

Date of assessment: 12th December 2021

Assessor:  John Harman

Date verified by Trustees: 13th December 2021

On behalf of the Trustees:  Simeon Woodcraft

Address of Church Premises: 24-26 Whitefield Road, New Milton, BH25 6DF, Hampshire

Type of Risk Assessment: Review of risks associated with the Government's move to Plan B in response to the spread of the Omicron variant of the Coronavirus. The changes relate to the wearing of Face Coverings in most indoor locations and are effective from 10th December 2021. This is an addendum to the full risk assessment and should be read in conjunction with it.

Note re Covid:

Whilst there are now no Covid regulations covering for example social distancing and hand washing, we under Health & Safety legislation still have to act reasonably and responsibly for the good of employees, and all those who enter our premises.

All people are encouraged to make informed decisions about managing the risk to themselves and others. Personal responsibility is the focus in England, meaning all acting for the good of everyone. We should therefore continue to encourage safe practices such as avoiding close personal contact indoors, the thorough washing of hands, and the use of hand sanitiser and face coverings.

Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19, even if they are mild, should not attend services or meetings. And if someone has been instructed to self-isolate because they have tested positive for COVID-19, or they are the close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, they must follow the new detailed guidelines on ongoing testing and isolation.

WEARING OF FACE COVERINGS (PLAN B MEASURES)

In England, from Friday 10 December, face coverings are required in most public indoor venues, including places of worship. There are exemptions for individuals and where it is not practical to wear one. 'Places of Worship' are now defined as any building, room or other premises used for public religious worship.

The requirement includes services, prayer meetings, bible studies and other meetings in public buildings including places of worship.

Other venues where face coverings are required unless individuals or the activity is exempt include community centres, youth centres and other public halls such as parish halls.

In other indoor settings, in crowded spaces where people come into contact with people they do not normally meet, there may be no legal requirement but the advice is to wear face coverings. There is also no requirement to wear face coverings for meetings in homes, but people may choose to do so.

For our meetings we will ask those age 11 and above to wear a face covering unless they or the meeting is exempt.

Singing is considered to be a reasonable excuse to remove a face covering, but this will be a personal choice. Those leading, preaching or reading may also remove their face covering.

There are other exemptions where it is not practical to wear one, such as when eating or drinking.

Face coverings need not be worn for organised and supervised activities for children up to the age of 18. This exemption includes the children, young people and leaders of Junior Church, K'neked & K'lossal groups.

The responsibility for wearing face coverings is the individual's not the building owner or organiser of an activity.