-curricular provision and clubs.**

*Schools should consider resuming any breakfast and after-school provision, where possible, from the start of the autumn term. We recognise that schools may need to respond flexibly and build this up over time. Such provision will help ensure pupils have opportunities to re-engage with their peers and with the school, ensure vulnerable children have a healthy breakfast and are ready to focus on their lessons, provide enrichment activities, and also support working parents.*

*We recognise that this will be logistically challenging for schools, particularly for clubs that would normally offer support across year groups, where parents are using multiple providers, or where childminders are picking up/dropping off pupils. Schools should carefully consider how they can make such provision work alongside their wider protective measures, including keeping children within their year groups or bubbles where possible. If it is not possible to maintain bubbles being used during the school day then schools should use small, consistent groups.<sup>6</sup>*

### **Guidance on Early Entry GCSEs**

*Schools are expected to review any plans for early entry among year 10 pupils in summer 2021. It may be in the best interests of the pupil to take their exams and assessments the following year when they are in year 11, if the curriculum can be adjusted to provide further teaching and study time in the summer term and academic year 2021 to 2022.<sup>7</sup>*

## **Northern Ireland**

The start of term for primary 7, year 12 and year 14 pupils and for vulnerable children across all year groups will be on August 24 2020. Schools will be opening from the week commencing 17 August 2020 for preparation purposes. All other pupils will return at normal start dates, which may vary depending on school.

Schools are advised to ensure social distancing of 2 metres for adults/adults and the pupils they are working with and 1m between pupils and, where possible, further mitigate that by

<sup>5</sup> Guidance for full opening: schools <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

<sup>6</sup> Guidance for full opening: schools <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

<sup>7</sup> Guidance for full opening: schools <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

use of protective bubbles. This applies to all year groups within a school setting, including pupils in years 11-14.

See the Northern Ireland Department of Education [latest updates](#) and a set of [frequently asked questions](#) about the Northern Ireland schools restart programme.

## Scotland

On 24 June First Minister Nicola Sturgeon announced key dates for a phased move out of lockdown across Scotland. All dates are subject to review, and are dependent on continued suppression of coronavirus in Scotland.

The social distancing minimum of 2 metres will remain in force in Scotland.

The Scottish Deputy First Minister announced on 23 June that school pupils will return to class full-time in August. This is conditional on infection rates being sufficiently low to continue to control the virus, public health and testing systems being in place, and protective measures and risk assessments being carried out in schools.

The 'blended' learning model will now only be implemented as a contingency measure in case of future restrictions and lockdowns in the event of new or regional outbreaks of coronavirus.

See the Scottish government's [non-statutory guidance](#) for local authorities and schools in their planning for a safe, phased opening in August 2020.

## Wales

[Schools in Wales](#) re-opened to some pupils to 'check in, catch up and prepare' for summer and September' from 29 June, as part of the next phase of education and childcare in Wales.

Welsh government [guidance](#) for primary schools states 'that it is not practicable to expect learners to maintain consistent social distancing of two metres. Staff should however seek to ensure some distancing between learners.'

For secondary school social distancing is required '...wherever possible, schools and (educational) settings should seek to ensure social distancing of two metres.'

See the Welsh government's [latest guidance on schools reopening](#).

If you have any questions or would like to make any comments please do get in touch by email [info@all-languages.org.uk](mailto:info@all-languages.org.uk)

Website links:

Prime Minister's statement to the house on Covid-19: 23 June 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/prime-ministers-statement-to-the-house-on-covid-19-23-june-2020>

Guidance for full opening: schools <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

This document has been created using specific guidance issued to Music teachers by the Incorporated Society of Musicians but has been updated and reworded in accordance with updated Government Guidance to ensure it supports language teachers. The original article can be viewed here: <https://www.ism.org/advice/easing-of-lockdown-schools-reopening> and here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>