



Christ Church Flackwell Heath Health and Safety Policy

General statement of policy

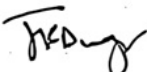
Our policy is to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that our activities are carried out safely and do not pose a risk to the health, safety and welfare of our congregation, employees, volunteers, visitors and others who may use and visit the church, associated buildings, church grounds or any other area we are responsible for. This will be in accordance with good practice and any relevant statutory provisions where they apply.

This policy sets out the allocation of duties for health and safety matters, and the particular arrangements to be made.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and appropriate changes made. It will be approved at the Parochial Church Council (PCC).

To ensure that health and safety matters are kept constantly under review, an item on health and safety is on the agenda for all Fabric Committee meetings. Any salient points are then raised as part of the Churchwarden's report at each Parochial Church Council (PCC) and Standing Committee (SC) meeting.

It is the duty of each employee and volunteer to exercise personal responsibility for their own safety and that of others. This policy will be brought to their attention. A copy of the policy will be kept in the office and made available to others on request.

Signed: 

Revd James Dwyer | Vicar

Date: 18th March 2024

To all employees, volunteers, and contractors:

This policy depends on your co-operation. It is imperative that you read it thoroughly to understand your role and the overall arrangements for health and safety.

Organisation and responsibilities

The Vicar has overall responsibility for health and safety. Necessary arrangements need to be in place to follow relevant codes of practice and health and safety regulations.

The Churchwardens, the Parochial Church Council (PCC), and the Fabric Committee have day-to-day responsibility for implementing our policy. Together with the help of the Administrator, they will ensure that:

- the standards set out in this policy are implemented and maintained
- where necessary, specialist health and safety assistance is obtained

- any hazards reported to them are rectified immediately
- only competent persons carry out repairs, modifications, inspections and tests
- where defects cannot be corrected immediately, interim steps are taken to prevent danger
- all accidents are reported in line with the requirements of this policy
- advice is sought where clarification is necessary on the implementation of this policy
- they set a personal example on matters of health and safety.

Tasks include:

- familiarity with the health and safety policy and arrangements
- ensuring the health and safety policy and arrangements are followed
- familiarity with health and safety regulations
- ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe systems of work are in place
- ensuring the church and building are clean and tidy
- ensuring church grounds are properly maintained, including trees
- ensuring that safety equipment and clothing is provided and used by all personnel, where this is required
- ensuring that all tools, equipment and plant are properly maintained and in good condition
- ensuring that appropriate training has been completed to operate tools and equipment
- ensuring adequate firefighting equipment is available and maintained
- ensuring that food hygiene regulations and procedures are observed.

All employees and volunteers have a responsibility to comply with this policy and to take reasonable care of themselves and others while on church business or premises. Therefore, they must:

- read this policy and understand what is required of them
- complete their work taking any necessary precautions to protect themselves and others
- comply with any safety rules, operating instructions and other working procedures
- use protective equipment and clothing, when required
- report any hazard, defect or damage, so that this might be dealt with
- report any accident, injuries or other potential safety hazards
- warn any new employees or volunteers of known hazards
- attend any training required to enable them to carry out their duties safely
- not undertake any repair or modification, unless they are competent to do so
- not misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety.

Implementation of the policy

This section outlines our arrangements to minimise the risks, as far as is reasonably practicable, to the health and safety of members of the congregation, employees, volunteers, contractors, visitors and external users.

First aid

First aid boxes are located in the kitchen and in the vestry. These are maintained and kept up to date by the Administrator. The Administrator also keeps the list of the trained first aiders.

At church events, there should be a minimum of one trained first aider present. External bookings are responsible for arranging their own cover.

Accident reporting

The accident book can be found in the kitchen, with instructions on how to use it. It is regularly reviewed.

All accidents and incidents must be recorded in the accident book, with a copy then given to the Administrator.

In the event of a reportable accident, our insurers will be informed by our Administrator and due process will be adhered to in accordance with the 'Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations'.

Anyone hiring our facilities will be informed in writing that, in the event of an accident, they must complete the details in the accident book and follow the due process.

Fire safety

We use the services of an external company, together with our Administrator, to ensure our fire systems are regularly maintained.

Electrical safety

Users of electrical equipment should take responsibility for ensuring that the equipment is safe to use. To identify most potential hazards, a user can make a visual quick yet thorough check.

The Churchwardens and Fabric Committee also carry out a visual inspection of the fixed electrical installations regularly.

Any faults must be reported to the Churchwardens. Any faulty items should not be used, and either removed or clearly labelled not to be used until fixed.

The Churchwardens maintain a list of portable electrical appliances and review this each year. A competent person with an appropriate level of electrical knowledge and experience who has the correct equipment to complete the tests, knows how to use it and can correctly interpret the results, will then test all the portable electrical equipment on an annual basis. Any unsafe equipment will be safely disposed of.

Our fixed electrical system will be inspected and tested by a competent contractor who is a 'Full Scope' member of the NICEIC, ECA or NAPIT every five years, with any remedial work being carried out.

The abuse and misuse of electricity is a significant cause of fire and injury, and faulty electrical equipment can kill.

We expect all employees, volunteers or users of the building to comply with the following:

- ensure electrical equipment is not brought onto the premises and used until it has been tested by the approved person and entered into the electrical equipment record
- visually check all electrical equipment before use
- do not attempt to use or repair faulty electrical equipment
- report all faults immediately to the Administrator and Churchwardens
- switch off and disconnect electrical equipment when not in use for long periods of time
- ensure flexible cables are positioned and protected so they do not constitute a tripping hazard and are not subject to mechanical damage
- do not overload extension cables and only use extension cables when necessary.

