

Chesterfield Parish Church

Additional COVID-related Health & Safety Risk Assessment and Procedures – updated 17th May 2021

General – applies in all cases

1. These procedures reflect the current advice offered by HM Government and the Church of England, and are to be observed until further notice.
2. Team members permitted to enter the building are those who are rotaed to do so as welcomers, those employees who need to enter to carry out their job, any contractors who are entering by prior arrangement, and the clergy team for purposes of prayer and the celebration of services. No one else is permitted to enter the building except by written permission of the Vicar save for visitors and congregation members at advertised times. **All team members and other permitted persons must sign in on entering the building, and sign out on departure; there are no exceptions to this.**
3. Team members should sign in and out using their own pen, and wiping door handles using the disinfectant spray and wipes provided. They should wash their hands in the sink in the disabled lavatory using the provided liquid soap and paper towels both on entering and on leaving the building, and frequently in the same way while in the building (in the disabled lavatory or in the Sacristy).
 - 3.1. Normally the disabled lavatory should be used exclusively for hand washing, and the other lavatory used for its usual purpose.
4. Any other door handles and surfaces should be similarly cleaned, and hands washed following contact with them. Surfaces should not be touched unnecessarily.
5. Liturgical books should not be handled by more than one person, unless a period of over 48 hours has elapsed.
6. The most direct route from the Choir Vestry to the relevant place for worship or work should be taken. Books should be kept in the space where they are to be used, and not in the sacristy.
7. Each celebrant has a designated altar, vestments and corporal. Altars should not be used by more than one celebrant unless 48 clear hours have passed between celebrations.
8. Items used during Mass should be washed in hot water and disinfected before being reused.
9. **A distance of at least two metres is to be maintained between individuals AT ALL TIMES AND IN ALL SITUATIONS.** *This requirement remains, as the space available to us does not require any permitted reduction in distancing. Note that two metres is further than most people seem to think, and that the pews in the side aisles are not quite two metres long!*
10. Individuals should avoid socialising with each other **at all** in the church building – this is an anti-infection measure, and also applies especially when the building is open for prayer, as every effort should be made to allow visitors to pray in silence. It also ensures that there are no breaches of the ‘rule of six’ within the church building. **It is essential that all respect this rule; it is illegal (and compromises the use of the church building altogether) for more than six people to be socialising.**
11. HM Government requires the wearing of face coverings in places of worship.
12. Signage has been produced to communicate the above requirement to those entering the church building, and spare face masks are available for any attending services who have forgotten to bring one.
13. It is acceptable for those speaking in the course of services to remove their face covering while they are doing so.
14. Outside of acts of worship (Mass; Morning & Evening Prayer; Occasional Offices) team members are subject to the relevant requirements for retail or visitor economy settings.
15. It is **not** required of any team member to police or enforce the advice on face coverings.

16. A quarantine box is provided and labelled for each day of the week; congregation members will be asked to place Orders of Service, attendance slips, and any other paperwork, in them at the end of the service. The boxes will be kept for 48 hours before emptying. Orders of Service can then be re-used, and attendance slips filed for 21 days.
17. Congregational singing is still not permitted. However, government guidance now permits a small properly distanced group to sing as part of a service. Procedures for choral services and choir rehearsals appear at the end of this document.
18. Test & Trace sign-in QR codes are provided to comply with the requirements of the NHS COVID-19 App
19. An attendance and contact list for people attending services will be held; a single-use A5 pro-forma will be provided to be completed by the congregants in their seated place, and these will be placed in the quarantine box as people leave following the service. If congregants have already signed in using the App, they should indicate this on the form.
20. Mass continues to be live-streamed on Sundays and Wednesdays; this system will stay in place until 21st June.

Provisions for Visitors

21. Visitors are to wear face coverings on coming in to the building, with the exception of those who are exempted.
22. Team members are explicitly *not* required to enforce or police the wearing of face coverings.
23. Visitor access is limited to areas of the church not being used for worship, except the East End, where sanctuary areas are roped off and chairs are regularly sanitised.
24. A one-way system enables considerable reduction in the risk of infection through lack of distancing or uncontrolled touching of surfaces.
 - 24.1. Entrance through SW Door into South Aisle as far as votive stands
 - 24.2. Exit through centre aisle and thence back to SW Door
25. Hand sanitiser is available at the SW Door.
26. One designated area of pews is available for prayer/devotion (the corporation pews – five rows of five) and the rest are roped off
 - 26.1. This area is signposted and regularly cleaned in line with the Recovery Group advice.
27. At least three team members (including shop volunteers) are available to supervise during visitor opening times.
28. The Gift Shop has a one-way system in place, and a perspex protective barrier is placed across the counter. Contactless payments are encouraged. Active supervision is required to direct traffic and ensure distancing is maintained.
29. There is no public access to the Prayer Tree, but there is no reason why whoever is supervising the shop part of the Narthex should not write down intentions on prayer labels (not to be touched by the public) which are then attached to the tree (by one designated person only).
30. Books and other items likely to be handled are to be made inaccessible to the public or removed altogether.
31. Adequate supplies of hand sanitiser and basic PPE are available on the premises.
32. If we become aware that a known COVID19 case has entered the church then we will have to close until a 'deep clean' could be carried out, or simply close to the public for 72 hours
 - 32.1. Public Health England have detailed instructions on how to carry out such a clean.

