St Mary’s Health & Safety Policy

1. **General Statement**

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 and voluntary helpers, and to provide such information, training and supervision as they need for this purpose. We will also endeavour to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all members of the congregation, contractors, visitors and others who may visit the church and associated buildings.

The allocation of duties for safety matters and the particular arrangements which we will make to implement the policy are set out below. The policy will be kept up to date, particularly in the light of any changes to our buildings or activities. To ensure this, the policy and the way in which it has operated will be reviewed every two years and the appropriate changes made. In order to ensure that health and safety matters are kept constantly under review, they will be reviewed annually at Vestry meetings and employees and voluntary workers will be consulted on a regular basis in order to seek their views on health and safety matters.

1. **Organisation & responsibilities**

This church is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment with a purpose of protecting employees, volunteers, visitors, contractors, church property and the environment.

Overall responsibility for health and safety is that of the Priest in Charge. The Churchwardens and Vestry have general responsibility to provide the required resources to ensure the health and safety policy is implemented. To achieve the church’s commitment to promote health and safety on its premises, the Vestry have appointed a Safety Officer who is responsible for ensuring the church’s health and safety procedures are complied with.  The Safety Officer is Martin Bland.

* 1. **The responsibility of the Safety Officer shall be to:**
* be familiar with Health and Safety Regulations as far as they concern church premises;
* be familiar with the health and safety policy and arrangements, ensuring they are observed;
* ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe systems of work are in place;
* ensure the church and hall are clean and tidy and highlight any safety concerns to the appropriate persons;
* ensure the church and it’s environment is properly maintained including the safety of trees, retaining walls, paths, carpark and driveway etc and highlight any safety concerns to the maintenance team and Vestry;
* ensure safety equipment is provided and used by all personnel where this is required (e.g. for cleaning- gloves, safety straps for ladders);
* ensure all plant, equipment and tools belonging to the Parish are properly maintained and in good condition. Appropriate training for any new plant or equipment brought on site should be provided to those likely to be operating this e.g. a new gas heater, floor sander, rug doctor carpet cleaner etc.
* ensure adequate access and egress is maintained;
* ensure adequate firefighting equipment is available and maintained.

* 1. **Responsibility of employees and voluntary workers**

All employees and voluntary helpers have a responsibility to co-operate in the implementation of this health and safety policy and to take reasonable care of themselves and others whilst on church business or premises, pastoral visits or meetings off the church site.

Employees and voluntary workers must therefore:

* be involved in and contribute to the parish health and safety system
* comply with safety rules, operating instructions and working procedures;
* use protective clothing and equipment when it is reasonably required e.g. if working at height on ladders, gloves when cleaning;
* report any fault or defect in equipment as soon as possible to the Administrator or Safety Officer;
* report all accidents (however minor), injuries, near misses or other potential safety hazards as soon as possible Administrator or Safety Officer;
* report any pain or discomfort (OOS) as soon as possible to the Safety Officer;
* assist new employees, volunteers and visitors to the church understand the right safety procedures and why they exist;
* minimise the risk of any trips and falls by keeping the church and hall tidy;
* not misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety.

Management (Vestry and the Priest/s in charge) will:

* establish and maintain acceptable standards for the worksite
* carry out regular hazard identification & maintain a hazard register (see appendix one for an example)
* ensure hazards are eliminated, isolated or minimised;
* provide training and required personal protective equipment where necessary;
* monitor employee/ volunteer health and safety performance;
* ensure church premises inspections are completed regularly;
* correct unsafe practices or conditions;
* investigate all serious church (worksite) incidents and monitor the record of less serious incidents .

1. **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.

* 1. **Accidents & First Aid**

First Aid boxes are located:

* Two are kept in the Kitchen on the bench beside the pantry

The accident book is located beside the First Aid box in the Kitchen.

All accidents and incidents must be entered in the accident book. Ideally at the time of the accident. This can be entered by any person who has full knowledge of the incident and should be reviewed by the safety officer.

**3.2 General fire safety**

Our policy is to fulfil our obligations under the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997

(as amended 1999). In order to achieve this, we undertake the following;

* + - * an assessment of the fire risks in the church and associated buildings;
      * a check that a fire can be detected in a reasonable time and people can be warned;
      * a check that people who may be in the building can get out safely;
* provide reasonable firefighting equipment;
* a check that those in the building know what to do if there is a fire;
* a regular check that our firefighting equipment is in place and is serviceable and
* there is an annual maintenance contract in place with a reputable company;
* training is provided for regular users of the church & hall to ensure they know how to use the fire extinguishers and hose.
* The church has 1 fire extinguisher and 1 fire hose. The hall has 1 fire extinguishers, a fire alarm and a fire blanket for cooking fires and in case clothing should catch alight.

