



Dance Live! 2022 – COVID-19 Safe and Secure

As a charity and arts venue, we are aware of the effect COVID-19 has had on the creative industries and participatory performing arts, however we are absolutely committed to offer young people with the opportunity to be creative and perform, at a time when creative expression is needed more than ever.

Dance Live! COVID-19 Safe Rehearsal Advice

The Dance Live! Team is committed to bringing you a safe, organized dance event for schools. We view this situation as an opportunity to expand our vision to bring the excitement of dance and creativity to everyone, no matter the circumstance.

Dance has many benefits including the following:

- Dance improves physical fitness and wellbeing
- Dance helps to develop problem-solving skills and creativity
- Dance aids cognitive and social skills
- Dance facilitates teamwork and independence
- Dance helps with self-confidence, self-esteem, and mental health

<https://www.communitydance.org.uk/creative-programmes/health-and-wellbeing#case>

The COVID-19 Lockdown has led to large reduction in physical activity for many children and young people across the country and has increased mental health and general wellbeing issues, particularly for those in under-privileged areas. It is now more important than ever to get children and young people engaged with creative and physical activities and Dance Live! is here to help.

We understand that the way we teach has changed. While we figure out the 'new normal', here is some advice to help your Dance Live! teaching and creating this year. Under current Government Guidelines, rehearsals can take place in person with students and details regarding this can be found in the below document. This document can also be used as a P.E. and Performing Arts lesson resource. This information has been sourced from the One Dance UK 'Returning to Dance' resources: <https://www.onedanceuk.org/return-to-dance/>. As the Subject Association for Dance, we highly recommend that you access the One Dance UK resources as well as this document. This document will be updated regularly as government guidelines change and new advice is offered.



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1. Advice for Rehearsing with Students in Person

a) **Preparing the Space:**

Before beginning rehearsals, we advise that you have a risk assessment prepared which follows your individual school's guidance and the above government guidance.

If your school is using social distancing measures, consider marking out squares across your space using tape or cones etc to aid students' distance perception. For students with additional needs, consider the size, colour contrast and positioning of your markings.

Doors and windows should be open where possible to increase ventilation, but be aware that the room shouldn't be cold as this increases the risk of injury. If your rehearsal space only has a fire door and no windows, ask permission from your school's fire safety officer if you require this to be opened during rehearsals.

Be prepared to clean your rehearsal space floor before (if it has not already been cleaned) and after your rehearsal. If your students are dancing in bare feet or you are teaching floor-work, this will increase contact with the floor. By cleaning the floor before and after your rehearsal, you will reduce the risk of transmitting COVID-19 to your students and those using the space after your rehearsal, from increased contact with the floor surface.

b) **Preparing Your Students:**

Communicate your plans (e.g. hand washing, social distancing, rehearsal structure etc) for rehearsals as much as possible with your students so that they feel comfortable and confident when they are in the space.

Encourage hand washing as much as possible, both before and after class.

Face masks: while it is possible to dance wearing a face mask, please follow the 'Actions for Schools' guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>) and your individual school's guidance regarding face masks.

Consider if you would like your students to rehearse in bare feet or shoes. If they rehearse in bare feet, make sure they have a bag or safe space to store shoes and ensure they wash their hands immediately after shoes are removed and stored. If your students are rehearsing in shoes, make sure that they are appropriate to dance in, are not likely to increase risk of slipping on the floor, and are different to their usual school shoe attire to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Consider asking students to have one pair of shoes for P.E. and another separate pair of shoes for Dance, however it is at your discretion whether you think this is a viable option for your students. When changing from school shoes to rehearsal shoes, ensure students wash their hands.

Advise your students and their parents/guardians around storing and washing sweaty rehearsal clothes. Make sure students have a sealable bag to store their clothes post-rehearsal if they are changing out of rehearsal clothes on-site and advise that any damp, sweaty clothing is washed as soon as possible to prevent the spread of bacteria.



c) Preparing Your Sessions:

You may have students who are 'vulnerable' and are not shielding, who would prefer shorter sessions to limit their contact with others. Be aware of this and try and plan the lengths of your sessions around this. Assess this with your students and try to keep your session plans flexible.

If you are planning to rehearse with your students outside to enable social distancing, make sure yourself and your students are wearing protective shoes and clothing. It is also important to be aware of the floor (e.g. concrete will be hard, grass may be slippery etc) and to avoid movement such as floor-work, jumping and lifting for safety purposes.

Teaching in bubbles: Schools can perform in bubbles. Bubbles will be able to be kept separate in your school's dressing room and on the way to and from the stage. The dance Live! Team can put a 'one side on, one side off' policy for the stage if required. If your school creates a section per bubble within your routine, all bubbles would be able to take part as long as they exited the dance on the correct side of the stage.

