

ST MARYS ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, BRIDGE GATE , DERBY
SEARCHING PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION

Constant vigilance is essential for maintaining high levels of security. All users of the church are encouraged to keep a watchful eye and report anything or anybody suspicious. Discrete notices have been placed in the church to remind parishioners to remain alert.

However, formal searches of the church and grounds are necessary, at specific times, to make sure that the entire premises, including the grounds, are covered in a systematic and thorough manner so that no part is left unchecked.

WHEN TO SEARCH

The current threat level does not justify daily formal searches of the premises and in any case resources are not available to perform thorough searches with such frequency. Systematic searches will be conducted before major festivals such as Christmas, St Patrick's Day and Easter and any specials services likely to be attended by VIPs or large congregations. Formal searches will also be conducted in response to a specific threat or when informed by the police of a heightened threat level.

Searches will also be carried out following the evacuation of the church in response to an incident or threat to ensure that the building is safe for re-entry.

The need and frequency of searches will be reviewed annually by the Parish Executive Committee.

It should be remembered that the church is cleaned weekly so any suspicious or unusual items are likely to be discovered by the cleaners.

WHERE TO SEARCH

Formal searches will cover all parts of the church, including chapels, vestries, confessionals, storerooms and corridors. The searches will also cover the car park and grounds. The searches will focus on packages, bags or similar items found in unexpected places, including rubbish bins and compounds.

WHO WILL CONDUCT SEARCHES

Searches will be conducted by nominated persons who have received appropriate instruction and training. All searchers will be familiar with the buildings and surroundings as they will be looking for items that should not be there, that cannot be accounted for or that are out of place. Ideally searches should be conducted in pairs.

RECORDING OF SEARCHES

A written record of each search will be completed (see Appendix I) and signed by the searchers. Records of searches will be kept for future reference for period of five years.

ACTION ON DISCOVERY OF SUSPICIOUS ITEM

The action to take in response to discovering a suspicious item or package is outlined in the procedure entitled "Action on Discovering of a Suspicious Package or Activity"

APPENDIX I – SEARCH RECORD SHEET