



St Mark's Church

LEAMINGTON SPA

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

INDEX

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY	1
Introduction	3
Responsibility of the Vicar	4
Responsibility of the Churchwardens	4
Responsibility of the Parochial Church Council	4
Responsibility of the Health and Safety Officer	4
Responsibility of employees and voluntary workers	4
Implementation	6
Accidents and First Aid	6
Fire safety	6
Fire extinguishers	7
Smoke alarms	7
Other fire protection equipment	7
Evacuation procedure	7
Evacuation drills	8
If you discover a fire (no matter how small)	8
Electrical safety	8
Gas equipment safety	9
Hazardous substances	9
Safety of plant and machinery	10

Slips, trips and falls – condition of floors, steps and paths.....	11
Lighting.....	11
Working at High Levels	11
Preparation of food.....	11
Manual handling – lifting, carrying and moving loads.....	12
Display screen equipment.....	12
Hazardous buildings and glazing.....	12
Safeguarding and child protection.....	13
Personal safety.....	13
Risk assessments for activities	13
Contractors	13
Further information	14
Health & Safety law poster	14

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Review cycle – 1 year

Introduction

This document has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and the regulations made under it.

Our policy, so far as is reasonably practicable, is to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for all our employees, casual labour and voluntary helpers, and to provide such information, training and supervision as they need for this purpose.

We will also endeavour, so far as is reasonably practicable, to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all members of the congregation, contractors, visitors and others who may visit the church, church hall and any associated buildings.

The allocation of duties for safety matters and the particular arrangements that we will make to implement the policy are set out separately.

The policy will be kept up to date, particularly in the light of any changes to our buildings or activities. The policy and the way in which it is operated will be reviewed regularly and the appropriate changes made.

In order to ensure that Health & Safety matters are kept constantly under review, an item on Health & Safety will be on the agenda for all meetings of the Parochial Church Council. Relevant sub committees, employees and voluntary workers will be consulted on a regular basis in order to seek their views on Health & Safety matters.

This policy is reviewed by the PCC every two years, or earlier if there are substantial changes to buildings or activities.

Organisation and responsibilities

Responsibility of the Vicar

Overall responsibility for Health & Safety is that of the Vicar (or in a vacancy, the Churchwardens), who will ensure that arrangements are in place to satisfy Health & Safety Regulations and appropriate Codes of Practice. Specific responsibilities may be delegated to church personnel.

Responsibility of the Churchwardens

Responsibility to ensure that the arrangements outlined in this policy are carried out and updated as necessary is with the Churchwardens.

Responsibility of the Parochial Church Council

The Parochial Church Council has general responsibility to ensure that the Health & Safety Policy is implemented.

Responsibility of the Health and Safety Officer

The responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of the arrangements outlined in this policy is carried by the Health and Safety officer.

The Health & Safety Officer will ensure:

- they are familiar with Health & Safety Regulations as far as they concern church premises;
- they are familiar with the Health & Safety policy and arrangements and ensure they are observed;
- that safe systems of work are in place so far as is reasonably practicable;
- the church and hall, if applicable, are clean and tidy;
- the car park and church grounds are properly maintained;
- that safety equipment and clothing is provided and used by all personnel where this is required;
- that all plant, equipment and tools are properly maintained and in good condition and that all operators have received the appropriate training;
- that adequate access and egress is maintained;
- adequate fire fighting equipment is available and maintained;
- that food hygiene regulations and procedures are observed;
- that all Risk Assessments are carried out and updated promptly.

Responsibility of employees and voluntary workers

All employees and voluntary workers have a responsibility to co-operate in the implementation of this policy and to take reasonable care of themselves and others whilst on church business or premises.

Employees and voluntary workers must therefore:

- comply with safety rules, operating instructions, working procedures and risk assessments
- use protective clothing and equipment when it is required

- report any fault or defect in equipment immediately to the appropriate person
- report all accidents (however minor), injuries, near misses or other potential safety hazards as soon as possible
- not misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety.

Responsible people

The following are responsible for particular areas of activity:

Accident book and reporting	Church office staff
Building defects and glazing	Chair of the fabric committee
Car park and pathways	Health & Safety Officer
Children and vulnerable people protection	Parish safeguarding officer
Contractors	Chair of the fabric committee
Display screen equipment	Health & Safety Officer
Emergency evacuation	Health & Safety Officer
Fire extinguishers and annual servicing	Church office staff
Fixed electrical system	Health & Safety Officer
Floors and stairs	Church office staff
Food preparation	Church office staff
Gas equipment	Health & Safety Officer
Hazardous substances	Health & Safety Officer
Health & Safety training	Health & Safety Officer
Manual handling	Health & Safety Officer
Music	Music coordinator
Outings	Health & Safety Officer
Personal safety	Health & Safety Officer
Plant and machinery	Health & Safety Officer
Portable electrical appliances	Church office staff
Special services	Health & Safety Officer
Working at high levels inc light bulb changing	Health & Safety Officer

Some responsibilities may be assigned to others who have specialist expertise. In the absence of a nominated person, responsibility falls to a churchwarden or the vicar.

