

Chesterfield Parish Church

Additional COVID-related Health & Safety Risk Assessment and Procedures – revised and updated 21st July, 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. **While they do not have the force of the criminal law, they are the minimum policy agreed by the Incumbent and PCC for the Health and Safety of all who use church premises, and are therefore to be observed by all users (and are, in theory at least, legally enforceable).**
2. Anyone entering the building outside the published opening hours (for services or to accompany visitors, or for any other reason) may do so only with written permission from the Vicar or churchwardens.
3. Team members are encouraged to 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).
4. All regularly touched surfaces are to be washed or sanitised on a regular basis, unless they are unused for a period of not less than 48 hours.
5. Items used during Mass should be washed in hot water and disinfected before being reused.
6. **Where possible, a distance of at least two metres is still to be maintained between individuals AT ALL TIMES AND IN ALL SITUATIONS.**
7. Face coverings should be worn in cases where there is crowding, or a distance of two metres cannot reasonably be maintained.
8. Signage has been produced to communicate the above requirement to those entering the church building.
9. Those speaking in the course of services should remove any face covering while they are doing so.
10. Outside acts of worship (Mass; Morning & Evening Prayer; Occasional Offices) team members are subject to the relevant requirements for retail or visitor economy settings.
11. It is **not** required of any team member to police or enforce individual choices on face coverings.
12. Anyone handling books or Orders of Service is encouraged to maintain careful hand and face hygiene.
13. Congregational singing will resume at the 10.30 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. services at the Parish Church, and twice a month at Saint Leonard's.
14. Test & Trace sign-in QR codes are provided to comply with the requirements of the NHS COVID19 App.
15. An attendance and contact list for people attending services is offered; a single-use A5 pro-forma is provided to be completed by the congregants in their seated place, and these will be placed in the designated box as people leave following the service. If congregants have already signed in using the App, they should indicate this on the form.
16. Mass continues to be live-streamed on Sundays and Wednesdays; this system will now stay in place at least until the present health emergency is over.

Provisions for Visitors

17. A one-way system enables considerable reduction in the risk of infection through lack of distancing or uncontrolled touching of surfaces.
 - 17.1. Entrance through SW Door into South Aisle as far as votive stands

- 17.2. Exit through centre aisle and thence back to SW Door
18. Hand sanitiser is available at the SW Door.
19. One designated area of pews is available for prayer/devotion (the corporation pews – five rows of five) and the rest are roped off
- 19.1. This area is signposted and regularly cleaned in line with current advice.
20. At least three team members (including shop volunteers) are available to supervise during visitor opening times.
21. 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.
22. The Prayer Tree is available again, and hand sanitiser is available for those wishing to write labels to place on it.
23. Adequate supplies of hand sanitiser and basic PPE are available on the premises.
24. If we become aware that a known COVID19 case has entered the church then we will follow current PHE procedures.
25. 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 (10.30)

26. The last ten rows of the north side of the nave and the north aisle are designated and set out with distanced seating, and signage indicating that face coverings are to be worn in this area, and singing not to take place. This is to accommodate those who remain uncomfortable with perceived risks associated with singing or lack of face covering. It will also be made clear through all available communication methods that seven out of the nine Masses celebrated in the church throughout the week do not have singing.
27. There is no 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, and a further 20 through use of the gallery.*
28. 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.
- 28.1. 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.
- 28.2. Pews are indicated with seating spaces at least two metres apart.
29. 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. Someone will remain on duty at the door throughout the service.
30. As above, those attending the service will be asked to use hand sanitiser on arrival and departure, and to wear a face covering where possible.
31. The vergers or welcoming team will set out in individual places any necessary books, booklets or service sheets.

32. The Gospel will be proclaimed from the chancel step; the sermon will be given from a lectern within the sanctuary, or from the pulpit.
33. 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.
34. No contact is to be made during the Sign of Peace, nor distancing to be reduced.
35. 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 of the altar away from the line of sight of the celebrant, and covered with a cloth. Only the celebrant will prepare the altar, and hand sanitiser is to be used before doing this.
36. 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.
37. Communicants will be asked to remove face coverings before presenting themselves.
38. 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.
39. Communicants will return to their places using the side aisles, and will be directed to do so by the stewards.

Evensong

40. 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

41. 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.
42. All chairs are sanitised after Mass before further use.
43. Communion is distributed as above, with appropriate distancing.
44. Altars will be allocated according to the 48-hour rule.

Weddings – in addition to the above

45. The number of people attending a wedding is not restricted by law. Unless special seating is set out, in this church it shall be no more than **one hundred** people.
46. Two-metre distancing is required between all congregation members except the bride and groom, and face coverings are requested to be worn by all except the bride and groom.
47. Separate pens will be provided for the signing of the Marriage Document; distancing should also be maintained. Hands should be sanitised before and after signing.
48. Live-streaming can be arranged if requested.
49. 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

50. The number of people attending a funeral is not restricted by law. Unless special seating is set out, in this church it shall be no more than **one hundred** people.
51. Seating arrangements for funerals are to be the same as for Sunday Mass, save that the corporation pews will be available.
 - 51.1. All occupied pews to be cleaned following a funeral.
52. The two-metre rule will still apply in this church, face coverings are requested to be worn, and Funeral Directors will need to be advised of this.

Baptisms – in addition to the above

53. Baptisms may take place with congregations gathered in the Baptistry. There is a reasonable limit of 25 people – apart from the church team – who may attend in a distanced manner.
54. Baptism parties will be required to enter through the South Aisle and leave through the Central Aisle.
55. 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.

Concerts and Organ Recitals

56. 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

57. 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.
58. **At all times the full two-metre distancing rule applies**, the only exceptions being those who are already in a 'bubble'.
59. At all times, except when singing, face coverings are to be worn (unless legally exempt).
60. 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 kept separate to be used by the same individual.
61. 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 for the time being. It may be helpful in this case to make copies of music which is to be found in heavy books.
62. 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.
63. 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.
64. Surfaces touched by choir members must also be sanitised immediately after choir practice.
65. 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.
66. 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.

67. 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**.
68. 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.
69. 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.

70. 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, 21st July 2021