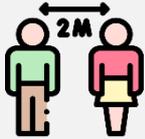


Coronavirus Guidance Updates

Following updated guidance issued by the government (as of 14 September) we are making the following updates and changes to our guidelines for parishes.

Church Halls

Church halls and other facilities may be used, provided that a proper risk assessment of any planned activities is undertaken. The following are general guidelines for the use of halls and other facilities, based on the government guidelines for multi-purpose community facilities (available online [here](#)).



At all events on Church property, we must continue to ensure that we continue to observe existing guidelines on social distancing, hygiene, and safe capacity. This means keeping a distance at least 1m between people (ideally 2m) with sufficient risk mitigation (facemasks, regular hand-sanitising etc.) A safe capacity for events taking place on Church property should be set. No event should exceed this maximum safe capacity.



Programmes such as RCIA and Alpha may resume, however the 'rule of six' must be observed at such events. This means that participants need to be divided into groups no larger than six people and must not be allowed to mix between these groups. We must ensure that there is sufficient distance between each group of six, or that each group has their own distinct space. Where meetings are regular (e.g. weekly) the groups of six should stay the same for every meeting. The normal rules about face-coverings must be followed during these events.



Following a wedding, funeral, or other life-cycle event (e.g. a Baptism), a Church venue may host a reception after the liturgy. However, such receptions should not exceed 30 persons and may be for a sit-down meal only. Face coverings need not be worn while eating but must be worn when standing up from their table and moving around. The rule of six must be observed and normal social distancing enforced.

Activities involving children (outside of Mass)

The government has issued separate guidance for events involving Children in 'Out of School Settings' (available online [here](#)).



Children should be encouraged to walk or cycle to the event, or to be dropped off in the car by a member of their family (or "bubble"). They should be discouraged from taking public transport as much as possible, and should not 'car pool' with people outside their family/bubble.



Care should be taken to ensure that Children come into contact with as few people as possible. They should be divided into groups of no more than fifteen children and one adult and should not socialise outside of their group. Where events for children and young people are held regularly, those participating should stay in the same group for every event.



Where multiple events for children are held on the same day (e.g. one Catechism class followed by another one later in the day) sufficient change-over time should be allowed between groups, so that the facilities can be thoroughly cleaned and so there is no crossover between groups.



A register of the Children attending any events and which groups they were part of should be kept for 21 days for NHS test and trace.

Updated Liturgy Guidelines

Based on government guidance (as of 14 September) and ongoing queries about our liturgy guidelines:



A Cantor, or small group of cantors, are now allowed to sing in Church, however congregational singing is still not permitted. Any music group should be kept to a small set number of people and should stand a safe distance from each other and the rest of the congregation. The congregation should be reminded not to join in with the singing. Any shared instruments (or instruments owned by the Church) should be cleaned between uses.



Shared facilities for Children for use during Mass (e.g. Creches or play corners) should be put out of use. Children's liturgies should not resume as the government advises children should remain under their parents' supervision during worship.



The congregation are permitted to speak the responses to the Mass but must not sing or say the responses with raised voices.



Priests should encourage Communicants to receive communion in the hand, however, if a person wishes to receive communion on the tongue, they may not be denied. People wishing to receive communion on the tongue should be advised to receive last and to take adequate steps to ensure that no physical contact is made (i.e. kneeling and opening their mouths wide).



Communion remains under one kind only, with only the priest distributing the host. Other than wearing a mask, the priest should distribute communion in the normal way without variation.



Priests should only sanitise their hands between communicants if accidental physical contact is made.

Visiting the Sick and Dying

There are no substantial changes to our guidelines on visiting the Sick and Dying, however, based on updated government guidelines and queries about our guidelines:



When entering the house of a dying person to administer the Last Sacraments, keep interactions with others in the house to a minimum (keeping to the rule of six)



Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion who are members of a housebound person's "support bubble" may take Communion to them in their house.