

Christchurch, Barnston
with
St. Michael's and All Angels, Pensby

Health & Safety Policy 2026

Christ Church Barnston.

85 Barnston Road, Heswall, Wirral. CH61 1BW

Tel: 0151 648 2404

St Michael's and All Angels.

1 Gills Lane, Pensby, Wirral. CH61 1AF

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

The policy is in three sections:

Section A – General statement of policy

Section B – Organisation and responsibilities

Section C – Arrangements

SECTION A: ORGANISATION & RESPONSIBILITIES

Our policy, so far as is reasonably practicable, is to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment, and systems of work for our employees and volunteers, and to provide such information, training, and supervision as they need for this purpose.

We will also endeavour to ensure, the health, safety, and welfare of all members of the congregation, contractors, visitors, and others who may visit the church, churchyard, and any associated buildings. The allocation of duties for safety matters and the arrangements that we will make to implement the policy are set out overleaf. 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 is operated, will be reviewed regularly 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 Parochial Church Council and relevant sub-committees. Employees and voluntary workers will be consulted on a regular basis to seek their views on health and safety matters.

Christopher R. Slater.....Vicar. 1st March 2026

Review Date: 1st March 2027

SECTION B: ORGANISATION & RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibility of the Vicar in Charge

Overall responsibility for health and safety is that of the Vicar in Charge, who will ensure that arrangements are in place to satisfy health and safety regulations and appropriate Codes of Practice. Specific responsibilities can and will be delegated to church personnel.

Responsibility of the Churchwardens

The Churchwardens have responsibility to ensure that the arrangements outlined in this policy are carried out and updated as necessary.

Responsibility of the Parochial Church Council

The Parochial Church Council has general responsibility to ensure that the health and safety policy is implemented.

Responsibility of the Health and Safety Officer

The H&S Officer has responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of the arrangements outlined in this policy as outlined below:

- Be familiar with health and safety regulations as far as they concern church premises.
- Be familiar with the health and safety policy and arrangements and ensure they are observed.
- Ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe systems of work are in place.
- Ensure that safety equipment and clothing is provided and used by all personnel where this is required.
- Ensure so far as is reasonably practical, that procedures are in place to maintain the health and safety of staff, the church community, and visitors.

Responsibility of employees and voluntary workers

All employees and voluntary 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.

Employees and voluntary workers must therefore:

- Comply with safety rules, operating instructions and working procedures.
- Use protective clothing and equipment when it is required.
- Report any fault or defect in equipment immediately to the appropriate person.
- Report all accidents (however minor), injuries, near misses or other potential safety hazards as soon as possible.
- Not misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety.

Responsible persons:

The following are responsible for safety in particular areas:

1. By activity	Name/position
Accident book/Accident reporting	Warden
Fire extinguishers	Warden
Emergency evacuation	Service Leader/Warden
Portable electrical appliances	Warden
Fixed electrical system	Warden
Gas equipment	Warden
Hazardous substances	Warden
Plant and machinery	Warden
Condition of floors and stairs	Warden
Condition of churchyard	Warden
Light bulb changing	Warden
Working at high levels	Warden
Food preparation	Person identified on Event Form
Manual handling	Warden
Display screen equipment	Warden
Building defects/glazing	Warden
Safeguarding	Safeguarding Lead
Personal safety	Warden
Events and Activities	Person identified on Event Form
Bell ringing	Warden
Contractors	Contractor/Warden
Church Security	Everyone.
Health and Safety Training	Health and Safety Officer

By Area	Name/position
Main body of church	Warden
Clergy and Choir Vestries	Warden
Sacristy	Warden
Organ Area	Warden
Boiler room	Warden
Storage Rooms	Warden
Kitchens	Warden / Person identified on Event Form
Car Parks & Church Environs	Warden
Churchyard	Warden
Church Halls / Foyer	Warden
Meeting Rooms / Offices	Warden
Toilets & Washrooms	Warden

Generic Risk Assessment.

To accommodate the wide range of activities carried out in the Church, whether it is a single event or a repetitive activity, a Generic Risk Assessment Form has been developed which will assist the person responsible for the activity to determine any Health and Safety Risks. The form identifies some common risks and encourages the responsible person to identify any further risks. The form must be completed before the activity commences and be signed and dated by the person responsible for the activity. In general, all activities within the Church should have a Generic Risk Assessment Form completed. If the event or activity is a **single occurrence**, then a Form should be completed for that single occasion. This may include for instance the Summer Holiday Club, a trip away, a night of entertainment or a special Church service where infrequent attendees are present.

If the event or activity is carried out on **multiple occasions**, then a single completed form would cover all those occasions. A new form would only be required if there was a change in the nature of the activity or a change in strategic personnel. Examples of such activities would include changing light bulbs, breakfast meetings, lawn mowing, weekly Church family meetings or activities.

