

**IMMANUEL CHURCH  
CHICHESTER**

**HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY**

Approved by the Trustees: 09/11/2023

## **Health and Safety Policy**

### **Introduction**

We are committed to the Health, Safety and Welfare of our members of staff, our volunteers and members of the public that visit us or attend meetings and services. Our aim is to ensure that the locations we use are a safe work and worship environment for all, by controlling the hazards in and around the premises we use and the hazards caused by what we do. Health and Safety legislation applies when a Church is an employer because it has at least one paid employee. However the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) considers it good practice for a volunteer user, such as a Church, to provide voluntary workers with the same level of health and safety protection as they would in an employer/employee relationship, irrespective of whether there are strict legal duties.

The Act says that you must do what is 'reasonably practicable' to ensure the health and safety of all who come, or are likely to come, to church activities. It is not always possible to give prescriptive advice on what health and safety responsibilities are in a given situation. It is often up to the people responsible to judge what is reasonable in the circumstances having due regard to the risks which may exist, the precautions which are already in place and the resources available.

The Policy is in three sections:

- A. General Statement of Policy
- B. Organisation and Responsibilities
- C. Arrangements

In this document Immanuel Church is referred to as the church. The term 'Church Workers' covers the Minister(s), Employees and volunteer helpers such as members of the congregation.

## **Section A – General Statement of 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 and volunteers, 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 and visitors to church meetings.

The allocation of duties for safety matters and the 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 activities and venues. To ensure this, the policy and the way in which it has operated will be reviewed annually and the appropriate changes made.

To ensure that health and safety matters are kept constantly under review, an item on Health and Safety will be on the agenda for all meetings of the church Trustees and Church Workers will be consulted on a regular basis to seek their views on health and safety matters.

Safeguarding is an important issue. Immanuel Church policy in this matter mirrors that of the Church of England and Chichester Diocese and is covered by a separate policy.

## **Section B - Organisation and Responsibilities**

### **1. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE TRUSTEES**

Overall responsibility for health and safety is that of the Trustees of Immanuel Church.

### **2. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE LEADERSHIP TEAM AND TRUSTEES**

The Leadership Team and Trustees have general responsibility to ensure that the health and safety policy is implemented.

### **3. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE HEALTH AND SAFETY CO-ORDINATOR**

The Responsibility of the Health and Safety Co-ordinator (the Responsible Person) shall be to: -

- a. be familiar with health and safety regulations related to activities and use of venues,
- b. be familiar with the health and safety policy and arrangements and ensure they are observed,
- c. ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe systems of work are in place,
- d. ensure that safety equipment and clothing is provided and used by all personnel where this is required,
- e. identify and report any issues related to the following, to the owner / manager of facilities used by the church: -
  - ensure the building is clean and tidy,
  - ensure that the grounds surrounding are properly maintained and safe,
  - ensure that adequate access is maintained,
  - ensure adequate firefighting equipment is available and that fire exits are clearly signed,
- f. report any RIDDOR incidents to HSE.

### **4. RESPONSIBILITY OF CHURCH WORKERS**

The term 'Church Workers' covers the Minister(s), Employees and volunteer helpers such as members of the congregation.

All Church Workers 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.

Church Workers must therefore: -

- a. comply with safety rules, operating instructions and working procedures,
- b. use protective clothing and equipment when it is required,
- c. report any fault or defect in equipment immediately to the appropriate person,
- d. report all accidents (however minor), injuries, near misses or other potential safety hazards as soon as possible,
- e. not misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety.

## **Section C - Arrangements**

This section sets out our arrangements to minimise as far as is reasonably practicable risks to the health and safety of Church Workers, members of the congregation and members of the public attending a meeting organised by the church.

### **1. ACCIDENTS AND FIRST AID**

A First Aid Needs Assessment has been completed (see Appendix 1) and concludes that there is no requirement for the church to have a trained First Aider, though employees are encouraged to attend either a First Aid at Work course, or, an Emergency First Aid at Work course.

We undertake the following: -

- a. a First Aid box is in the ministry box and as such will be available in the school hall during services and other large meetings. (Also, it is transportable to external events organized by the church),
- b. the accident book is in the above First Aid box,
- c. all accidents and incidents are to be entered in the accident book,
- d. an additional First Aid box is kept with the Youth Pastor and taken to Youth meetings.

### **2. GENERAL FIRE SAFETY**

The Minister, Employees, Service Leaders and leaders of meetings are to: -

- a. acquaint themselves with and follow the Fire Safety procedures for the buildings in which meetings are held.
- b. have a risk assessment in place for all of our meetings in hired venues and which include reference to fire safety,
- c. have fire evacuation procedures to be explained by the Health and Safety Officer at least annually and preferably at the time of the Annual General Meeting.

