



Health and Safety Policy 2026 (to be reviewed Sept 2028)

Statement of Intent

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of All Saint's Church, Preston On Tees recognises in full its responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work, etc. Act 1974 and recognises their legal and moral duties with regards to all aspects of health, safety and welfare of its employees, visitors, contractors. In addition, they are aware that poor health and safety management can affect the continuity of business.

Purpose

The PCC of All Saint's Church, Preston On Tees (*the Employer*) is committed to ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all their employees, volunteers (aka **workers**) and others who may be affected by their activities.

This policy has been prepared in accordance with Section 2(3) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.

Name Matt Levinsohn

Position: Chair of PCC, Vicar

Signature

Date: 21/9/26

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Roles and Responsibilities

The Employer will, so far as reasonably practicable

- provide effective control of the health and safety risks arising from all work activities;
- implement adequate prevention and precautions for fire safety;
- consult with employees on matters affecting their health and safety;
- provide and maintain safe plant and equipment;
- ensure suitable and sufficient risk assessments and safe systems of work, are completed and followed;
- ensure the safe use, handling and storage of hazardous substances;
- ensure that all employees are provided with appropriate information, instruction/training and supervision;
- maintain a workplace that is safe and without risks to health; and
- provide a safe and healthy working environment with adequate facilities and arrangements for welfare at work.

Workers responsibilities are

- to ensure they are familiar with this policy and how it applies to their work (the team leader will ensure all members of their team have received an email or paper version of this policy);
- to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work;
- to co-operate with management, with regards to, health and safety;
- not to intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare;
- to use all machinery and equipment following the instruction and training provided;
- to inform management of any situation or matter that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others; and
- to record all accidents or near misses.

Specific Responsibilities

Our Church Wardens have delegated responsibility, to ensure this Policy is disseminated, applied and resourced and will be referred to as the **Health and Safety Officer(s)**, in this Health and Safety Policy. They will annually review our practice as a church to ensure that this Health and Safety Policy is being adhered to.

Contractors

Contractors are persons or organisations (other than workers) that carry out any work on behalf of the Employer. Contractors must:

- Comply with relevant health and safety legislation.
- Be able to evidence competency prior to being appointed. As far as is possible we will use contractors from our approved list.
- Provide copies of their insurance certificates, relevant qualifications, and details of professional/trade memberships, etc.
- Provide copies of their method statements/risk assessments for all works to be undertaken.
- Provide copies of their own health and safety policies and any other documentation appertaining to the work they are to carry out.
- To follow their professional/trade Code of Conduct, where applicable.
- Ensure that the objectives outlined within this health and safety policy are fully understood and observed by themselves and other persons under their control.

Arrangements

The following arrangements have been set out in alphabetical order.

1. Accident Management

The **Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013** (RIDDOR) require that certain incidents, injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences involving employees, self-employed workers and members of the public are to be recorded and reported to the Church Wardens. All accidents are to be recorded in the accident form (1A). All near misses are to be recorded in the near miss form (1B). All accidents and near misses (regardless of consequence) that could have resulted in a serious injury will be investigated by the Wardens as soon as practicable and action taken to mitigate subsequent injury.

2. Asbestos

A list must be maintained of where asbestos is at All Saints'. If it is sealed and in good condition it can be left alone. The Wardens will ensure a risk management plan is in place for any asbestos including how we are reducing the risk of exposure including ensuring anyone working on an area with asbestos knows about it, e.g., Contractors. This plan will be reviewed every three years. In 2019 an asbestos survey was carried out and the document is in the church office.

3. Building/grounds maintenance and statutory inspections

For the benefit of those using our buildings we want to ensure they are safe. A record of all maintenance is recorded in the Log Book by the Church Wardens. This is particularly important regarding ladders. The caretaker will ensure that he complies with this policy whilst ensuring the building is safe for use. This includes ensuring his tools are not left unattended where they might cause harm to others but also that he operates equipment using proper safety equipment and in line with the manufacturer's instructions.

4. Car Park

The car park is for Church use including those hiring or using the building. Signs will indicate this is a private car park. Care must be taken by those parking and those on foot to ensure

the car park can be used safely. This includes using cones to ensure if the car park is used for other activities, that this is clear to drivers.