Non Church Family Hall Users.

The Church Halls and rooms are rented out to a number of organisations for activities and meeting purposes. Event organisers must sign a specific Hall Users Form, part of which requires them to acknowledge that they take full responsibility for adhering to Health & Safety requirements.

SECTION C: ARRANGEMENTS

This section sets out our arrangements to minimise risks as far as is reasonably practicable to the health and safety of employees, voluntary workers, members of the congregation, visitors, and contractors.

There is a Health & Safety notice board containing relevant information in both churches.

Barnston: Situated on the wall in the church hall kitchen.

St Michaels: Situated in the hall on the wall adjacent to the main entrance.

A copy of the HSE poster 'Health & Safety Law – what you should know' is displayed on the notice boards in both churches.

1.0: ACCIDENTS & FIRST AID.

First aid boxes are located in:

Barnston: Kitchen, choir vestry

Pensby: Kitchen, hall, creche

Trained/qualified First-aiders: - There are a number of personnel at both churches who hold a relevant and in date first aid certificate.

The accident books are located in:

Barnston: On the wall in the kitchen adjacent to the H&S notice board.

Pensby: On the wall in the main hall adjacent to the H&S notice board.

All accidents and incidents (including near misses) must be entered in the accident book and our insurers advised as necessary.

Any accidents / incidents will be reported by the responsible person.

When the church or church hall is let to outside organisations, they are informed that in the event of an accident, details must be entered in the accident book.

Accident books are regularly reviewed.

Defibrillators are in place at both churches – on the outside wall of the church hall at Barnston and in the foyer at St Michaels. Both are regularly checked to ensure they remain in efficient working order.

2.0: FIRE SAFETY

Our policy is to fulfil our obligations under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. In order to achieve this, we undertake the following:

- An assessment of the fire risks in the church and associated buildings and the risks to our neighbours. This is carried out either as a specific exercise or as part of our general health and safety risk assessments.
- A check that a fire can be detected in a reasonable time and that people can be warned.
- A check that people who may be in the building can get out safely including, if necessary, the provision of emergency lighting and fire exit signage.
- To 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 fire fighting equipment is in place and is serviceable, and that there is an annual maintenance contract in place with a reputable company.

2.1 Fire extinguishers

Fire extinguishers are kept in the following locations:

Pensby:

Location	Type of extinguisher
Kitchen	1 x Carbon Dioxide 1 x Fire Blanket
Church (by altar)	1 x Water
Church (outside vestry)	1 x Water
Foyer	1 x Carbon Dioxide 1 x Water
Church Hall near to activities room	1 x Water
Passageway outside meeting rooms	1 x Carbon Dioxide
Flower Room	1 x Carbon Dioxide

Barnston:

Location	Type of extinguisher
Rear of church near to entrance	1 x Water
Choir Stalls near to organ	1 x Carbon Dioxide
Clergy Vestry	1 x Carbon Dioxide
Parish Hall entrance hall	1 x Water
Parish Hall outside Parish Office (First Floor)	1 x Carbon Dioxide 1 x Water
Kitchen	1 x Carbon Dioxide 1 x Fire Blanket
Storeroom adjacent to Kitchen	1 x ABC Powder
Children's Creche Room	Water

The extinguishers noted are checked every 3 months by the responsible person to ensure that they are still in place and have not been damaged or discharged.

The extinguishers are checked annually by Cloughton Fire Protection.

2.2 Fire alarm system

Details of the procedures for checking and maintaining the system will be produced by the respective Wardens and recorded in the official files which are kept adjacent to the H&S notice boards at both locations.

Responsibility for testing the Fire Alarm and other fire protection equipment:

Barnston: Parish Administrator

Pensby: Warden

2.3 Fire Evacuation procedure - Pre-requisites.

- The Fire Alarm will be tested weekly to ensure correct function and that it can be heard in all relevant areas.
- Fire doors and fire extinguishers will be checked on a regular basis.
- All signage is clear and conspicuous and fire exit routes are regularly checked to ensure they are clearly identified and provide free and clear movement.
- All Clergy, Wardens, Readers, and Welcome team members are clear about their responsibilities in the case of an incident.
- Assembly points have been identified.

2.4 Fire Evacuation procedure.

In the event of a fire or other incident:

- The person leading the service, having been made aware of a fire /incident will ask the congregation to evacuate the building calmly and quietly as directed by members of the welcome team.
- Welcome team members will ensure all people have left the building via the fire exits and have assembled in the assembly area. An assessment will be made to confirm everyone has been evacuated.
- The service leader will telephone the fire service.
- The Warden and / or members of the welcome team may attempt to use the fire extinguishers if it is safe to do so.
- The service leader and warden, if present, will liaise with the fire service /police to ensure that the incident is dealt with safely and effectively.

