**Parish of ­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­St Paul’s Wilford Hill West Bridgford**

**Risk assessment**

**Activity: COVID risk assessment for groups using the church Date of latest risk assessment: 27 July 2021**

**Location: St Paul’s Church**

**Name of person with responsibility: Charles George (Church Warden) Date to be reviewed: TBA**

**This Risk Assessment assesses the risks limited to prayer or other small groups meeting in church.**

**This Risk Assessment has been reviewed now that we are at step 4 of the roadmap out of lockdown. This removes the legal requirement to undertake certain mitigations. Having said that, it is in everyone’s interests to minimise the risk of the transmission of Covid-19 and the practices set out below although now advisory are best followed to ensure everyone’s safety. This risk assessment relates to both prayer and other church groups. The rest of the preamble to this document remain for reference purposes.**

**Prayer groups are not limited by numbers, subject to meeting social distancing requirements and mitigations generally and in any event the nature of such groups is that they are most effective with relatively low numbers. Any other groups are a social gathering and limited to a maximum of six by the Rule of 6. However, as of 14 October 2020 the Government introduced the 3 Tier System of alert levels, which then had the Stay-at-Home Tier 4 added as from 20 December 2020. We were in Tier 4 as from 31 December 2020 and as with Level 2 (High) and Level 3 (Very High), there could not be a mixing of households indoors and, therefore, there could not be social gatherings under the Rule of 6 for small groups. Levels 2 to 4 of the Covid local alert levels did not prohibit or limit prayer groups meeting in church and this remains the case, as an act of public worship, under Lockdown 3 from 6 January 2021 and now under Step 2 (from 12 April 2021) as part of the Government’s Roadmap out of lockdown. However, at this time small groups cannot meet in church, but that will be possible if Step 3 takes place as from 17 May 2021. The meeting of prayer groups, or not as the case maybe, reflect the assessment of risk by the group leaders having regard to infection rates, the vulnerability of group members and the very fact there remains a form of lockdown. Groups, prayer or otherwise, do, if they so wish, have capacity to meet remotely on Zoom and this is actively encouraged.**

**Regard should also be had to the Risk Assessment for Opening Church Buildings to the Public (revised as at 27 July 2021), the contents of which are not repeated in this document. If there are any issues arising from the meeting of such groups, the designated leader should have regard to the said Risk Assessment or seek guidance from the church wardens or the office administrator.**

**Seating: The current (and this remains the case) layout of the church is that to the right side of the raised dais there is an area set aside for prayer or other groups with chairs socially distanced. This only provides for 6 or 7 chairs in the circle. If numbers are greater a prayer group can use the chairs which are set out in rows (50 inches apart by rows) ensuring that 2 empty chairs separate each individual or couple. If it is decided by the group leader to move any chairs from the front rows to facilitate a slightly larger group, the chairs should be cleaned with sanitiser spray both before and after and returned to the rows ensuring the 50 inches gap provision is met.**

| **What are the hazards?** | **Who might be harmed and how?** | **Controls required** | **Do you need to do anything else to manage this risk?** | **Action by whom?** | **Action by when?** | **Done** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Spread of COVID 19 | All attendees and those subsequently coming to church. | **Entry**  By the priest’s door which will be left open to improve ventilation and avoid touching of the door and handle.  **Exit**  By the same door. Avoid queueing, giving others present time to leave. | Avoiding the foyer reduces the risk of mingling with any other users of the site. | Group leader | On day |  |
| As above | As above | **Hand sanitation**  Sanitisers are available to be used on entry and exit. These are positioned by the door. | No. | Group leader | On day |  |
| As above | As above | **Social Distancing**  All present to asked to stay 2 meters apart wherever possible. | Please see the preamble about chair layout in the church. | Group leader | On day |  |
| As above | As above | **Ventilation**  Wherever possible doors should be left open. Windows with louvres can also be opened. | Attendees to be reminded to wear warm clothing. | Group leader | On day |  |
| As above | As above | **Face coverings**  We invite the wearing of face coverings subject to medical exemptions. | There is a stock of face coverings in the office should an attended forget to bring one. They should take it home with them. | Group leader | On day |  |
| As above | As above | **Worship materials**  To avoid infecting church books and materials, attendees should bring their own bibles. | If leaders wish to use other materials these should be single use and either taken home by attendees or put in the bin by the exit door. In practice church bibles are sometimes used. This is not an issue as these can be put to one side/quarantined. | Group leader | On day |  |
| As above | As above | **Lighting of candles**  A large candle in a bowl and single use candles are available. | A single use candle can be lit, allowing 3-4 minutes to pass after using the hand sanitiser. There is a warning notice with the bowl. | Group leader | On day |  |
| As above | As above | **Refreshments**  Bring own. | No. | Group leader | On day |  |
| As above | As above | **Toileting**  We must make toilet facilities available. | Simply making the toilet in the foyer available should be adequate given likely numbers attending but the main toilets can be used. | Group leader | On day |  |
| As above | As above | **Attendance record**  An attendance record is asked to be kept and retained for 21 days on a rolling basis. | Group leader to ensure a consent form is signed by attendees to assist with NHS Test and Trace. Pass to church wardens to retain. Those who have attended services will have signed such a form and will not need to sign another one. The leader will make the register available on request. |  |  |  |
| As above | As above | **Cleaning**  After the meeting, ensure high risk surfaces and touch points have been wiped with sanitiser spray or disposable wipes. | The group leader should wipe down the wooden parts of chairs used, and any other surfaces used. Also, clean touch points in the toilet, if used. Materials are on the table by the exit and disposable gloves are in the sacristy. Use the bin by the exit. | Group leader | On day |  |
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