

Policy Title:	Health and Safety Policy
See Also:	Emergency Evacuation Plan
Policy Date:	May 2016
Revised:	May 2025
Review Date:	Annually

OUR OBJECTIVE

It is the intention of the Vicar, Sub-wardens, and the Parochial Church Council that everyone worshipping at, working in, or visiting St James' Church, Rowledge, Little Fishes Nursery School, the churchyard, church car park and church office should be safe and free from harm as far as we can reasonably ensure. In order to achieve this objective, we need your co-operation, and we would be grateful if you could spare a few minutes to read this **Health and Safety Policy** and observe the guidelines contained in it.

Much of it will be perceived as common sense but there may be some points which you might not have previously considered. It is not exhaustive as we wish to avoid excessive detail. However, if everybody makes an effort to put this guidance into practice there should be much less likelihood of accidents or other incidents occurring.

As well as the obvious pain, distress and suffering which accidents cause, they also bring an additional burden in terms of reporting and investigation, increased insurance costs and, in some circumstances, court proceedings. The avoidance of accidents and their consequences is our objective.

THE RISKS

We have carried out risk assessments and we consider that the main risks to be found in the church, church centre, churchyard, car park and church office and approaches are as follows:

1. FIRE

As with all buildings, a fire in the church and associated church buildings, particularly when they are full, represents a major potential hazard. We detail below the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire.

2. ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

Whether permanently installed or brought into the church and associated church buildings for particular events, electrical equipment may cause serious or fatal shocks or, alternatively, cause fires.

3. SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS

These types of accidents can affect anybody but are more likely to affect the young and older people. Especially dangerous are falls from heights and volunteers carrying out routine maintenance of the church and contractors should take particular care.

4. MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT

This is mainly a risk to contractors and others including volunteers carrying out repair and maintenance work on the Church and surroundings, including caring for the Churchyard.

5. FOOD HYGIENE

Food poisoning may cause embarrassment and inconvenience but at worst it can kill. Observance of simple rules can do much to reduce the risks.

6. HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

Unless brought in by building and other contractors these generally consist of cleaning materials. These are mainly a risk to children.

7. ROAD SAFETY

There is a need to drive in the car parks and approaches at a slow speed watching out for in particular, the young, old or disabled people.

8. ACTIVITIES

Social and fundraising activities, including sporting activities and outings, can create hazards caused by volunteers and participants undertaking unfamiliar tasks.

9. SAFEGUARDING

There are legal requirements for the safeguarding of vulnerable adults and children.

FIRE PROCEDURES (see also the Emergency Evacuation Plan)

The procedures in the event of a fire are as follows:

- i. The Vicar, Sub-warden or other person in charge will order evacuation.
- ii. The Sub-warden, Welcomers or event organiser will open all doors which shall be unlocked during a service or event.
- iii. If there is a choir, they will evacuate through the vestry door and the congregation through the main porch door if feasible (the South door). The church centre has "running man" signs. Provision should be made for those who are disabled.
- iv. Children in Big Fish will be taken to the assembly area by the Big Fish leaders and meet their parents there.
- v. Evacuation should proceed quickly but in as calm and as orderly a manner as circumstances permit.
- vi. Fire extinguishers should only be used to facilitate emergency exit.
- vii. The emergency services will be called using a mobile phone immediately.
- viii. The assembly area is in the middle of the old churchyard in front of (South side) of the church.
- ix. The Vicar, Sub-warden and / or other person in charge will attempt to account for all persons at the service or event.

Please note that Little Fishes Nursery School have their own procedures and full lists of children and staff on site.

Smoking is illegal anywhere in the church and church centre. Please do not smoke in the churchyard and car parks, especially during dry summers, as dry vegetation may catch fire.

ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

Unless you are authorised to do so, do not alter, tamper with or interfere with any permanent electrical installation.

No temporary wiring should be installed unless authorised by the Vicar or Sub-wardens. If any plug or socket appears to be damaged do not attempt to use it.

Ensure that all portable electrical equipment, including musical items, have been properly tested, do not have worn flexes and, if appropriate, are earthed.

In the event of a heating failure, use only convector type portable heaters.

SLIPS TRIPS AND FALLS

Take care when moving around the church, church buildings and churchyard.

Avoid leaving anything on floors such as loose carpets, rugs, trailing wires, or obstructions which could cause someone to trip.

Do not over stack chairs.

Do not allow children to play on churchyard monuments which could topple over.

Take particular care when using ladders or steps to install temporary decorations including Christmas decorations, banners or flags. Ensure that the ladder or steps used are appropriate for the work envisaged.

Ladders used at high levels should be properly secured and generally held by a second person. Do not over-stretch, hold on to the ladder as much as possible when working and use appropriate footwear.

MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT

All machinery and equipment should be adequately maintained and tested.

Hand tools should be tested for defects.

Safety equipment including footwear, goggles, ear protectors and gloves should be worn as appropriate.

The manufacturers' instructions should always be observed.

FOOD HYGIENE

Wash your hands prior to preparing or serving food.

Do not prepare or serve food if recovering from a relevant illness.

Any wounds should be covered with a brightly coloured waterproof dressing.

Wipe down and disinfect all surfaces before preparing food.

Check food stored in cupboards or refrigerators for sell by dates and remove out of date or unwanted items.

Do not store ready-to-eat food with raw uncooked food.

Take particular care with high-risk foods such as meat, fish and dairy products and ensure that they are cooked thoroughly where necessary.

Where temperature control is necessary for food safety purposes ensure it is kept hot (above 63 degrees centigrade) or cold (below 5 degrees centigrade).

Empty waste bins regularly.

Supervise the involvement of children with food preparation carefully.

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

Avoid bringing any hazardous substances on to church property if possible.

Ensure that any hazardous substances are used appropriately in accordance with their labelling.

All cleaning materials should be kept in the bolted cupboard provided out of reach of children.

Take care when using petrol or other flammable substances in connection with garden or other equipment. Do not store flammable substances at the church.

ROAD SAFETY

Drive along the approaches to the church and in the car parks, including Forestry Commission car park, at an appropriately slow speed.

Please keep a look out for young, old and disabled people.

ACTIVITIES AND SAFEGUARDING

All social and fundraising activities should be assessed for risk and if appropriate, approval sought from the Vicar or Sub-wardens.

Activities with children and young people need to be assessed for risk by those working with them and considered with the Vicar or Sub-wardens as appropriate.

Safeguarding procedures for children and vulnerable persons must be observed in accordance with procedures laid down by the Diocese and Church of England and following the St James' church safeguarding policy.