2.5 Evacuation drills

Fire evacuation drills will be carried out annually and the results recorded. All employees, voluntary workers, wardens, and members of the welcome team must ensure that they are familiar with escape routes and ensure these are kept clear and unobstructed.

On a regular basis, the person leading the service should remind the congregation about evacuation procedures. This should always be done at services which attract a congregation less familiar with church layout and procedures.

2.6 If you discover a fire (no matter how small)

- The overriding rule is people before property.
- Immediately raise the alarm.
- Telephone the emergency services.
- Check the building for occupants (if it is safe to do so).
- Contain the fire if possible and 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.
- Evacuate to the designated assembly point.
- Ensure clear access for the emergency vehicles.

3.0: HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

The responsible person will maintain a list of all hazardous substances used in the church/hall. (Hazardous substances are those labelled as such with either a Hazard Symbol or a Hazard Statement).

Where possible, the Church have eliminated the use of hazardous substances. Where this is not possible, all hazardous substances are stored and used in compliance with the manufacturer's instructions.

- We do not mix chemicals.
- We do not store chemicals in unmarked containers.

4.0: GAS SAFETY EQUIPMENT

Our gas boilers and any other gas equipment is maintained and checked annually by a competent contractor who is registered with the Gas Safe Register. Any necessary work required for safety is implemented immediately.

We do not use LPG.

5.0: ELECTRICAL SAFETY

A list of all portable electrical appliances (i.e. any item which can be plugged into the mains) is maintained by the relevant warden and details kept in the main Health and Safety file.

On a yearly basis, this equipment will be visually inspected by a competent person with an appropriate level of electrical knowledge and experience.

Every 3 months, plugs, cables, and sockets will be inspected by the responsible person to ensure that there are no loose connections, worn flexes or trailing leads. Any repairs needed will be actioned by the responsible person.

Both Churches have RCDs fitted to protect people/equipment in the event of an accident/malfunction. The majority of electrical equipment in the Church is of a domestic type and therefore the type of inspection carried out will be similar to that of any homeowner. Where equipment is of a type which is considered more complicated, an annual test will be completed by an appropriately qualified person. Any equipment deemed unsafe and not able to be repaired will be disposed of safely.

Every five years, our fixed electrical system will be inspected and tested by a competent contractor who is a 'Full Scope' member of the NICEIC, ECA or NAPIT. Any necessary remedial work will be carried out.

At intervals of not more than two and a half years the lightning conductor system will be examined and tested by a competent specialist firm of lightning engineers.

It is Church policy not to sell any second-hand electrical goods unless they have been inspected and tested by a suitably qualified person. A register of such equipment is kept.

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 and report any faults immediately.
- Do not attempt to use or repair faulty equipment.
- Electrical appliances used by volunteers will be covered by the Generic Event Form. This means that when the form is initially completed the use and condition of any appliance will be considered to ensure the safety of the user and other people.
- Electrical equipment should be switched off when not in use for long periods.
- Flexible cables should be positioned and protected so that they do not constitute a trip hazard and are not subject to mechanical damage.

6.0: SAFETY OF PLANT AND MACHINERY

The responsible person will maintain a list of all items of plant and machinery. The procedures for checking and rules for use are as follows:

- Employees and voluntary workers must not operate plant or machinery that they are not trained and authorised to use (e.g. lawn mowers, hedge trimmers).
- Employees and voluntary workers must not ride on any parts of machinery that are not intended for such 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 a safe working condition, correctly adjusted, and without defects.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment must be worn when operating any machinery.
- 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 other equipment such as tower scaffolds or mobile elevated work platforms cannot be used and for work of short duration provided they can be safely secured. This may necessitate the use of ladder ties.
- Any defect and / or damage found to any item of plant or machinery must be reported to the responsible person.
- All plant and machinery will be regularly maintained, and a maintenance schedule kept.
- Persons must not work on their own unless they have a means of communication and have notified a colleague of the details of the work being undertaken and agreed a procedure to ensure their safety is checked on.

7.0: HAZARDOUS BUILDINGS / GLAZING

Our policy is to ensure that our buildings are safe and to minimise risks to the health, safety, and welfare of all who work in and use them. In order to achieve this, the buildings are inspected annually by the responsible person.

Any defects noted are immediately reported and the procedures put in place 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.

Regular checks are made of any asbestos in the building by a competent person noting its location, type, and condition. Where necessary, asbestos will be removed by a licensed contractor. Information regarding any asbestos remaining in the building is given to all contractors and anyone else who may be affected. The state of any asbestos material, deemed safe if undisturbed, will be checked every 6 months.

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.

8.0: CONTRACTORS

Anyone entering church premises for the purposes of carrying out work, other than an employee or voluntary worker will be regarded as a contractor.