Implementation

This section sets out our arrangements to minimise as far as is reasonably practicable risks to the health and safety of employees, voluntary workers, members of the congregation, visitors and contractors.

Accidents and First Aid

First Aid boxes are located in:

- The church lounge
- The church kitchen
- The hall kitchen. The hall kitchen freezer contains cold compresses.
- The upper room

A list of qualified GPs and people with first aid qualifications is kept by the church office and updated when required.

The accident books are located in the Church office.

All accidents and incidents are entered in the accident book or on an accident report form, and our insurers may be advised, depending on the accident seriousness.

When the Church or Church hall is let to outside organisations, they are told in writing that in the event of an accident, details must be entered in the accident book. A separate book is kept for this purpose.

Accident books and accident records are regularly reviewed, and may be brought to the attention of the PCC if appropriate.

Fire safety

Our policy is to fulfil our obligations under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. In order to achieve this, we undertake the following:

- an assessment of the fire risks in the church and associated buildings and the risks to our neighbours. This is carried out either as a specific exercise or as part of our general Health & Safety risk assessments.
- a check that a fire can be detected in a reasonable time and that people can be warned
- a check that people who may be in the building can get out safely including if necessary the provision of emergency lighting and fire exit signage
- to provide reasonable fire fighting equipment
- a check that those in the building know what to do if there is a fire
- a regular check that our fire fighting equipment is in place and is serviceable, and that there is an annual maintenance contract in place with a reputable company

Fire extinguishers

Fire extinguishers are kept in the following locations:

Location	Type of extinguisher	Capacity
Church office	CO ₂	2 kg
Lobby	Foam	6 litres
Hall	Foam	6 litres
Kitchen	CO ₂	2 kg
Top landing	Foam	6 litres
Cellar	Dry powder	6 kg
Choir vestry	Foam	6 litres
Chancel	Foam	6 litres
Back of church by hatch	Foam	6 litres
Back of church by fuse cupboard	CO ₂	2 kg
Upper room	Foam	6 litres
Upper room	CO ₂	2 kg
Lounge	Foam	6 litres
Lounge	CO ₂	2 kg

The extinguishers are checked every three months by the responsible person to ensure that they are still in place and have not been discharged.

They are checked annually by an appropriate organisation.

Smoke alarms

Smoke alarms are located in the organ loft and at the top of the hall stairs.

The responsible person tests the smoke alarms annually and replaces the batteries as required.

Other fire protection equipment

There is a fire blanket in the kitchen.

The responsible person will check every three months that it is still in place.

Evacuation procedure

Area of church	Exit door(s)
South aisle	South door
North aisle	Choir vestry/Committee room
Nave	West door

Hall	Fire doors
Kitchen, hall corridor, lobby	Fire door at end of corridor
Lounge, vestry, committee room	Hall entrance doors

For large services, where the congregation exceeds 300, our procedures for stewarding and evacuation are as follows:

- All designated fire doors must be unlocked before the service commences and be clearly marked as fire exits using the 'Running Man' symbol
- A check must be made that all doors can be opened
- A trained steward must be allotted to each door and have responsibility for people in a specific part of the church.
- Responsibility for using each fire extinguisher will be allotted to named and trained stewards
- Torches must be available for each steward.
- In the event of an emergency, an announcement to leave the building will be made by the service leader.
- People will assemble at the assembly point in the car park near Rugby Road.
- The emergency services will be contacted immediately by a nominated person.

Evacuation drills

Fire evacuation drills will be carried out where and when considered necessary. All employees and voluntary workers should ensure they are familiar with escape routes and ensure these are kept clear and unobstructed.

If you discover a fire

1. Immediately raise the alarm.
2. Telephone the emergency services.
3. Check the building for occupants.
4. Attack the fire if possible within your capability using the appliances provided, but without taking personal risk.
5. If not possible to attack the fire or if you are unsure which fire extinguisher to use, assist in the evacuation of the building, ensuring that all doors are closed behind you. The general rule is people before property.
6. Evacuate to the designated assembly point in the car park near Rugby Road.
7. Ensure clear access for the emergency vehicles.

Electrical safety

A list of all our portable electrical appliances is maintained by the responsible person.

Every quarter plugs, cables and sockets will be inspected by the responsible person to ensure that there are no loose connections, worn flexes or trailing leads. Any necessary repairs will be undertaken or reported to a churchwarden.