5. Child/Youth Safety

The default position is that children are under the care of their parent(s)/carer(s). That parent(s)/carer(s) have responsibility for them including for their safety. Where church workers have responsibility for children, this will be made clear. Specifically this happens during Childrens' Groups and Youth Church in addition to other activities designated by the children's worker or Youth Pastor as activities where parents can leave their child in a church worker's care. Any issues of safety to do with safeguarding are dealt with in the Safeguarding Policy. In many cases children/young people will be brought to the activity and collected by parents/carers, however if parents/carers are happy for their child/young person to walk home on their own, this should be communicated clearly to the group leader via the Youth Consent Form.

Procedures: Sunday services: During the first part of the service, children are the responsibility of their parents. The leaders take responsibility for the children when the children leave to join the children's groups. Leaders return children to parents at the end of the service when they then resume their parental responsibility for their children.

Similar responsibilities apply to members of the Youth Church other than they are not returned to their parent(s) in the service. Rather they rejoin their parents in the hall during tea and coffee or are collected from the youth room.

Hot drinks: care should be taken when moving around the hall with hot drinks. At children's events when large numbers of children are present (e.g. Messy Church), hot drinks are served in cups with lids.

6. Chemicals

Limited hazardous chemicals will be kept on site. Where hazardous chemicals are kept on site they must be locked away securely and only be accessed by those competent to use them. This includes substances labelled as Toxic, Very Toxic or Harmful, Corrosive, Irritant, Sensitizing or Carcinogenic. Those using chemicals of this nature must be COSHH trained and adhere to safe practices. The exception to this guidance is the dishwasher detergent, which can cause severe burns. A full COSHH assessment has been carried out and a safe system of work applies. Only the Church Operations Team, Church Wardens or Office Administrator are permitted to change the fluids. Where a new chemical is to be used on site

the label must be read and the person using it should assess if it is a COSHH chemical, in which case the caretaker will advise of its use.

COSHH Sheets are kept in the church office and a copy in a folder in the cleaning store.

7. Communication

A list is kept of which people need to have received a copy of this policy. After the annual review of Health and Safety, the Wardens will meet with the Incumbent to highlight any need for change in the policy and/or practice.

8. Disabled workers / visitors / church members

As a church we want to ensure that workers, and those attending the church, can do so regardless of who they are. With this in mind, the car park has two disabled bays, access ramps are at the church and hall entrances to the building. A ramp has also been added to the stage area of the sanctuary to aid access. If someone's disability dictates changes in how a person accesses church activities this should be raised with the ministry leader and where possible accommodated.

9. Display Screen Equipment

Those working for the church who are required to be on screens for periods over an hour at any one time will be provided with an optional assessment of their computer setup in order to prevent eye strain, back strain, RSI, etc. This requirement pertains primarily to the office administrator but if other staff feel they would like an assessment they should make their request to the Wardens. A workstation and chair are available in the staff office that meets the required standards for healthy screen working.

10. Driving

All employees who drive, on behalf of the Employer must comply with the **Road Traffic Act 1988**, the **Highway Code** and have business insurance if driving for more than commuting purposes. If driving others they must adhere to the Driver's Bank policy.

11. Electrical Equipment

The **Employer** will:

- Ensure the mains electricity supply is tested on a five (5) yearly basis. The caretaker will conduct PAT testing on relevant equipment owned by or loaned to the church annually. PAT test stickers with the relevant Date will be attached to tested equipment. Faults are registered and a record is kept at the reception desk. Equipment failing tests, which cannot be repaired, should be labelled and disposed of at the earliest opportunity.
- Records will be kept in the Health and Safety File of all electrical inspections and testing.

Workers will ensure:

- Extension cables are fully unwound prior to use.
- Electrical equipment with a heating element (e.g., coffee machine) should be plugged directly into the mains or be used with a short extension, with no other equipment attached.

Workers may only use any personal electrical appliances, e.g., mobile phone or tablet ~~chargers~~, with original chargers. These will be inspected, and PAT tested every 12 months, and all electrical equipment brought in and used on a regular basis must be PAT tested. A register will be kept of all inspections.

A competent person will carry out minor electrical work and a Minor Electrical Work Certificate made out and signed by the person, which will be kept in the church office.

12. Events and Activities (on-site and off-site)

Risk assessments must be produced by the person leading the activity for all church activities taking place on or off-site. Those workers and volunteers involved with the activity must have seen the risk assessment and be aware of their role in it if there is a role they need to perform. The risk assessment procedure document must be adhered to and steps taken to mitigate risk wherever practical. If an activity is thought to have the potential for serious harm or death, the leader of that activity must consult a church warden or the incumbent who will seek advice from a recognised competent person where required.

