



## **HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY**

**October 2025**

### **1. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY**

Our church should be a healthy, safe environment in which people come together to worship Almighty God and to enjoy a range of activities which contribute to life in all its fullness.

This Policy sets out how the PCC intends to meet its legal responsibilities to ensure the safety of all staff, volunteers and visitors using its premises. In this Policy the word “Employer” means the PCC and the word “Employee” means all staff and volunteers working or serving at St Christopher’s, whether or not they are paid for the work they do.

The PCC is required by law to take all reasonable measures to prevent accidents or ill-health arising from work activities taking place within its premises, to provide adequate training to ensure that employees can do their work safely, to provide certain information about health and safety and to ensure that both the procedures and the equipment necessary to deal with emergencies are in place. The PCC also has a duty to protect members of the public from coming to harm within its premises. Employees and volunteers must take the lead in ensuring their own health and safety and that of those around them. This means they must comply with health and safety guidance such as that set out in the Policy, participate in any training required, report anything which they feel is unsafe or any accidents which occur, and never interfere with or damage any equipment which is provided for health and safety purposes.

### **2. ORGANISATION & RESPONSIBILITIES**

The vicar carries overall responsibility for health and safety, although specific responsibilities may be delegated to members of the congregation. In the absence of a vicar, responsibility passes to the churchwardens and the PCC, who are also responsible for ensuring arrangements are implemented. The PCC is responsible for ensuring Public Liability Insurance is kept up to date and renewed annually.

The PCC will nominate a health and safety officer who will be responsible with the vicar and churchwardens for the day-to-day implementation of the health and safety policy. The health and safety officer will be supported through appropriate training.

All employees and volunteers 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 premises or business.

### 3. ARRANGEMENTS

(i) Fire safety – see our separate Fire Policy

(ii) Accidents and first aid

A first aid box and accident book are located by the PA desk in church. All accidents or incidents are entered in the accident book or on a separate accident report form. A list of named first-aiders will be kept in the accident book. If the accident or incident is deemed sufficiently serious by the vicar, churchwardens or the health and safety officer then the insurers will be notified. Accident books and records will be reviewed annually.

(iii) Electrical Safety

A list of all our portable electrical appliances is maintained in the Springfield Centre office. Every quarter, all plugs, cables and sockets will be inspected by the vicar/priest-in-charge, churchwardens or the health and safety officer to ensure they are in good condition. PAT testing will be carried out annually in partnership with the Springfield Project.

Every five years our fixed electrical system will be inspected and tested by a competent and qualified contractor with the current levels of professional certification. Any necessary remedial work will be carried out. It was last tested in January 2023.

All employees and volunteers are required to take all reasonable care in the use of electrical equipment on church premises or in church activities. Electrical equipment brought onto church premises by church musicians or others remains the responsibility of the owners of that equipment. This includes PAT testing and other safety measures.

(iv) Gas Safety

Our gas heaters are maintained and checked annually by a competent contractor who has the appropriate levels of qualification and certification.

(v) Hazardous Substances

Where possible, we will eliminate the use of hazardous substances. Where this is not possible hazardous substances will be kept securely above a height of 1.5m. Product information provided by the manufacturers will be easily available to show the correct method of use, protective clothing needed, method of storage and action to be taken in the event of an accident.

(vi) Safety of Plant & Machinery

The vicar/priest-in-charge, churchwardens or the health and safety officer will maintain a list of all items of hazardous plant and machinery.

Employees and volunteers must not operate plant or machinery that they have not been trained and authorised to use.

(vii) Slips, trips and falls

In order to reduce as far as is reasonable practicable the risk of slips, trips and falls, an inspection will be made every quarter by the vicar/priest-in-charge, churchwardens or the health and safety officer who will then arrange for repairs or remedial work to be carried out.

(viii) Working at high levels

Only those employees and volunteers authorised to work at high levels in the church will be allowed to do so. Ladders kept in church will be kept securely.

(ix) Preparation of food

There is a specific hand-washing sink in the kitchen which all those involved in preparing food must use. Before any preparation commences all surfaces will be washed down and disinfected. Food will always be handled using best practice, and at least one person present must have a current Food Hygiene Certificate. At the end of events food will not be saved, unless there are exceptional reasons. It will be given or thrown away. Bins will also be emptied and foodstuffs will not be left in bins overnight. We will ensure that all food-handlers receive adequate supervision and support to maintain best practice. We will ensure that the appropriate risk assessment is carried out before all new activities including food preparation are undertaken.

(x) Manual handling

St Christopher's is a church with a lot of portable equipment, especially tables, chairs and play equipment. Our policy is to ensure that only those confident and competent to undertake the necessary manual handling tasks are encouraged to do so. People will always be allowed to 'opt out' of manual handling. Where possible, training will be offered to those who regularly undertake these tasks.

(xi) Personal Safety

Employees and volunteers are expected to take all reasonable care for their own personal safety. Special care should be taken when working alone in the church, travelling to church or on church business, accepting and handling cash/valuables or accepting people into homes on church business. In some instances, risk assessments should be undertaken if the employee, their line manager, a volunteer or the vicar, churchwardens or the health and safety officer deem this necessary.

(xii) Child Protection

See separate policy for full details.

(xiii) Risk Assessments

Risk assessments will be carried out annually on all areas of the church, its grounds and on all activities. These will be done by the vicar, churchwardens or the health and safety officer and filed in the church office.

(xiv) Contractors

Any person entering church premises for the purpose of carrying out work, other than a volunteer or an employee of the church will be regarded as a contractor. They should be able to produce a copy of their appropriate Public & Employers' Liability insurance and comply with all the requirements of this health and safety policy to provide a safe place of work and a safe system of operation whilst working in, around or on behalf of the church.

(xv) Health & Safety Law poster

A copy of this poster is displayed by the old kitchen in church.