**If you discover a fire (no matter how small):**

* + - 1. Immediately raise the alarm
      2. Telephone the emergency services (dial 111 for fire brigade)
      3. Check the building for occupants

1. Attack the fire if possible within your capability using the appliances provided, but without taking personal risk
2. 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.**
3. Ensure clear access for emergency vehicles

**3.3. Electrical Safety**

* + - * At regular intervals, plugs, cables and sockets to be inspected to ensure there are no loose connections, worn flexes or trailing leads. Any repairs needed to be carried out by a competent electrician.
      * Every five years the fixed electrical system to be inspected and tested by a competent contractor who is a member of the NICEIC, ECA or other approved body. Any necessary remedial work to be carried out.

Misuse and abuse of electricity is a significant cause of fires and injury. Faulty electrical equipment can kill. All employees and voluntary workers must observe the following;

* + 1. visually check all electrical equipment before use;
    2. report all faults immediately to the Administrator, as soon as noted;
    3. do not attempt to use or repair faulty equipment;
    4. electrical equipment should be switched off and disconnected when not in use for long periods;
    5. flexible cables should be so positioned and so protected that they do not constitute a tripping hazard and are not subject to mechanical damage.

**3.4 Gas equipment safety**

Gas heating and other gas equipment is to be maintained and checked every 2 years by a competent contractor who is a registered gas installer. Any necessary work required for safety to be implemented immediately. All employees and voluntary workers must observe the following;

* + 1. visually check all gas equipment before use; if you can smell gas- **DO NOT** turn on the equipment;
    2. report all faults immediately to the Administrator, as soon as noted;
    3. do not attempt to use or repair faulty equipment;
    4. gas equipment should be switched off and disconnected when not in use for long periods;

**3.5 Hazardous substances**

Where at all possible, the use of hazardous substances has been eliminated. Where this is not possible, hazardous substances are locked away and only used by persons with the appropriate experience.

* Use personal protective equipment where appropriate.
* Do not mix chemicals.
* Do not store chemicals in unmarked containers or unlocked cupboards.

**3.6 Safety of plant and machinery**

* Employees and voluntary workers must not operate plant or machinery that they are not trained and authorised to 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 safe working condition, correctly adjusted and that there are no loose nuts, bolts or other defects.
* The appropriate personal protective equipment must be worn when operating any item of plant or machinery e.g. floor sander, weed eater, lawn mower etc
* 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.
* Ladders may only be used when they can be safely secured. This may necessitate the use of ladder ties or a two-person operation.
* Any defect or damage found to any item of plant or machinery must be reported to the Administrator or Safety Officer as soon as possible.
* Any plant or machinery to be regularly maintained and a schedule kept of maintenance requirements.

**3.7 Slips, trips and falls (condition of floors, steps and paths)**

In order to reduce as far as is reasonably practicable the risk of slips, trips and falls, regular inspection is to be made of floors and stairs in church, hall, and all paths and steps in the churchyard. Particular note to be made of moss, algae, leaves on paths and broken paths etc. Any defects are to be reported and repairs carried out.

**3.8 Lighting**

In order to ensure the church is adequately lit, regular inspections are to be carried out ensuring all lights in the church, hall and churchyard are working and are replaced as necessary. The necessary safety precautions will be followed for replacing bulbs at high levels.

As a precaution against all burglary attempts and arson attempts, the entrances of church and hall have security lights fitted.

**3.9 Working at high levels**

Only approved contractors or competent volunteers may work at high levels, subject to the necessary safety provisions being in place. Ladders may only be used when they can be safely secured. This may necessitate the use of ladder ties or a two-person operation.

* 1. **Preparation of food**
     + - All the appropriate regulations governing the preparation and storage of foodstuffs are to be followed;
       - The appropriate assessment of risks to be carried out for food preparation and storage, including storage at correct temperatures, washing hands and utensils before and after preparing food.
       - Before any preparation commences, surfaces coming into contact with food to be washed down with warm soapy water.
       - Other organisations using the church kitchen for food preparation are responsible the preparation and storage of all their food and using best practice food safety guidelines.