13. Fire

Fire Safety:

The caretaker / administrator will ensure that the:

- Fire alarm system is **checked** weekly.
- Fire alarm system is serviced 6 monthly.
- Emergency lighting is **checked** monthly.
- Emergency lighting is serviced annually.
- Fire extinguishers are **inspected** weekly.
- Fire extinguishers are serviced annually.
- Fire Action Notices are displayed.
- Annual Fire Warden Training is undertaken.
- Fire drills are undertaken annually and organised by the Churchwardens.
- Fire detection currently covers the hall only.
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Fire Emergency Procedures:

Prior to an event the:

- Fire doors that may be needed in the event of fire need to be unlocked.
- Caretaker will ensure if they are testing the alarms during an event, that the person overseeing that event is informed beforehand.
- The person running the event needs to have allocated people to help evacuation if needed. For Sunday services this will be people from the Welcome team.
- The plan for exiting the building in emergency should be on the risk assessment with an allocation of who will help.

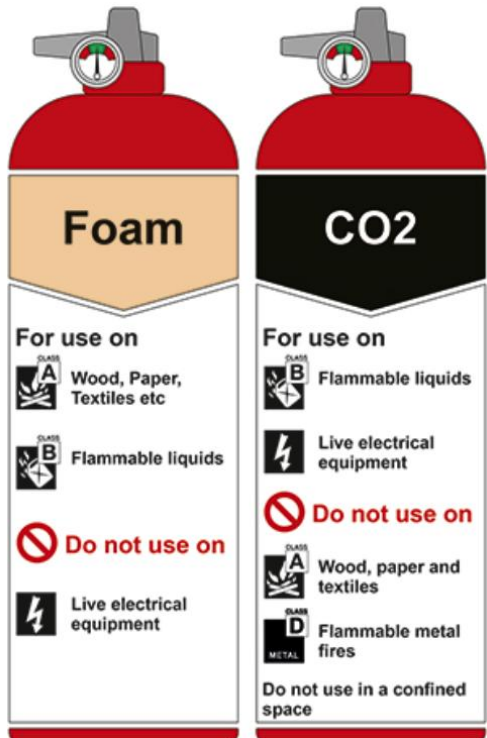
In the event of a fire, those in the church are to:

- Raise the fire alarm (if not already done) – by activating one of the call points. (i.e. break glass points in the hall. There is no fire alarm in the church so a warden or vicar should announce from the front there has been a fire and instruct people to proceed in an orderly way to the Assembly Point which is the church car park.
- Vicar or Warden call 999 or instruct another staff member to do it.
- Only tackle the fire if it is safe to do so (all staff and Wardens have had fire safety training).
- Evacuate the building through the nearest exit. We will evacuate the whole building whether the suspected fire is in one part of it or all parts. Note there are fire doors to the

Narthex (main church doors), doors to the centre (by car park), a door at the back of the youth room and a door at the back of the hall.

- If children/Young People are in groups at that point being supervised by church workers, those workers will evacuate the children to the lawn adjacent to Dunottar Ave and check they have the right number of children, and none are missing and then reunite them with their parents once they have checked all the children are accounted for. For any young people not with parents, it should be checked they are accounted for and then they can be released back to the general congregation.
- Evacuation drills will be held annually and overseen by the Church Wardens.
- The Wardens and two members of the welcome team will do a sweep of the building during evacuation to ensure nobody is left in toilets etc. Care must be taken to not put their own lives at risk.

Fire extinguisher Guidance

<u>FOAM</u>		<u>CO2</u>
Use On: Anything except live electrical equipment. <u>Locations</u> • By sound cabinet. • Back of church. • Entrance from Dunottar • Library • Kitchen • Centre lobby • Youth room • Hall		Use On: Flammable liquid and live electrical equipment. Nothing else. <u>Locations</u> • By sound cabinet. • Entrance from Dunottar • Centre lobby • Youth room.

- A fire blanket is also in the kitchen.

14. First Aid

First aid is designed to preserve life, promote recovery and prevent a condition deteriorating. All staff have been trained in first aid. In addition we have in the congregation various medical professionals who may be willing to assist if the need arises.

First aid kits are in the Narthex and in the Centre Lobby. In addition, there is a youth first aid kit in the youth room. Outside the Centre Entrance is a defibrillator, which can be used by members of the public.

In the event of injury or illness, the person encountering the injured person should ask someone else to fetch a first aider to assist. In the Narthex and Lobby are photos of those who have been first aid trained. The first aid trained person will decide if an ambulance is needed and if one is needed they will ask someone else to call it whilst they start to administer appropriate treatment.