Every year all our portable electrical equipment will be tested by a competent contractor who is a member of the NICEIC (National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contracting), ECA

(Electrical Contractors Association) or other approved body to ensure that all appliances are safe. Any unsafe equipment will be repaired or safely disposed of.

Every five years, our fixed electrical system will be inspected and tested by a competent contractor who is a member of the NICEIC, ECA or other approved body. Any necessary remedial work will be carried out.

At intervals of not more than two years our lightning conductor system will be examined and tested by a competent specialist firm of lightning engineers.

Misuse and abuse of electricity is a significant cause of fires and injury, and faulty electrical equipment can kill.

Therefore, all employees and voluntary workers must observe the following:

- Visually check all electrical equipment before use.
- Report all faults immediately to the responsible person.
- Do not attempt to use or repair faulty equipment.
- No electrical equipment is to be brought onto the premises and used until it has been tested by the approved person and entered in the electrical equipment record.
- Electrical equipment should be switched off and disconnected when not in use for long periods.
- Flexible cables should be so positioned and so protected that they do not constitute a tripping hazard and are not subject to mechanical damage.

Gas equipment safety

Our gas boilers and any other gas equipment are maintained and checked annually by a Gas Safe registered gas installer.

Any necessary work required for safety is implemented immediately.

These arrangements are checked by the responsible person.

Hazardous substances

The responsible person will maintain a list of all hazardous substances used in the church and hall.

We try to avoid using hazardous substances whenever possible. However, when we do need to use them, we have strict safety procedures in place. All hazardous substances are labeled with their hazards. These labels can include harmful, irritant, corrosive, toxic, flammable, explosive, and oxidizing. We use the manufacturer's data sheets or product information to determine the correct way to use these substances. This includes the correct protective clothing to wear, how to store the substances, and what to do in the event of an accident.

Hazardous substances commonly stored include:

Locked in kitchen	Johnson Diversey Suma Linos Dishwasher liquid detergent Johnson Diversey Suma Maro Dishwasher liquid rinse aid
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Locked in tool cupboard in vestry	Oven cleaner Disinfectant Descaler Carpet cleaner Methylated spirit Chewing gum remover Silver and brass polish Drain cleaner Carefree Mop & Shine floor stripper 1 Carefree Mop & Shine floor polish 2 & 3 Carefree Mop & Shine floor maintainer 3 Carefree polish stripper
Locked in cleaners cupboard	Espo Disinfectant CIF wood floor cleaner Carpet cleaner
Locked in cupboard in kitchen at back of church	Various cleaning products

Safety of plant and machinery

The responsible person will maintain a list of all items of plant and machinery.

Employees and voluntary workers must not operate plant or machinery that they are not trained and authorised to use.

Employees and voluntary workers must not ride on any parts of machinery not intended for that use.

Machinery must be switched off before any adjustments are made.

After carrying out maintenance and adjustments, all guards must be replaced before the machinery is used.

Before using any item of plant or machinery, a check must be made to ensure it is in a safe working condition, correctly adjusted, and there are no loose nuts, bolts or other defects.

The appropriate personal protective equipment detailed below must be worn when operating any item of plant or machinery.

People under the age of 18 may use hand tools only and are not permitted to operate any power driven item of plant or machinery.

Ladders may only be used when other equipment such as tower scaffolds or mobile elevated work platforms cannot be used and for work of short duration provided they can be safely secured. This may necessitate the use of ladder ties.

Any defect and damage found to any item of plant or machinery must be reported to the responsible person.

All plant and machinery will be regularly maintained and a schedule kept of maintenance requirements.

People must not work on their own unless they have a means of communication and have notified a colleague of the details of the work being undertaken and agreed a procedure to ensure their safety is checked on.

Vacuum cleaners, floor polishers, microwave ovens and all other portable appliances will undergo an annual PAT test carried out by a qualified person.

Slips, trips and falls – condition of floors, steps and paths

To reduce the risk of slips, trips and falls as far as is reasonably practicable, all floors and stairs in the church and hall and all paths and steps in the church grounds will be inspected every quarter by the responsible person.

Particular note will be made of moss, algae and leaves on paths. Any defects will be fixed or reported to a churchwarden who will arrange for repairs or remedial measures to be carried out.

Lighting

In order to ensure that the church is adequately lit, an inspection will be made every month by the responsible person to ensure that all lights in the church, hall and church grounds are working. Any bulbs that require replacing will be reported to H&S Churchwarden who will ensure that the bulbs are replaced in a timely manner, ensuring that the safety procedures for the replacement of bulbs is followed.

Working at High Levels

The following areas are designated as high levels:

- Internal: Chancel (lighting), Hall (lighting), Church (decoration and maintenance)
- External: Erection of banners etc, Work on building up to ladder level, Work on building suspended from tower, Work on building using scaffolding

Only contractors with their own indemnity or competent volunteers with appropriate safeguards may work at high level.