33. Visitor opening hours: 10.00 to 16.00 Monday-Saturday. The building is only open outside these hours when there are services taking place.

Sunday Mass

34. The church is glad to welcome congregations at Mass.
35. There is no legal restriction on numbers attending – the requirement is that they be accommodated safely in accordance with this Risk Assessment. *The present arrangements will accommodate 64 people in the Nave – more if some of them are from the same household or ‘bubble’ and do not require to be distanced from each other. These arrangements can be expanded by a further 15 through use of the corporation pews and choir stalls for special occasions.*
36. On Sundays Mass is celebrated at the All Saints Altar with a small distanced altar party consisting of the celebrant and one server, and the congregation distanced in the Nave.
- 36.1. The area used by the congregation consists of the central Nave, other than the corporation pews which are normally to be left empty, and the side aisles.
- 36.2. Every other pew is available for occupation. Pews are indicated with seating spaces at least two metres apart.
37. A sidesperson will be on duty in the porch for half an hour before the service to manage queuing and access so that the two metre distance can be maintained. Another sidesperson will be on duty in the narthex to direct people to suitable seating. At least one designated person will be on duty to supervise the Narthex during the service.
38. As above, those attending the service will be asked to use hand sanitiser on arrival and departure, and to wear a face covering in line with current legislation.
39. Using disposable gloves, the vergers or welcoming team will set out in individual places any necessary books, booklets or service sheets, on the basis that these will not have been used since the previous Sunday, i.e. more than 48 hours before. While books and booklets should be handed back by placing in a quarantine box, any other printed literature should be taken away by the individual using it. Literature should not be shared except by member of a single household or ‘bubble’.
40. The New Testament reading will be read from the eagle lectern by a congregation member who will sit at a suitable vantage point and return directly there following the reading. The lectern should as far as possible not be touched.
41. The Gospel will be proclaimed from the chancel step; the sermon will be given from a lectern within the sanctuary, or from the pulpit.
42. The collection plate will be available in the Nave for people to place their collection *before the service*. Plates will not be passed around at the offertory.
43. No contact is to be made during the Sign of Peace, nor distancing to be reduced.
44. Only those elements to be received by the celebrant shall be placed in front of the celebrant; the elements to be consecrated for the rest of the congregation should be placed to one side and covered with a cloth. Only the celebrant will prepare the altar, and hand sanitiser is to be used before doing this.
45. Those wishing to receive communion will be invited to do so by joining a single file forward in the central aisle, observing a 2 metre distance at all times. Communion will be in one kind (the sacred Host) and in the hand only.
46. Communicants will be asked to remove face coverings before presenting themselves.
47. The person(s) distributing communion will wear a face covering, and will stand as far back from the chancel step as is practicable; the persons receiving will stop at the chancel step and receive standing

with their hands held forward. The person(s) distributing communion will use hand sanitiser before and after, and also in the case of accidentally making any contact with another person's hand.

48. Communicants will return to their places using the side aisles, and will be directed to do so by the stewards.

Evensong

49. For Choral Evensong, the first six rows of the Nave pews are to be roped off, in order to maintain a significant distance from the choir, who will sing as set out below. The side aisles will also remain roped off, so that the area to be sanitised following morning Mass consists of the westernmost two-thirds of the pews in the centre of the Nave. These will be set out with books, pew sheets and sign-in sheets with pens, as for morning Mass.

Weekday Masses

50. Most weekday Masses will take place in the East End, where it is possible to set out distanced chairs, and where the late arrival of one individual will not trigger a crisis.
51. All chairs are sanitised after Mass before further use.
52. Orders of Service and attendance slips are provided and left (for at least 48 hours) in the quarantine box following the service
53. Communion is distributed as above, with appropriate distancing.
54. Designated altars are rotated so that there is a 48-hour gap before the same altar can be used again.

Weddings – in addition to the above

55. It is the law that no more than **30** people may be in attendance at a wedding. This number includes children, but not clergy, paid members of the support team (organist, vergers), or team members on duty in the Narthex.
56. Congregational singing is not permitted. A small choir may sing from the East End if required.
57. Two-metre distancing is required between all congregation members excepting the bride and groom, and people who share a 'bubble', and face coverings should be worn by all except the bride and groom.
58. Care must be taken not to have physical contact between the Officiant and the bride and groom.
59. The Officiant should maintain a substantial distance from the bride, groom and congregation as far as is reasonably possible; a face covering should be worn when addressing the bride and groom at closer quarters.
60. Separate pens will be provided for the signing of the registers; distancing should also be maintained. Hands should be sanitised before and after signing.
61. Live-streaming can be arranged if requested.
62. Any photographer or videographer will be required to sign an undertaking to observe at least two metres' distancing; if the service is live-streamed, an additional small fee will be charged if (exceptionally) recorded music has been permitted, to cover the cost of the Limited Online Music Licence.

