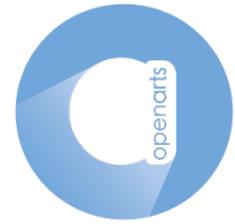


Inspiring and supporting the creativity and
artistic development of disabled people



Open Arts Covid-19 Policy

Open Arts understands the risk that COVID-19 poses to our participants, staff, freelance personnel, volunteers and the wider community.

This Covid-19 policy outlines our commitment to implement a plan and help prevent the spread of the virus. The policy will be signed and dated by the Chief Executive and brought to the attention of our participants, staff, freelance personnel and volunteers.

Covid-19 Policy Statement

Open Arts is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for participants, staff, freelance personnel and volunteers.

To ensure that, we have developed the following Covid-19 Response Plan. All our team are responsible for the implementation of this plan and a combined effort will help contain the spread of the virus.

We will:

- continue to monitor our Covid-19 response and amend our plan in consultation with our board
- provide up to date information on Public Health advice
- ensure everyone has information on the signs and symptoms of Covid-19 and correct hand-washing techniques
- inform all staff, freelance personnel, participants and volunteers of essential hygiene and respiratory etiquette and physical distancing requirements
- adapt spaces and activities to facilitate social distancing
- keep a log of contact/group work to help with contact tracing
- have all staff and freelance personnel attend an induction/familiarisation briefing
- develop a procedure to be followed in the event of someone showing symptoms of Covid-19 while at an Open Arts activity
- provide instructions for people to follow if they develop signs and symptoms of Covid-19 during an Open Arts activity
- intensify cleaning in line with government advice.

All participants, staff, freelance personnel and volunteers will be consulted on an on-going basis, and feedback is encouraged on any concerns, issues or suggestions. This can be done through the Chief Executive.

Signed: *Eileen Branagh*, CEO

Date: 18th August 2021

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Charity No. NIC103341|HMRC charitable status XR20553|Company No. NI 26507

Open Arts Covid-19 Procedures

Risk Assessment

A detailed risk assessment will be carried out for all elements of Open Arts work. Below is an overview of procedures.

Face Coverings

Face coverings must be worn in all indoor public places unless you are medically exempt. Therefore, you must wear a face covering when entering, exiting, or moving around any venue where Open Arts activities take place. Depending on the activity, coverings may be removed while you are seated. This information will be given on a group-by-group basis.

Where there are participants, who are medically exempt Open Arts may provide screens. Everyone is expected to have their own face covering, however Open Arts will also have disposable masks available at each activity.

NI Executive's advice on mask wearing will be communicated to everyone involved with Open Arts:

- make sure the face covering covers your mouth, nose and chin without any gaps at the side
- wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer before putting a face covering on
- avoid wearing on your neck or forehead
- avoid touching the part of the face covering in contact with your mouth and nose, as it could be contaminated with the virus
- change the face covering if it becomes damp or if you've touched it

Social Distancing

Keep 1 metre (or 2 if singing) distance between you and others in activities and while moving around any venue. Open Arts will set up spaces to facilitate social distancing; this must be adhered to.

Hand Hygiene

Wash your hands often, for at least 20 seconds, and make use of the sanitizer provided in venues as you enter. Open Arts will also provide sanitizer in the rooms that we use.

Respiratory/cough hygiene

Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.

Use tissues and safely throw them away in a bin.

Wash your hands or use a hand sanitizer every time you touch your mouth or nose.

Do not attend any Open Arts activity if you show any symptoms of COVID-19.

Symptoms are:

- New, persistent cough
- High temperature
- Loss of taste or smell

Self-isolation, Testing and Vaccination

You should not attend any Open Arts activity if you are required to self-isolate. You should follow the rules for PCR testing if you are vaccinated and identified as a close contact.