15. Food Safety and Hygiene

Food Safety, whilst a Health and Safety concern, is dealt with under the Food Hygiene policy, which must be adhered to at all times.

16. Gas Safety

All Saints' Church is responsible for ensuring that our gas boilers are maintained. An annual maintenance contract is in place. Gas engineers registered on the Gas Safe Register must carry out any work on gas appliances, including maintenance and inspections.

In the event of a gas leak, or suspected gas leak, gas appliances should be switched off. A warden, caretaker, or staff member must be contacted as soon as possible, they will then phone the national grid on **0800 111 999** who will advise what to do next.

17. Hire of hall / church

For all those hiring the church hall, the hire contract needs to have been read and signed before the event occurs. If they want to prepare and serve food, they will need to adhere to the Food Hygiene policy of which they will receive a copy.

18. Hours of work

Full time hours for our paid staff are 35 per week. To reduce the risk of undue stress we will ensure no employee is regularly working in excess of his or her contracted hours. This matter is kept under review by the line management.

19. Housekeeping

All Saints' Church has employed a cleaner to ensure that the church hall remains clean. This, we hope, will minimise the risk of infection spreading and prevent the build-up of hazards (e.g. accumulation of rubbish). In addition there is a volunteer cleaning rota for areas of the church not covered by the cleaner.

20. Information, Instruction, Training and Supervision

This document will be given to all workers to whom it is pertinent according to the policy matrix. In addition, certain workers and staff have been trained in First Aid, Fire Safety and Food Hygiene. A list is held in the church office.

21. Insurance

All Saints' Church is insured for all church activities. This insurance includes injury to staff, volunteers, or others taking part in church activities. It does not include those hiring the building and running their own activities, e.g. Seated exercise and Pilates. The current insurance certificate is displayed outside the Office.

22. Law Poster

The **Health and Safety Information for Employees Regulations 1989** requires provision of the Law Poster or Leaflet to be made available to all employees. The current certificate is displayed outside the Pastoral Office where there is a notice board.

23. Lone working and personal safety

If possible avoid lone working. However, if it is not possible then ensure:

- Someone knows where you are and when you intend to return. WhatsApp can be a good method for doing this.
- Avoid poorly lit entrances and exits.
- If you feel unwell contact someone to come and be with you or in extreme circumstances phone 999.
- Do not count money alone but have someone else present and do so in a private space.
- Avoid taking unnecessary risks whilst alone, e.g., using ladders.
- Ensure if you are alone in the building that you lock yourself in, and keep your keys and phone with you.
- Always meet unfamiliar people in a public area. If you feel at all concerned whilst meeting someone then leave. Consider whether to bring a second person with you.
- If driving alone ensuring you have enough fuel, breakdown cover, charge your mobile phone and do not stop in isolated places.
- If taking public transport alone, avoid travelling late at night or when there are unlikely to be many people around.
- If staying away from home alone make sure you have pre-booked your accommodation and that it is safe.

24. Manual Handling

Manual handling refers to lifting people or objects. The guidance for lifting is:

- Think before you lift;
- Keep the load close to your waist;
- Adopt a stable position;
- Ensure a good hold on the load;
- At the start of the lift, moderate flexion (slight bending) of the back, hips and knees is preferable to fully flexing the back (stooping) or the hips and knees (squatting);
- Don't flex your spine any further as you lift;
- Avoid twisting the trunk or leaning sideways, especially while the back is bent;
- Keep your head up when lifting;
- Move smoothly;
- Don't lift more than you can easily manage.

A specific manual handling risk assessment should be completed for activities that pose hazardous manual handling operations. It is strongly recommended that unless trained, and if it is not an emergency, people do not lift one another.

25. Missions / Overseas travel

Overseas trips and mission trips in the UK must all occur in line with the risk assessment for them which will be completed by the person leading the trip. If the trip includes an overnight stay the risk assessment must be shown to a Warden or the Incumbent before the trip occurs.

26. Motorised Buggies and Motorised Wheelchairs

Our desire as a church is to ensure that all people are made to feel welcome and part of that is to ensure that those who need motorised buggies or wheelchairs are accommodated well. However, it is also the case that motorised buggies, because of their weight and power could, cause harm to other church users. We therefore require those using them to have them set to low speed in the building and to ensure when moving around the building that care be taken to avoid people and particularly children.