When teaching in bubbles, your students should be fixed groups – try to keep students in bubbles with the students in their curricular class/year group where possible. If this is not possible, make sure that the bubble is fixed. If any student is displaying symptoms of COVID-19, their bubble (including yourself as the teacher), and any other bubbles they are a part of, should follow Government and school rules regarding isolating and PCR and Lateral Flow Testing. When thinking about lesson plans for bubbles, consider giving different bubbles different sets of choreography that could eventually put together to make a whole routine. If you have choreography that you would like your whole group to learn, consider teaching this online (please see the Advice for Rehearsing With Students Online, page 5).

Teaching in bubbles is also a great way to develop each bubble's movement individuality. You could allow each bubble to create their own movement style and choreography which contrasts with another bubble. This could then be brought together with a movement phrase that the whole group learns. The possibilities are endless!

Try to teach facing away from the students where possible (this is possible with and without a mirror depending on your choreography) and take into consideration which direction your students are facing. If students are facing the same direction during a movement exercise (e.g. all facing the front of the room), this will reduce the risk of respiratory droplets being passed from face to face. Similarly, if you teach by facing away from the group, any respiratory droplets produced by speaking will be directed away from the students. This isn't a possible task throughout a whole session, but adhering to this advice where you can will still reduce any risk.

Try to play music at a quieter level to reduce yours and your students' need to shout. This will also reduce the risk of respiratory droplets being spread through the space.

You may wish to avoid teaching contact-work if COVID-19 is prevalent in your school. Instead, try focusing on dance technique, performance skills and socially distanced choreography. Whether or not you use contact-work in your choreography should be at your individual school's discretion.

Travelling around the room: although we advise that you mark out squares to aid students with social distancing (if your school is enforcing distancing measures), students are able to move around the room provided they are still social distancing. If you are teaching a movement phrase that travels across the room, consider how to ensure that students stay



out of each other's slipstreams. For example, this could be through two students travelling from the right corner and the next two students travelling from the left corner and so on or by increasing the amount of time between each student's turn etc.

Floor-work: floor-work does increase the amount each body has contact with the floor. Therefore you may wish to consider reducing the amount of floor-work you create (this is completely at your discretion) and if you do intend to create floor-work you should ensure the floor is properly cleaned before and after your rehearsal to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

2. Advice for Rehearsing With Students Online

Teaching dance online can be daunting however we hope that the following guidance will build your confidence and allow you to develop beautiful, creative work with your students. There are many positives of teaching dance online, some of these include:

- Being able to involve students who are 'vulnerable' and shielding
- Students are encouraged to share links to videos and images of their movement inspiration
- Online working inspires students to use their immediate environment to create work (e.g. chairs, kitchen utensils, remote controls etc could be used as props)
- It can help students to take charge and own their work when creating movement at home
- If using apps such as Zoom, smaller 'break out' settings allow for students to build confidence and find their voice when creating movement
- You will be able to begin your choreographic process and dance teaching as soon as possible if your individual school has set late dates in the term to begin face to face extra-curricular activities.

a) Blended/Hybrid Learning:

You may wish to teach partly online and partly in person – this is particularly helpful if your students are fixed in multiple bubbles. A piece of choreography you wish to teach to the whole group could be taught online, as could a solo/duet/trio, with a piece of choreography for a bubble of students being taught in person. These individual pieces of choreography could be put together to make a full piece with all the students later on.

Blended/hybrid learning also allows for students to be given choreography in person and develop it to show and discuss online at a later date. This helps to give students ownership of their work with it still relating to the work of the whole group.

b) Preparing to Teach Dance Digitally:

Firstly, you will need to think about how you wish to create, develop and teach your choreography and how your individual school will allow you to do this. For schools that are not allowing children to have cameras on during live classes (due to safeguarding rules), you may prefer to deliver your sessions through pre-recorded videos. For choreography that you



want all of your students to learn, you may also prefer to deliver in pre-recorded videos which the students can re-watch at their convenience and learn from at their own pace. Alternatively, if you have choreography that you want students to be involved in and help develop, you may prefer live classes for real-time discussions and demonstrations. Depending on which app you are using to deliver your sessions, live classes may also allow for students to break off into smaller groups to create and discuss movement together. If you have the ability, you could also record live sessions for students to access after your original session time. A mixture of live, pre-recorded and in person sessions is acceptable too – whatever works best for you and your students.

Health and safety: you should begin all of your live and pre-recorded sessions with a short introduction in what to do if your students sustain an injury and the type of space they will need to dance in (e.g. kitchen or living room with no obstructions/trip hazards such as chairs or laundry baskets). You should also send this to parents and guardians ahead of your sessions, making them aware of how to treat minor injuries (e.g. a pulled muscle) and major injuries (e.g. when to seek medical advice etc). Make sure that parents and guardians are aware dates and times that sessions are going ahead or pre-recorded videos are being sent out to ensure they are in the vicinity should an injury occur. You should also think about the use of jumps and floor-work in your choreography and the hazards that rehearsing at home could affect these. Students may be dancing on wood or tiles which are hard and unsuitable for jumping. Similarly, dancing on carpet may be a slip hazard whereas floor-work may not be possible for those students rehearsing in a smaller space.