The rules for self-isolation and PCR testing can be found on The Northern Ireland Executive's website:

www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-self-isolating

You should not attend Open Arts activity if you travelled outside of Northern Ireland and are required to self-isolate. You should also follow the PCR testing rules for returning to Northern Ireland. Detailed travel advice can be found at:

www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-travel-advice

While we are not currently asking people to show any proof of negative lateral flow tests, we would encourage everyone to make use of home test kits regularly. Information on how to get kits can be found at:

www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests

While we are not currently asking for proof of vaccination, we would strongly encourage everyone, who can to have the COVID-19 vaccination. Information on vaccination can be found at: <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/get-covid-19-vaccination-northern-ireland>

Entering/Exiting activities

Many venues have implemented new one-way systems and entry/exit points.

Open Arts will ensure that everyone is fully aware of these and everyone must adhere to these systems.

To avoid too many people gathering in hallways or waiting areas, you should not arrive at your activity any earlier than 5 minutes prior to the start. You will have to wait outside the venue until you are directed in to ensure safe entry for everyone.

Access support

Sighted guiding: Open Arts understands that social distancing cannot be maintained while guiding for a blind/visually-impaired person. Both the guide and the blind/visually-impaired person must use hand sanitizer before and after guiding. Both people also need to wear face coverings unless medically exempt. The sighted guide will verbally confirm that they have sanitized their hands and are wearing a face covering.

Assistance for wheelchair users/people with mobility difficulties: Open Arts understands that some people need assistance with their manual wheelchair, mobility aid or belongings while using either. Those receiving support and those who are supporting must use hand sanitizer before and after touching. Surface sanitizer will also be available at every Open Arts activity.

Ventilation

It is recommended that indoor spaces be well ventilated. For this reason, windows will remain open or be opened regularly throughout activities. Please bear this in mind, particularly in the winter months.

Cleaning

We will be requesting cleaning schedules from venues to ensure that everyone involved with Open Arts is safe.

In addition, there will be surface sanitizer available at every Open Arts activity.

Track & Trace System

Everyone involved with Open Arts is encouraged to download the Northern Ireland COVID-19 app – STOP COVID 19.

We hold contact details for all our regular participants, freelance personnel and volunteers, we will ask for consent for this information to be used for PHA Track and Trace, which will include sharing details with the venues that we use, if required.

We will ensure to keep a comprehensive list of attendees at each activity.

Communication

The above points are the key messages that we shall use in our communications everyone involved with Open Arts and will be communicated by:

Website

Email

Social media

In person at activities

Notification of COVID-19 symptoms

If you become unwell with COVID-19 symptoms during an Open Arts activity, you must inform the facilitator (in the case of a facilitator becoming unwell, you should contact the Open Arts staff member, who coordinates the group). You must leave the activity immediately to go home. If this is not possible, Open Arts staff will liaise with the venue management to arrange to bring you to a room away from the group until you can make your way home. Open Arts and the venue will each fill in a form to record your symptoms, where you have been in the building etc. and decide on the best course of action.

You should arrange a PCR test immediately and communicate the result to Open Arts.

Cancellation of in person activities

In the event of Open Arts cancelling in person activities e.g., increased government restrictions/legislation or in the event that a group is impacted due to positive COVID tests among members or in the venue, we will move the activity online for the required length of time. Freelance individuals that have been booked for any such activity will undertake the online activity and be paid at the agreed rate of the in person activity.

Travelling

Open Arts is not responsible for any individual's journey to activities.

However, advice can be found at the following link:

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/safer-travel-guidance-public-transport-users-walkers-cyclists-drivers>

Open Arts Office

We love having impromptu visits to our office from participants, artists and volunteers but this will not be possible while there are COVID-19 restrictions in place. If you need to speak to any member of staff in person, you should request to arrange this in advance and the staff member will suggest a suitable venue/place.

Office Procedures – overview

Shared touch points (door handles etc.) will be cleaned at regular intervals throughout the day.

Each member of staff will have hand and surface sanitizer at their workstation to use regularly through the day.

While seated at your desk, you do not need to wear a facemask but you must if you get up from your workstation to move through the office and the main Crescent building.

First Aid/Health & Safety/Fire Procedures

In the case of emergency first aid being required or fire evacuation, COVID-19 Guidelines will not apply. You should follow the evacuation procedures of the venue, which will be communicated by Open Arts.