



## CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) POLICY

The Government has published a coronavirus action plan. The threat posed by COVID-19 has been assessed by the Chief Medical Officer as it is now being described as a pandemic. **The risk level has been raised to high.**

With this in mind, Emmanuel Church Oxford is committed to regularly reviewing this policy and communicating any updates to church members as needed. All guidance will continue to reflect appropriate Public Health England advice.

**Current Government advice** is that individuals should follow good hygiene practices including:

- carrying tissues and using them to catch coughs and sneezes, and binning the tissue;
- washing hands with soap and water (for 20 seconds) or using sanitiser gel to kill germs when water is not available.

**Advice has been issued** for people with symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), including those with a diagnosis of coronavirus (COVID-19) infection, who must remain at home until they are well.

Stay at home for 7 days if you have either a high temperature or new continuous cough.

Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital. You do not need to contact 111 to tell them you're staying at home.

**Advice has also been issued** to travellers who have returned to the UK from a number of countries.

Anyone who has returned to the UK from any of these areas in the last 14 days and develops symptoms of cough or fever or shortness of breath, should immediately:

- stay indoors and avoid contact with other people as you would with the flu;
- call NHS 111 to inform them of your recent travel to the country.

Long-standing government advice has been that 'In a pandemic, it makes good sense to take precautions to limit the spread of disease by not sharing common vessels for food and drink.'

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public#advice-for-travellers>

## OFFICE STAFF

Office staff should all follow best hygiene practises:

- Washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Washing hands as soon as you arrive to work and when you get home.
- Using an alcohol-based hand sanitiser that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available. Hand sanitiser should be provided for desks. This is particularly important on Sunday's and evening events as well as when coming into contact with members of the public.
- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- If feeling unwell, stay at home, do not attend work. Working from home could be an option for some tasks.
- Covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throwing the tissue in a bin.
- Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces in the office and equipment used on Sundays.

All non-essential travel by the staff team should be reconsidered. Before undertaking any travel, whether in the UK or abroad, staff team should consider whether the objective can be achieved by another means e.g meeting online via Skype.

## SUNDAYS

Our Sunday meetings will be affected in several ways. Anti-bacterial hand soap should be provided in the toilets.

Hand sanitiser should be readily available on refreshment tables with hospitality volunteers advised to wash their hands regularly and before handling food or cups that will be passed to church members. NHS England advice posters should be visible above refreshment tables as well as outside toilets.

Furthermore, it is advised that people consider reducing physical contact (hugging, handshakes etc).

### Communion

Communion has been identified as a risk area for spreading infection.

The use of disposable individual communion cups for 'wine' should be continued. In place of bread, where people are touching the same piece of bread, wafers should be used to minimise hand contact.

As communion is being set up before the service, the bread and 'wine' must remain covered. On Sundays where communion is taking place towards the end of the service, set-up teams should not set-up the communion until nearer the time of use. Set-up teams must thoroughly wash hands before handling communion.

### Refreshments

All self-service refreshments should discontinue - this includes self-service coffee pumps (at our Central site). All juice and milk should be served by the refreshments team with the team being sure to regularly wash their hands. Biscuits should not be served on Sundays. Coffee machines should be wiped down at the end of every Sunday meeting.

### Worship & PA

Microphones harbour a lot of bacteria and germs with multiple people sharing microphones. Each microphone used on Sundays should be sprayed with sanitising and deodorising spray. This includes contribution microphones, but not the tie microphone used by the preacher.

### Kids Work

Kids groups leaders should be sure to follow the best hygiene practises:

- Washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Washing hands as soon as you arrive to church and when you get home.
- Using an alcohol-based hand sanitiser that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available. Hand sanitiser should be provided for each kids group.
- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- If feeling unwell, stay at home, do not attend church to avoid infecting others.
- Covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throwing the tissue in a bin.
- Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces in the office and equipment used on Sundays.
- Encouraging kids to thoroughly wash their hands when going to the toilet.

### **Venues**

Both our Sunday sites are in schools, Oxford Spires Academy & Oxford High School Junior. Each school (including Fusion Lifestyle) have stated dedication to following Public Health England's advice and guidelines. Should anything change, we should be contacted by them. In the event of school closures, an alternative to meeting at these schools will be arranged e.g online church.

## **EVENTS**

All precautions taken on Sundays should be replicated for any events held outside of Emmanuel's Sunday meetings.

## **COMMUNICATION**

All information about the new precautions on Sundays should be communicated to members of Emmanuel via email, including any developments as they arise.

This information communicated should include:

- The measures we are putting in place as a church
- Directions to the PHE guidance for those that have travelled/ are travelling overseas

- Instruction to let us know if either themselves or a friend/family member has received a positive test for the virus and, if they do have symptoms, to not attend church.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>