Changing light bulbs in the Nave is authorized without special agreement.

The appropriate training will be given and a system of recording will detail who is working where at any time.

Preparation of food

We ensure that:

- we follow the appropriate regulations governing the preparation and storage of foodstuffs;
- all food handlers have received adequate supervision, instruction and training;
- the appropriate assessment of risks is carried out for the foods to be prepared and stored including storage at the correct temperatures;
- all hirers who wish to provide foodstuffs are advised of the facilities and procedures.

Before any preparation commences, all surfaces coming into contact with food must be washed down and disinfected

Foodstuffs may only be prepared in the kitchen.

A list of those with food preparation, hygiene and allergy training is kept by the church office and updated when required.

Manual handling – lifting, carrying and moving loads

Our policy is to eliminate the need for manual handling as far as is reasonably practicable

Where it is not possible to avoid the need to move loads, we will carry out risk assessments and make use of lifting aids, including trolleys, lifts and hoists as far as possible

The necessary training will be given to all those employees and voluntary workers who are required to undertake manual handling and only those people who have received the appropriate training are authorised to undertake manual handling tasks.

Display screen equipment

Our policy is to assess the risks to all habitual users of computer workstations and to reduce those risks to the lowest level possible. The following factors will be considered when carrying out risk assessments:

- Stability and legibility of the screen
- Contrast and brightness of the screen
- Tilt and swivel of the screen
- Suitability of keyboards, desks and chairs
- The work station environment
- The user friendliness of the software

Daily work routines will involve periods away from the screen. Where necessary, risk assessments will be carried out by the responsible person.

Hazardous buildings and glazing

Our policy is to ensure that our buildings are safe and without risks to the health, safety and welfare of all who work in and use them. In order to achieve this, the buildings are inspected externally every quarter by a contractor.

Any defects noted are immediately reported to and the procedures put in hand for repairs.

Where necessary, temporary measures are taken to ensure that there is no risk of accident or injury until permanent repairs can be carried out.

A check has been made of any asbestos in the building by a competent person noting its location, type and condition. Where necessary, asbestos will be removed by an approved contractor. Information regarding any asbestos remaining in the building is given to all contractors and anyone else who may be affected.

A check is made of all glazing in the buildings to ensure that any glass in windows below waist height and in doors and beside doors below shoulder height is of a safety material or is protected against breakage.

Safeguarding and child protection

Our policy and procedures for safeguarding and child protection are held in separate documents.

A statement upholding our procedures will be made at each annual church meeting and be suitably recorded.

A permanent record will be maintained of all accidents involving children.

Personal safety

Risk assessments are undertaken to assess the risks to people working alone in the church, travelling to and from church, accepting people into their homes and handling cash and other valuables.

Procedures must be drawn up, including the appropriate control measures.

Risk assessments for activities

Risk assessments will be carried out on all areas of the church premises and all activities that carry a significant risk. They will be reviewed at regular intervals by a competent person in order to meet our obligations under The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999, amended 2003 and 2006.

Risk assessments relating to specific threats may generate specific risk assessments.

We will use, modify and update all relevant risk assessments recommended by the Church of England, including those relating to Covid 19 regulations.

Risk assessment documents will be made available to all church and hall premises users.

Contractors

Anyone entering church premises for the purposes of carrying out work, other than an employee or voluntary worker of the church, will be regarded as a contractor.

All contractors, including self-employed, must:

- have their own Health & Safety policy where required by law and be able to provide a copy of it;
- produce evidence that they have appropriate public and employers' liability insurance in place;
- comply with all the requirements of this Health & Safety policy and co-operate with the church officials in providing a safe place of work and a safe system of operation;
- show that plant and equipment brought onto the church premises has been inspected and tested to ensure its safe operation.

A record of this evidence will be kept by the church office.

Contractors may use sub-contractors or people other than their own direct employees with the express permission of the church officials. However, responsibility will remain with the contractors.

All contractors will be given detailed instructions regarding the areas where they are permitted to work and the extent of the work they are authorised to undertake. They will also be advised of any specific or unusual safety precautions they must undertake.

Further information

<p>Environmental Health Service Information: Warwick District Council Environmental Health Riverside House Leamington Spa Tel 01926 456725 (Environmental Protection) Tel 01926 456712 (Food Safety)</p>	<p>Employment Medical Advisory Service Information: Employment Medical Advisory Service Health and Safety Executive Belgrave House Greyfriars Northampton Tel 01604 738300</p>
<p>Health & Safety Executive Information Line: 0845 345 0055 HSE Books: 01787 881165</p>	

Health & Safety law poster

A copy of the HSE poster 'Health and Safety Law – what you should know' is displayed in the church office.