As is set out in the section on fire, motorised buggies must not be used in the event of a fire as they might get stuck and prevent others from exiting the building. Churchwarden or leader of the activity will assist as required.

27. Personal Protective Equipment

Personal protective equipment (PPE) is to be worn in accordance with the risk assessments / safe systems of work. This is particularly important for the caretaker who will be the person most commonly using tools or chemicals, which can cause harm. The Employer will provide suitable PPE for any tasks undertaken.

28. Pressure Systems (boilers, coffee espresso machines, etc.)

Systems are to be maintained by external contractor(s). The only people using the coffee machines and water boiler will be people who have been shown how to use them. Particular care should be taken to ensure the coffee machine is not filled twice by accident as this causes the first lot of water to boil and overflow as the second is added.

29. Risk Assessments

Ministry leaders must complete risk assessments for every church activity. These will be held on the G-drive and shown to all those who are working on the activity being assessed. Risk assessments must be completed in line with the Risk Assessment procedure. Ministry leads will review risk assessments in August/September and a competent professional's advice sought when required.

30. Safety Signs and Signals

Health & Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996 outline safety signs and signals:

- Warning signs - yellow/black triangular signs e.g. "wet floor"
- Prohibition signs - red/white round signs e.g. "No Smoking"
- Mandatory signs - blue/white round signs e.g. "Eye Protection"
- Emergency signs - green/white rectangular signs e.g. "First Aid"
- Fire signs - red/white rectangular signs e.g. "Fire Extinguisher"

The current signage in All Saints' is a mix of old (green background with white man) and current signage (green background with green man, in white doorway).

31. Smoking

It is the policy of All Saints' that all our workplaces are smoke-free, and all employees have a right to work in a smoke-free environment. The policy came into effect on Sunday, 1 July 2007. Smoking is prohibited in all enclosed and substantially enclosed premises in the workplace. This includes company vehicles. This policy applies to all employees, consultants, contractors, customers or members and visitors. Where someone is smoking in the building they will be asked to extinguish their cigarette or leave. If people wish to smoke, they can do so in the car park away from the buildings and bins.

32. Solar Panels

Appropriate contractors will carry out any maintenance of the solar panels. The only general maintenance required is cleaning the panels every six months, which is done by a contracted window cleaner. At the same time a check for any birds nests and debris under the panels should be carried out.

33. Stress

The Health and Safety Executive define stress as “the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them”. This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress that can be detrimental to health. First point of contact for anyone who is suffering from occupational related stress is to contact his or her line manager. Appropriate support will then be provided, which may include an assessment of workload, time off, or help in completing a particular task.

34. Waste Management

Waste material should be kept in suitable containers prior to removal from the premises. Recycling should be in line with the posters in the kitchen. Glass cannot be recycled on site and will need to be taken home by people to recycle. The exception is broken glass, which should be disposed of safely (wrapped or bagged) in the non-recyclables bin.

35. Winter Salting of Iced Paths

In the event of icy paths salt / grit, which is stored in the garage and near the Dunnottar Road entrance of the church, must be used. This will be done either by the caretaker or the wardens. A container is also kept in the hall foyer when there may be a frost!

36. Work Equipment

Only persons who have received adequate training are allowed to operate equipment. Tools will be kept in the garage and cleaning tools will be kept in the locked cleaning cupboard. Neither should be left unlocked. The caretaker is responsible for telling the office administrator when a tool is broken or in need of replacement and should not use the tool until it is repaired or replaced.

37. Working at Height

Where a job can be done without working at height, this is preferable.

- No member of the public will be permitted to use steps or ladders of any height.
- No member of staff will be permitted to use portable ladders.
- Untrained members of staff will be allowed to use step stools with a maximum of 3 steps.

- Approved members of staff will be allowed to use stepladders with a maximum of 7 steps. These are: Caretaker, for the 6 tread step ladder access in the Switch House Store Room and Youth room storage area.

The PCC approve the use of the 6 tread step ladder providing the following are adhered to:

- No lone working; that working from this ladder must be carried out with one other person in the room.
- That only small boxes with dimensions of 30cmx20cmx100cm (lxbxd) and weighing no more than 5kg is carried to the top shelf of the storage space.

Only external contractors will be permitted to use ladders or steps greater than 7 steps in height.

If using ladders, the top two steps must not be used. Care should be taken to ensure the ladder is used in accordance with it's instructions, and the person using it should wear flat shoes and position the ladder so it is stable and minimises the risk of injury.

Training for those working at height does not need renewing and so the approved staff members may request refresher training as and when they would find it useful.