Remind your students to have a short break and a drink of water – this is easier to forget when teaching live online or pre-recorded sessions.

You should aim to make your sessions and resources digitally accessible. Try to send/upload all documents in Word format as PDFs are not accessible for students who only have access to phones and tablets. If you have students who have audio needs, could you add captions? If you have students with visual needs, could you clearly describe your movements as you teach them?

Try to consider your use of language – all students will have different sized spaces and surroundings available to them. For example, if you are using a chair as a prop, all students will have different width and height of chairs while some may not have chairs at all and only have sofas. Therefore, instead of creating a 'chair' dance, you could ask them to create a 'low level' dance. Another example would be if you would like them to get from one side of the space to another. You may ask them to 'walk' to the other side of the room but some may have obstructions such as chairs and tables. Instead, ask them to 'move' to the other side of the room, giving them the option to navigate those obstacles in the easiest way for them.

Think about filming yourself in your home space instead of your school's rehearsal space. This will give students the confidence that your choreography is doable in their kitchens/bedrooms/living rooms as well as a large room.

Be specific about directions and sides of the body you wish your students to copy and consider how you are filming yourself. Although you may raise your left arm, if you are in front of a camera, this will show as an arm being raised on the right side of the screen for those watching the video. If you are using your camera selfie-style, the arm will be raised on the left side of the screen for those watching the video. Be aware of how you are filming using your camera and how this will affect directions for your students as well as how these



directions will translate when moved into a space when the students are rehearsing in person. Try practicing your session with a friend/family/colleague first so that you have an idea of how your students will find learning/copying physically in this format.

3. Dance Live! Participatory Advice

We would suggest taking a video of your piece at every rehearsal which can then be submitted to the Dance Live! Team in case you are unable to attend the event (if the event runs in person) due to a COVID-19 outbreak. Your piece will still be judged in a fair manner, with the judges taking your situation into consideration.

Costumes and costume changes: consider the size and complexity of your costumes, whether they are easily washable and easy for students to put on without assistance to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

Props: it is at your individual school's discretion as to whether you use props in your performance. If you are using props, please note that props should be washed before and after each use. Each student should have their own prop that is theirs and theirs alone to mitigate the risk of the spread of COVID-19. You therefore may wish to use a limited number of props and consider using plastic, washable props.

4. COVID Safe Venue

A full policy will be sent to all participating schools, closer the event date, taking into consideration the government guidance at the time.

As a minimum, the following procedures will be in place, to ensure the day is safe for all participating in an event that takes place at the Guildhall:

- Longer arrival period, with staggered arrival times, to ensure schools are not mixing in the foyers or outside.
- Each school will have their own dressing room, which will be thoroughly cleaned prior to arrival, in line with government guidelines.
- You will be chaperoned to and from the auditorium and sat in specific areas, that are separate from other schools (subject to restrictions). Schools will not leave their allocated areas at any point, unless chaperoned by Guildhall staff.
- If it is not possible for all schools to be in the auditorium at the same time, a live feed will run to the dressing rooms, so schools can still view performances.
- Schools will be allocated a specific set of toilets to use; these will be frequently cleaned and sanitised.
- Hand sanitiser stations will be located in each dressing room for schools to use.
- Guildhall staff will ensure no crossover of schools in the backstage areas.
- Should schools be situated in the auditorium during the day, the space will be fully cleaned before the evening audience's arrival.



5. **Guidance References:**

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

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-COVID-19/performing-arts>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-COVID-19/providers-of-grassroots-sport-and-gym-leisure-facilities>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-people-from-outside-your-household-from-4-july>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protective-measures-for-holiday-or-after-school-clubs-and-other-out-of-school-settings-for-children-during-the-coronavirus-COVID-19-outbreak/protective-measures-for-out-of-school-settings-during-the-coronavirus-COVID-19-outbreak>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-meeting-with-others-safely-social-distancing/coronavirus-covid-19-meeting-with-others-safely-social-distancing>

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

<https://www.onedanceuk.org/return-to-dance/>

6. **Other References:**

<https://www.onedanceuk.org/return-to-dance/>

<https://www.ukactive.com/COVID-19/>

<https://nya.org.uk/guidance/>

<http://www.safeindance.com/>

<http://www.safeindance.com/newsletter-march-2020/>

<https://www.iadms.org/page/coronavirus>

<https://www.afpe.org.uk/physical-education/wp-content/uploads/COVID-19-Interpreting-the-Government-Guidance-in-a-PESSPA-Context-FINAL.pdf>

<https://www.youthsporttrust.org/coronavirus-support-schools>