

Parish of Holy Trinity and Christ Church, Richmond

Policy	Dogs on church premises
Document agreed by	PCC in March 2024
Document prepared by	Keith Nurse
Date of this document	March 2024
To be reviewed	March 2026
Introduction	<p>We want our church to be a safe, secure and welcoming environment for everyone, especially children and vulnerable adults. We are committed to putting in place policies and procedures that support this, and to communicating them to those who are required to follow them or are particularly impacted by them.</p> <p>We recognise that many church members and others who come into our building are dog owners and derive huge pleasure and companionship from this. We also recognise that, almost without exception, when dogs have come into our building, owners have shown an awareness that dogs need to be well-behaved and well-controlled.</p> <p>However, we also recognise that the church site is, at times, a very busy place, and an environment that dogs may be unfamiliar with and may react to in unaccustomed ways. One example of this is the Trinity Room at the time refreshments are served after Services, when many people are present and children, in particular, are moving around in an enclosed space. We also know that some children, and even occasionally adults, can be very uncomfortable in the presence of dogs. This policy therefore seeks to address these concerns.</p>
Who the policy is for	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff Team members• Leaders of church groups and activities• Welcome Team members• Individuals and groups that hire rooms in our building, either regularly or on one-off occasions• Church members who we are aware have previously brought dogs into our building• Church members in general.
Aims of the policy	<p>The aims of this policy are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To play a part, alongside other policies and procedures, in promoting a safe, secure and welcoming environment for everyone• To manage risks that arise from dogs being in our building, particularly the possibility of them causing biting or injury of some other kind.
Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dogs should not be brought into our building during Services or other church events, groups or activities. This includes the Foyer and any other areas not being directly used for the Service, event, group or activity

- Dogs should not be brought into our building by anyone hiring rooms, either regularly or on one-off occasions, or by those attending events, groups or activities arranged by the hirer
- Assistance dogs can be brought into our building to support owners who have disabilities or other special needs. These dogs have received training to handle unfamiliar and unpredictable situations
- Emotional Support Animals (not just dogs) should not be brought into our building without evidence that they have received recognised training to handle unfamiliar and unpredictable situations
- There will be occasions where members of the public come into our building not knowing this policy, for example when making an enquiry about hiring a room. If a church event, group or activity is taking place at the time, they will be asked to secure their dog outside the building or, if possible, place it in their car in the car park. If neither of these is possible, they will be asked to return on another occasion or communicate with us by email or phone
- Where members of the public come into our building and no church event, group or activity is taking place at the time, the dog will be allowed into the building if the person they have come to see is comfortable with this.

Communication

- Staff Team members, leaders of groups and activities, and Welcome Team members will be briefed on the policy and will, in turn, be expected to make their team members aware of it
- Hire conditions will reflect the requirements of the policy
- A copy of the policy will be displayed in the Foyer, together with a notice stating that dogs are not allowed in the building.