

Advice to parishes re use of church premises by schools v1.0 (170620)

We have been contacted by a number of parishes understandably seeking to help with the current move to open our schools to children and students beyond those from key worker families. The following are a list of matters to consider if you are one of these parishes.

- Consult your insurers. Whilst insurers may well not be against this alternative use it is important, they are asked.
- Draw up a clear agreement for the arrangement. It is likely that the school will take full responsibility for cleaning and security. This may require additional equipment (e.g. doorbells/intercoms to be installed). What hours are you proposing to hand over the building for exclusive use.
- Key holders to the hall may well have to give up their keys during the period the hall is being used by the school unless they have DBS clearance.
- Regarding safeguarding a clear check in system will need to be in place. In most contexts if the hall is close to the school, the school may ask all visitors to register at reception in the school building before proceeding to the hall building.
- If your hall and worship area of the church building are connected clear access points for the hall are important and reserved for sole use. If your church is open for private prayer at the same time as the hall very clear measures need to be in place to enable safe access to the 'school' area. Clear evacuation procedures for fire/other emergencies need to be in place with separate provision for evacuating the hall of pupils and church of any people praying.

Archdeacon David Picken