**3.11. Manual handling [Lifting, Carrying, Pushing and Moving Loads (4.5kg & above)]**

* Our policy is to eliminate the need for manual handling as far as reasonably practicable.
* Where it is not possible to avoid the need to move loads (e.g. moving trestle tables in the hall), the use of lifting aids is recommended, including trolleys, additional persons, lifts and hoists as far as practical for the individual situation.

**3.12. Hazardous buildings/ glazing**

* Our policy is to ensure our buildings are safe and without risks to the health, safety and the welfare of all who work in and use them. In order to achieve this, the buildings are regularly inspected and any defects noted are immediately reported 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 is made of all glazing in the building 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. The use of signage maybe required.

**3.13. Contractors**

Anyone entering the church premises for the purpose of carrying out work, other than an employee or voluntary worker of the church, will be regarded as a contractor. All contractors, including the self-employed, must abide by the following:

* + - 1. Have their own health and safety policy (required by law) and be able to provide a copy of the same.
      2. Produce evidence they have appropriate public and employers liability insurance in place. A record of this evidence will be maintained.
      3. Comply with all requirements of this health and safety policy and cooperate with the church officials in providing a safe place of work and a safe system of operation.
      4. Where plant and machinery is brought onto church premises by contractors, they must be able to show where necessary that the equipment has been inspected and tested to ensure its safe operation.
      5. Contractors may only use sub-contractors or persons other than their own direct employees with the express permission of the church officials. However, responsibility will remain with the contractors.

**3.14. Other**

*Hazardous substances*

1. Polishes and materials used for cleaning are kept in a locked cupboard.
2. Cleaning fluids such as washing up liquid are kept in a cupboard under the sink in the kitchen. Child safety locks are installed on these cupboards. No children are allowed unsupervised in the kitchen.

*Evacuation exits*

All exits are clearly sign posted. These are checked quarterly as part of our fire safety inspection by Life Safety Services Ltd.

*Personal safety*

Our policy is that wherever possible tasks in the church and hall should be done in the company of at least one other. This would especially apply after dark. Priests carrying out confidential counselling should ensure there is at least one other person in the church buildings (not present in the room where counselling is taking place- just on the premises for safety) with them (other than the client).

*Parking*

Some parking spaces are available on the church grounds. We strongly recommend these are used for our disabled and elderly visitors. We recommend drivers (if able) reverse park into these spaces as there are regularly young children around the entrance to the church buildings. This will assist the driver to be able to see them at the entrance more effectively when leaving the church premises.

Children should not be unsupervised on the carpark. The gate to the foyer of the church and hall should be latched at all times.

*No Smoking*

St Mary’s has a strict **NO SMOKING** policy within the church buildings and grounds, in order to maintain the wellbeing of all people visiting and the safety of the buildings and visitors.

*Rubbish Bin*

St Mary’s rubbish bin is to be kept away from the main buildings on the other side of the carpark as is required by our insurer, to minimise the risk of fire.

*Child safety*

Unless under direct adult supervision, children under (12 years of age) are not permitted to;

Free range/play in St Mary's grounds or buildings;

Play with or use any St Mary's plant, equipment or facilities;

Enter the kitchen or any storage areas.

**Appendix One**

**Hazard Register**

**Location: Date of Assessment:\_**April 2016\_**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Hazards** | **Potential Harm** | **Eliminate, Isolate or Minimise** | **Controls** |
| Children | Accidents | Minimise | Gate & fencing to foyer of hall & church always secured.  Children are not to play in the car park without parental supervision |
| Dishwash detergent in the kitchen cupboards | Poisoning of children | Isolate | Child safety catches to be applied to cupboards  No children unsupervised to be allowed in the kitchen |
| Cleaning chemicals | Poisoning of children  Skin irritation to cleaners | Isolate | All cleaning chemicals to be locked in the cleaner’s cupboard. This cupboard requires a lock on the door to be installed.  Disposable gloves to be available & used by cleaners |
| Falling furniture during earthquake | Injury to persons in the vicinity | Minimise | Earthquake strapping & securing of large items of furniture to the walls including bookshelves, filing cabinets, unsecured items in storeroom etc as per hazard identification survey carried out in 2016 |
| Wires & cords around band area | Trips & falls | Minimise | All wires & cords on floor are covered & secured to prevent falls. |
|  |  |  |  |