Procedure on discovery of a Fire (No matter how small): -

- immediately raise the alarm,
- telephone the emergency services,
- check the building for occupants,
- attack the fire, if possible, within your capability using the appliances provided, but without taking personal risk,
- 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,
- ensure clear access for the emergency vehicles.

### **3. ELECTRICAL SAFETY**

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: -

- visually check all electrical equipment before use,
- report all faults immediately to the Responsible Person,
- do not attempt to use or repair faulty equipment,
- electrical equipment should be switched off and disconnected when not in use for long periods,
- flexible cables should be so positioned and so protected that they do not constitute a tripping hazard and are not subject to mechanical damage,

- Church Workers are to identify and report any issues related to electrical safety to the Responsible Person or the owner / manager of facilities used by the church.

#### **4. GAS EQUIPMENT SAFETY**

The church does not currently own or operate any gas fired equipment. Any gas fired equipment operated as part of a hire agreement must be done so in accordance with the hire agreement. Any issues relating to the equipment are to be reported to the hire company or building owner.

#### **5. HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES**

- a. Where at all possible, we have eliminated the use of hazardous substances. Where this is not possible, hazardous substances are locked away and only used by persons with the appropriate experience.
- b. Personal protective equipment should be used where appropriate.
- c. Do not mix chemicals.
- d. Do not store chemicals in unmarked containers.

#### **6. SAFETY OF PLANT AND MACHINERY**

The church does not currently own or operate any plant or machinery. Any plant or machinery operated as part of a hire agreement must be done so in accordance with the hire agreement. Any issues relating to the equipment are to be reported to the hire company or building owner.

- a. Church Workers must not operate plant or machinery that they are not trained and authorised to use.
- b. Machinery must be switched off before any adjustments are made.
- c. 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 there are no loose nuts, bolts or other defects.
- d. The appropriate personal protective equipment must be worn when operating any item of plant or machinery.
- e. Ladders may only be used when they can be safely secured. This may necessitate the use of ladder ties or a two-person operation
- f. Any defect and damage found to any item of plant or machinery must be reported to Hire Company and the Responsible Person.

#### **7. SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS (Condition of floors, steps and paths)**

Church Workers are to identify and report any issues which may increase the risk of slips, trips and falls to the owner /manager of facilities used by the church and the Responsible Person.

#### **8. LIGHTING**

Employees and voluntary workers are to identify and report any issues relating to inadequately lit areas or failed lighting to the owner /manager of facilities used by the church and the Responsible Person.

## 9. WORKING AT HIGH LEVELS

Only approved contractors or competent volunteers approved by the health and safety co-ordinator may work at high levels subject to the necessary safety provisions being in place.

## 10. PREPARATION OF FOOD

- a. All the appropriate regulations governing the preparation and storage of foodstuffs to be followed
- b. All food handlers to receive adequate supervision, instruction and training
- c. The appropriate assessment of risks to be carried out for food preparation and storage, including storage at correct temperatures
- d. Before any preparation commences, surfaces coming into contact with food to be washed down and disinfected

## 11. MANUAL HANDLING (Lifting, carrying and moving loads)

- a. Our policy is to eliminate the need for manual handling as far as is reasonably practicable.
- b. Where it is not possible to avoid the need to move loads, use the equipment provided (such as chair and table trolleys), break down the load into a manageable size (such as spreading the load from bibles into the multiple boxes provided) and get help with lifting.
- c. Church Workers are to follow the best practice guidance as below; -

### Good handling technique for lifting

There are some simple things to do before and during the lift/carry:

#### Think before lifting/handling.

Plan the lift. Can handling aids be used? Where is the load going to be placed? Will help be needed with the load? Remove obstructions such as discarded wrapping materials. For a long lift, consider resting the load midway on a table or bench to change grip.

#### Adopt a stable position.

The feet should be apart with one leg slightly forward to maintain balance (alongside the load, if it is on the ground). Be prepared to move your feet during the lift to maintain your stability. Avoid tight clothing or unsuitable footwear, which may make this difficult.

#### Get a good hold.

Where possible, the load should be hugged as close as possible to the body. This may be better than gripping it tightly with hands only.

#### Start in a good posture.

At the start of the lift, slight bending of the back, hips and knees is preferable to fully flexing the back (stooping) or fully flexing the hips and knees (squatting).

#### Don't flex the back any further while lifting.

This can happen if the legs begin to straighten before starting to raise the load.

#### Keep the load close to the waist.

Keep the load close to the body for as long as possible while lifting. Keep the heaviest side of the load next to the body. If a close approach to the load is not possible, try to slide it towards the body before attempting to lift it.

#### Avoid twisting the back or leaning sideways, especially while the back is bent.

Shoulders should be kept level and facing in the same direction as the hips. Turning by moving the feet is better than twisting and lifting at the same time.

Keep the head up when handling.

Look ahead, not down at the load, once it has been held securely.