All contractors, including the self-employed, must abide by the following conditions:

- Have their own health and safety policy (where required by law) and be able to provide a copy of the same.

- Produce evidence that they have appropriate Public and Employers' Liability insurance in place. A record of this evidence will be maintained.
- Comply with all the requirements of this health and safety policy and co-operate with the church officials in providing a safe place of work and safe systems of operation.
- Where plant and machinery are brought onto the 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.
- Contractors may only use sub-contractors or persons, other than their own direct employees, with the express permission of the church officials.
- All contractors will be given detailed instructions regarding the areas where they are permitted to work and the extent of the work they are authorised to undertake. This 'permit to work' will also specify any safety precautions they must undertake.

9.0: MANUAL HANDLING – LIFTING & CARRYING LOADS

Our policy is to eliminate the need for manual handling as far as is reasonably practicable.

Where it is not possible to avoid the need to move loads, we will carry out risk assessments and make use of lifting aids, including trolleys, lifts, and hoists as far as possible.

The risk assessment will be done using the "Generic Event Form" and will consider the various safety aspects and the knowledge of the participating individuals.

10.0: WORKING AT HIGH LEVELS

In general, we have no exceptionally high areas in which work is carried out by non-contractors. When church staff carry out work/activities at high levels above the ground they will consider all health & safety hazards. As a rule, we will aim to use scaffolding before ladders where practical, but in either case we will ensure appropriate safety and stability measures are instituted.

11.0: LIGHTING

To maintain an appropriate level of lighting, the responsible person will inspect every month to ensure that all lights in the church, hall and churchyard are working. Any remedial work will be reported to the Warden who will ensure that that such work is carried out following appropriate safety procedures.

12.0: PREPARATION & SERVING OF FOOD

The appropriate regulations governing the preparation and storage of foodstuffs are strictly adhered to.

Adequate training, instruction and supervision is provided to everyone engaged in food preparation and serving. At every event where food is served, at least one member of the catering team will have an in date certificate in food hygiene.

The appropriate assessment of risk is carried out for the foods to be prepared and stored including storage at the correct temperatures

Before preparation commences, all surfaces are washed down and disinfected.

Food stuffs may only be prepared in the Church Kitchens or in private premises with the permission of the responsible person.

'Food Allergy' notices are clearly displayed on all occasions when food is served. This is to alert people to discuss their allergy with a member of the catering team.

For safety reasons, no-one under the age of 16 will be allowed in the kitchen while hot food/ hot drinks are being prepared or served.

All hall hirers who wish to provide foodstuffs are advised of the relevant facilities and procedures. These are detailed in the "Hall Guide."

13.0: SLIPS, TRIPS & FALLS

In order to reduce, as far as is reasonably practicable, the risk of slips, trips and falls, an inspection will be made every 6 months by the responsible person of: -

- All floors and stairs in the church and hall
- All paths and steps in the churchyard.

Particular note will be made of moss, algae, and leaves on paths. Any defects will be reported to the Warden who will arrange for repairs or remedial measures to be carried out.

A gritting programme will be in operation during the winter months.

14.0: PERSONAL SAFETY

Risk assessments will be undertaken to assess the risks to persons working alone in the church, travelling to and from church, carrying out pastoral visits, accepting persons into their homes and handling cash and other valuables.

We seek to follow the principles of the Diocese of Chester Guidelines on Lone Working and Personal Safety for Clergy.

15.0: RISK ASSESSMENTS

Risk assessments will be carried out on all areas of the church premises and all activities that carry a significant risk. These will be done at regular intervals by a competent person in order to meet our obligations under The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

This will be covered by an annual Health & Safety inspection, constant monitoring by the Churchwardens and our generic risk assessment procedure.

16.0: DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT

A DSE risk assessment will be carried out by a competent person on all habitual users of computer workstations in order to reduce risks to the lowest level possible.

The following factors will be considered when carrying out risk assessments:

- stability and legibility of the screen
- contrast and brightness of the screen
- tilt and swivel of the screen
- suitability of keyboards, desks, and chairs
- the workstation environment
- the user-friendliness of the software.

Daily work routines will involve periods away from the screen.

17.0: SAFEGUARDING

We have a comprehensive Safeguarding Policy for the protection of both children and vulnerable adults. A statement upholding our procedures will be made at each annual church meeting and be suitably recorded. A permanent record will be maintained of all accidents involving children. The Safeguarding policy is available to view online and in each of the church buildings.

Regular safeguarding training is provided by our Designated Safeguarding Officer who should be contacted regarding any safeguarding issues or for any advice around safeguarding in general.

18.0: CHURCH SECURITY.

We will comply with our Church security procedures to ensure the safety of our staff, volunteers, and congregation.