Heating systems and gas equipment

We will ensure that the gas heating system is suitably maintained and checked annually by a competent contractor who is registered with the Gas Safety Register. All other gas equipment will also be included in this yearly inspection. Any defects found will be corrected immediately.

Hazardous substances

The Administrator keeps an up-to-date list of hazardous substances.

Data sheets, or product information provided by the manufacturer, are used for all hazardous substances to determine the correct method of use as well as the protective clothing needed, method of storage, and the action to take in the event of an accident. These data sheets are available in the office.

Instructions for use of cleaning products are also available in the office or in the cleaning cupboards.

Chemicals should not be mixed or stored in unmarked containers.

Asbestos

We will take steps to identify the presence of asbestos in our buildings and, if so, assess any risk from it.

We will then implement any plan to manage that risk. We will also provide relevant information to others who might need it (for example, building contractors). We will keep records of the checks, assessments and plans we have made.

Safety of plant and equipment

The Churchwardens and the Fabric Committee, together with the help of volunteers, check and maintain the safety of plant and equipment.

The procedures for checking and rules for use are:

- 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 that there are no defects
- any damage or defects must be reported to the Churchwardens and Fabric Committee members and not used until fit to do so
- before any adjustments are made, machinery must be switched off
- the Churchwardens and PCC will decide if any maintenance work should be done by a contractor or by a trained and competent volunteer
- the safety of other users of the building must be taken into consideration when planning any work
- plant or machinery should only be operated by those who are trained and authorised to do so
- the appropriate personal protective equipment must be worn when operating any item of plant or machinery
- persons under the age of 18 may use hand tools only and are not permitted to operate any power-driven item of plant or machinery
- all plant and machinery must be regularly maintained, and a schedule kept of maintenance requirements
- persons 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
- specific risk assessments may need to be written.

Slips, trips, and falls

The Churchwardens and Fabric Committee regularly undertake inspections to reduce, as far as is reasonably practicable, the risks of slips, trips and falls.

External lighting should be used during the hours of darkness.

The Churchwardens will arrange for repairs and remedial measures to be completed.

Working at high levels

High level can be defined as working where there is a risk of falling, or where any sort of aid, such as a stepladder, is required in order to complete the work.

Working at high level should be avoided wherever possible and people must not be on their own when using above a single height step ladder. Tall ladders need to be supported at the foot while work is being carried out.

Ladders must be checked for defects before use, and any defects found reported to the Churchwardens. Any ladders with defects must be clearly labelled to ensure others do not use them.

All ladders will be inspected annually, with labels applied to confirm the inspection has been undertaken.

Only approved contractors and competent volunteers and staff may work at high level. In order to work at height and be competent, you must have been trained in the use of ladders or any other equipment required to work at high level.

Manufacturer's instructions must be followed at all times.

Preparation of food

We will ensure that on those occasions when we prepare food, we use a clean and disinfected work surface, utensils and equipment. We will store food in such a way as to avoid contamination, provide hand washing-facilities and suitable arrangements for the disposal of waste.

Manual handling

We will avoid the need for lifting or carrying heavy objects as far as is possible. Where this is not practical, we will make use of lifting aids (such as trolleys) or other precautions including team lifting.

Display screen equipment

We will assess the risk of employers who regularly use computer workstations and to reduce these risks as much as possible. Factors which will be considered are:

- workstation and work surface
- suitability of keyboards, desks and chairs
- display screen.

A display screen equipment workstation risk assessment will be carried out, where necessary.

Employees will also build in periods away from the screen into their daily work routines.

Safeguarding

The Safeguarding Policy can be found on Christ Church Flackwell Heath's website.

Personal safety and lone working

Lone working can mean you are the only one in the church and related buildings, but it can also apply if you are offsite for pastoral visits or other church-related activities. It can refer to employees, volunteers and contractors, such as cleaners.

If you are working alone on site, you must ensure the building is secure, ensuring all external doors are locked. It is also advisable to be familiar with alternative exit routes from the building and carry a mobile phone with you for emergencies. Lone workers should not let people they do not know into the building.

Anyone who locks up the church building on their own should have a mobile phone with them for emergencies and let someone know where they are so, if they are late, they will be alerted.

Anyone meeting people outside the church for pastoral visits should follow the guidance in the 'Pastoral visiting team – job description and confidentiality code'.

Risk assessments

We will complete risk assessments to identify what we need to do to comply with health and safety law. We will record our findings, implementing any necessary precautions. We will review and revise these where we suspect that they are no longer valid.

Electronic copies of risk assessments are filed by the Administrator.

Contractors

Anyone, other than an employee or volunteer of Christ Church Flackwell Heath, that enters church premises in order to carry out work will be regarded as a contractor.

We will make sure that contractors have their own health and safety policy (where required by law) and Public and Employer's Liability Insurance in place. Contractors will need to provide a copy to the Administrator to keep on record.

Where contractors use plant and machinery, they will need to be able to show that the equipment has been tested and inspected to ensure it is safe to operate.

Contractors will also be expected to abide by this policy.

Health and safety law poster

A copy of the HSE poster 'health and safety law – what you should know' is displayed in the office.

Approved by: Standing Committee

Owner: Churchwardens

Date updated: February 2024

Review Date: February 2025