

St Mary & St George Church

Health & Safety Policy

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of St Mary & St George, High Wycombe

Introduction

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

To all employees, trustees, lay leaders, office holders, voluntary helpers and contractors: The success of this policy will depend on your co-operation. It is therefore important that you read this document carefully and understand your role and the overall arrangements for health and safety.

This Policy applies to all activities run by St Mary & St George Church whether on our own church premises or elsewhere. External organisations are expected to operate to their own Health and Safety policy and procedures providing these are of a standard at least equal to this policy.

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 to ensure, so far as is reasonable practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all members of the congregation, contractors, visitors and others who may be effected by church activities whether they be in the church, its grounds or any associated buildings.*

*The Church Hall is contractually leased out to *Little Cherubs Nursery* during the working week, who are their own organisation, completely independent from St Mary & St George Church. It is expected that they will comply with their own Health and Safety policy and be covered by their own liability insurance in terms of the activities that take place during their lease of the building. Responsibility for the maintenance and safety of the building itself rests with the PCC of St Mary & St George and is delegated to the Church Warden and the Buildings Committee.

All external groups and organisations using church premises should either have their own operating Health & Safety Policy (which should be at least at the standard of the SMG policy) or agree to adhere to the terms of the church policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

Minister

Overall responsibility for health and safety is that of the Minister, the **Revd. Jonny Dade** who will ensure that arrangements are in place to satisfy health and safety regulations. Specific responsibilities may be delegated to Church Officers, PCC members or members of the Core Team.

Churchwardens

Paul Butcher and Kate Caroe are the Church Warden. Responsibility for the safety of the church building and its grounds and the safeguarding of those who use the church, in accordance with the agreed church policies, rests with the Church Wardens.

As detailed below, practical matters pertaining to the safety of the building and its grounds are handled by the Buildings Committee, which is chaired by Paul Butcher. Matters pertaining to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults are delegated to the Parish Safeguarding Officer and matters pertaining to the specific implementation of this Policy are delegated to the Health & Safety Officer.

Parochial Church Council (PCC) and Standing Committee

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) and the Standing Committee have general responsibility to ensure that the health and safety policy is implemented and regularly reviewed. The policy should be approved by the PCC and may be reviewed by the Standing Committee under their delegated powers.

Buildings Committee

The Buildings Committee has delegated responsibility to ensure the safety of the church building and surrounding grounds. General maintenance, as well as urgent work which may compromise the safety of the site, should be highlighted and addressed by Committee members. The Buildings Committee has delegated powers to make decisions pertaining to the ongoing maintenance of the church site and to respond to any safety concerns without the requirement of PCC approval.

Where work is carried out on the building or in the grounds by external contractors at the request of the Buildings Committee, they should ensure that workers are adhering to a robust health and safety policy and have their own insurance.

Parish Safeguarding Officer

Rhiannon Stokes is the appointed Parish Safeguarding Officer. The Safeguarding Officer should work to support the Health & Safety Officer in the implementation of this policy and its regular review. In particular, the two officers will work together to conduct Risk Assessments for public events and larger services and will make recommendations to the Standing Committee and PCC to that end.

The Parish Safeguarding Officer will take particular responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults, whilst the Health & Safety Officer will focus primarily on broader risks and the nature of the building with respect of public worship and larger-scale events. The nature of these roles means there will inevitably be a large amount of overlap, and the two officers should work together closely to that end. A separate Safeguarding Policy exists which pertains to children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Health and Safety Officer

Lynette Ankrom is the appointed Health and Safety Officer. Lynette shall work closely with the Parish Safeguarding Officer to regularly review the policy, particularly in preparation for larger-scale public events or services. The Health & Safety Officer shall report to the PCC, and in their absence, the Safeguarding Officer may report on their behalf to either the PCC or the Standing Committee.

The responsibility of the health and safety officer shall be to:

- Be familiar with the health and safety policy and arrangements and ensure they are observed.
- Notify the Church Wardens of any safety issues in the building or on the church grounds and ensure that they take appropriate action
- Ensure adequate firefighting equipment is available and maintained. Where equipment requires testing or updating, the Health & Safety Officer should inform the Church Wardens and Buildings Committee as a matter of urgency.
- To liaise with the Buildings Committee to ensure that electrical items are regularly PAT tested
- Ensure that fire exits are accessible and maintained
- Ensure that the preparation of food is carried out in a safe and hygienic way
- To work with the church First Aid Officer (**Stefanie Herath**) to ensure that the First Aid equipment is accessible and up to date

- To work with the Church Wardens and Parish Safeguarding Officer to carry out a Risk Assessment of the building and grounds and complete the necessary Risk Assessment paperwork in preparation for any public events or large Sunday services
- To work with the Church Wardens to ensure that external organisations using the church premises are compliant with the church's Health and Safety policy or have their own policy which is equally robust.
- To ensure that numbers of people inside the church building do not exceed the safety limit of 250 seated and standing persons
- To work with the Parish Safeguarding Officer and the Minister to ensure that there is appropriate supervision of people and spaces; clear signage; and agreed contingencies in place (and that these are recorded in a comprehensive Risk Assessment) in the event of public events or larger services.

Employees and Volunteers

All employees and volunteers have a responsibility to co-operate in the implementation of this health and safety policy; comply with its stipulations and take reasonable care of themselves and others whilst on church business or premises. They should report any safety concerns or accidents to one of the relevant persons listed above at the earliest opportunity.

Monitoring and Compliance

This policy will be kept up to date, particularly in the light of any legislative changes, changes to our buildings or activities, or any change in conditions that would require the review of this policy to maintain its effectiveness. To ensure this, the policy and the way in which it has operated will be reviewed regularly and appropriate changes made.

The Standing Committee will review the Health and Safety Policy on an annual basis, or more frequently if required. Any changes needed to ensure its effectiveness will be carried out as soon as is reasonably practicable and will come to the PCC for approval.

Revd. Jonny Dade (Minister)

Paul Butcher (Church Warden and Buildings Committee Chair)

Kate Caroe (Church Warden)

Lynnette Ankrom (Health and Safety Officer)

Rhiannon Stokes (Parish Safeguarding Officer)