Funerals – in addition to the above

63. The normal maximum attendance at a funeral is as for Sunday Mass (i.e. **64**). However, this can be increased to **100** with prior notice. This number includes children, but not clergy, paid members of the support team (organist, vergers), or team members on duty in the Narthex.
- 63.1. All occupied pews to be cleaned following a funeral, or 48 hours to be left before the pews are permitted to be occupied again.

64. The two-metre rule will still apply in this church, face coverings will have to be worn, and Funeral Directors will need to be advised of this.
65. Congregational singing is not permitted, but it may be possible to arrange for a small choir to sing from the East End.

Baptisms – in addition to the above

66. No more than **30** people may be in attendance at a baptism. This number includes children, but not clergy, paid members of the support team (organist, vergers), or team members on duty in the Narthex.
67. Baptism parties will be required to enter through the South Aisle and leave through the Central Aisle.
68. The Officiant will not hold the baby, nor make physical contact at any point; oil will be applied using a cotton bud and the baptismal water will be poured using the customary shell. Paper towels – immediately discarded – will be used by the parents to dry the baby's head.

Organ Recitals – in addition to the above

69. Lunchtime organ recitals will resume from Thursday 27th May.
70. Those attending the recital will sit in the central nave as set out for Sunday Mass, and will be asked to queue if necessary, sanitise hands and wear face coverings.
71. Programmes will be set out to indicate distanced seating, and they will be accompanied by attendance slips and pens. These should be placed in the Thursday quarantine box, and filed after 48 hours.
72. The welcome announcement will reinforce the above provisions.
73. Pews to be used for the recital audience will be roped off until 15 minutes prior to the recital; they will be roped off again immediately afterwards, and sanitised (if necessary) in the course of the afternoon.

Choir Practices and Choral Services – in addition to the above

74. All choir rehearsals will take place in the East End of the church. Signing-in, hand cleansing and other safety measures apply as in the General Section above.
75. **At all times the full two-metre distancing rule applies**, the only exceptions being those who are already in a family or school 'bubble'.
76. At all times, except when singing, face coverings are to be worn (unless legally exempt).
77. Music, including hymn books, is to be set out before practices and services, by designated individuals wearing gloves, in named folders. In the same way it should be cleared away and either kept separate to be used by the same individual, or quarantined for at least 48 hours before being used again.
78. Music stands are to be sanitised before and after each use, and may not be shared except by individuals from the same 'bubble'. If there are insufficient stands choir members will have to manage without. It may be helpful in this case to make copies of music which is to be found in heavy books.
79. Chairs are to be sanitised immediately before and after choir practices – do not assume that the duty Verger will have done this beforehand, or have time for this the following morning.
80. The piano is also to be put back in its place and the surfaces sanitised **immediately** following choir practice, mindful that this area will be open to the public the following morning.
81. Surfaces touched by choir members must also be sanitised immediately after choir practice.
82. No socialising is to take place before, after, or during practices. **IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THIS RULE BE KEPT BOTH IN THE CHURCH AND THE CHURCHYARD: ANY POSSIBLE, OR APPARENT, BREACHES OF THE 'RULE OF SIX' CONSTITUTE A THREAT TO THE UNDERSTANDING ON WHICH THE CHOIR CAN CONTINUE TO FUNCTION.**

83. For Choral Mass, the choir will be situated in the East End of the church, arranged in a semicircle so that no one is singing toward anyone else, and there is a very significant distance from the clergy and the congregation, who are effectively in another part of the building.
84. The maximum number that can be so accommodated is **16**. Any greater number than this can only be accommodated in the East End through placement in the Saint Catherine or Lady Chapels. If these are used, great care must be taken not to touch any of surfaces in these chapels, since they are also being used for worship, but they will in any case require to be sanitised after use by the choir, care being taken not to damage the fabric, especially the alabaster in the Lady Chapel.
85. When playing or conducting in the East End, Dr Nash will wear a clear visor as protection.
86. For Choral Evensong, the choir will be distributed in the choir stalls, using chairs in the central aisle, next to the chancel arch, and in the south aisle, and all will face north (toward the organ console) to sing. It is important for visibility as well as safety that singers do not stand or sit one behind the other. The maximum number that can be so accommodated is **20**.
87. When the choir is singing from the choir stalls, the first six rows of the nave pews on both sides will be roped off to maintain a significant distance between the singers and the congregation.
88. When directing the choir from the organ console, Dr Nash will do so from behind a transparent screen.
89. If more than the maximum numbers of choir members wish to sing, there will be a need to arrange who will sing on which occasion, and this may be helped by communicating availability with Dr Nash well in advance.

90. These provisions are in addition to, and do not detract from, any further documents concerning safety in church buildings published by the Archbishops' Council Recovery Group.

Agreed with the PCC

Patrick Coleman, Vicar, 17th May 2021