

Dear Clergy, Lay Readers, Vestry Secretaries and Diocesan Secretaries

The Advisory Group of the Scottish Episcopal Church has updated its principal guidance document to take account of changes since the last major revision. Because of the fast changing nature of changes over the course of the last few weeks, the Group has issued regular updates by email but considers that it is now appropriate to issue a more comprehensive update. It is available at the usual page on the provincial website: <https://www.scotland.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/Revised-Guidance-Version-8-28.05.21.pdf>. To enable you to identify changes from the previous version more easily, we attach a highlighted version.

There are two main changes since our last email update issued on 13 May 2021 which relate to singing and children's activities: –

1. Congregational singing is to be permitted in levels 0 and 1 from Monday 31 May. The Advisory Group guidance reproduces verbatim the new guidance from the Government. The Government Guidance indicates in relation to singing that "it is advised" that congregational members wear face coverings and maintain 2 m social distancing. If that sounds as though such requirements are optional, that is not the case since both are legal requirements in places of worship. Removal of face coverings is possible only for the permitted "small group" who may lead worship "from the front".
2. The Government has updated its guidance on unregulated activities for children. As lockdown has eased this year and such activities resumed, they were subject to restrictions on numbers. Those restrictions have now been removed and replaced with limiting numbers on the basis of building capacity, allowing for physical distancing.

Work is also being undertaken to revise the Bishops' Pastoral Guidance which will be re-issued when available.

By way of reminder, the areas of Scotland that are currently in level 1 are Orkney, Shetland, Western Isles, all islands in Highland (except Skye) and the Argyll and Bute islands of Coll, Colonsay, Erraid, Gometra, Iona, Islay, Jura, Mull, Oronsay, Tiree and Ulva. No areas of Scotland are currently in level 0. It is expected that most of Scotland will move to level 1 from 7 June 2021.

Kind regards

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