Move smoothly.

The load should not be jerked or snatched as this can make it harder to keep control and can increase the risk of injury.

Don't lift or handle more than can be easily managed.

There is a difference between what people can lift and what they can safely lift. If in doubt, seek advice or get help.

Put down, then adjust.

If precise positioning of the load is necessary, put it down first, then slide it into the desired position.

## **12. HAZARDOUS BUILDINGS / GLAZING**

Church Workers are to identify and report any issues, related to the following, to the owner /manager of facilities used by the church.

- Our policy is to ensure that the buildings we use are safe and without risks to the health, safety and welfare of all who use them. Any defects should be noted and immediately reported.
- Where necessary, temporary measures are taken to ensure that there is no risk of accident or injury until permanent repairs can be carried out.
- Note: it is the responsibility of building owners to ensure a check is made of all glazing in the buildings 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.

## **13. LONE WORKING**

Lone working in a church setting is a common requirement and can involve Ministers, employees and volunteers. All Church Workers should assess any risk before committing themselves to any situation and immediately report any problems or concerns to their line manager, Minister or Responsible Person.

All Church Workers shall take the following basic precautionary measures when lone working: -

- Make sure you have some means of communication with you in the event of an emergency, make sure your mobile is charged.
- Ensure you have access to first aid equipment
- In any building, know where the nearest emergency exit is located.
- If working alone in a building, make sure intruders cannot access the building
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure your own safety
- Try to meet vulnerable or young people in public places or in the presence of others

In addition, when attending a meeting on your own with someone you don't know, or have concerns about: -

- Ensure that you appoint a Contact Person (eg could be another church worker or close friend, preferably your 'line manager') and make sure the Contact Person is aware you are working alone, where you are, what you will be doing and what time



you expect to finish. Agree with the Contact Person a plan of action they will take if you do not call in by a set time.

- Inform your Contact Person that you are safe when the activity is complete.

#### **14. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- a. We have a legal duty to assess the risks which exist in the facilities and locations used by the church and to reduce them as far as reasonably practicable. Any risk which cannot be entirely removed should be reduced until it can be described as a small risk.
- b. Risk assessments should: -
  - identify the hazards,
  - quantify the risk of an accident occurring,
  - quantify the potential impact of such an accident,
  - identify existing precautions and decide whether they are adequate or whether more should be done to overcome the hazard,
  - record the significant findings of your risk assessment, eg. the main risks and the measures you have taken to deal with them.

#### **15. HOUSE KEEPING AND PREMISES**

The responsible person will monitor processes to ensure that: -

- safe stacking and storage methods are followed,
- standards of cleanliness and hygiene are maintained in kitchen areas,
- waste is disposed of safely in appropriate containers,
- corridors and exits are kept clear and free of obstruction,
- equipment is in good working order.

#### **16. TRAINING**

Church Workers will be given briefings regarding any health and safety issues relevant to the tasks that they are undertaking. Any updates or changes to these arrangements will be discussed with them. Advice and training will be offered as appropriate.

## Appendix A – First Aid Needs Assessment

### First Aid Needs Assessment (based on HSE L74: The Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981)

Under the Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981, there is no legal duty on employers to provide first aid to non-employees. However, HSE strongly recommends non-employees (ie volunteers and those attending meetings) are included in the first-aid needs assessment and provision is made for them.

#### **Assessment**

The church employs two staff (one full time Youth Minister and part time administrator working 16 hours per week). Immanuel Church has no building or office and so all activities take place in hired halls or offices, or in homes, with some church organised trips to other venues or outdoor activities. These are mainly in an urban environment with good access to emergency services. The work of the church is carried out by the Minister, employees or volunteers under the guidance of, or with the approval of, the Minister, employees or the Leadership Team.

The hazards in workplaces are predominately slips and trips, manual handling and lone working. Meetings or activities generally last less than 3 hours each and they occur mainly evenings and weekends. History shows that very few injuries and near misses occur as a result of church activity. In the past 10 years there have been occasional slight injury (slips and trips, minor abrasions) and one more significant event (cardiac). None of these involved employees.

The first-aid needs assessment indicates that the minimum requirements are:

<b>First-aid personnel</b>	<b>Required Yes/No</b>	<b>Number needed</b>
First-aider with a first aid at work (FAW) certificate	No	0
First-aider with an emergency first aid at work (EFAW) certificate	No	0
First-aider with additional training (specify)	No	0
Appointed person	Yes (this is the Responsible person for H&S)	1 (not present at every meeting)
<b>First-aid equipment and facilities</b>	<b>Required Yes/no</b>	<b>Number needed</b>
First-aid container	Yes	1
Additional equipment (specify) (eg automated external defibrillator (AED))	No	0
Travelling first-aid kit	Yes (with Youth Pastor)	1
First-aid room	No	0

Ends