



HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY 2021

I. STATEMENT OF INTENT

In recognition of our responsibilities for health and safety risks it is our policy to:

- Nominate a person or persons from within the parish to co-ordinate our efforts on health and safety risks
- Agree with the Parish Health and Safety Coordinator the frequency of regular safety inspections of the Parish Premises (Church, Mass Centre, Hall, Club, presbytery etc. which are used for Parish purposes), equipment and activities
- Check that parishioners, staff, volunteers, contractors and others are able and competent to carry out their tasks safely
- Ensure that adequate supervision is provided where necessary for safety
- Agree the extent of the premises, equipment and activities that are under parish control where the site is shared with other occupiers
- Have health and safety as an agenda item on the parish meetings
- Discuss with parishioners, staff, volunteers, contractors and others any matters affecting their health and safety



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To help us implement this policy we ask each Parish Priest to:

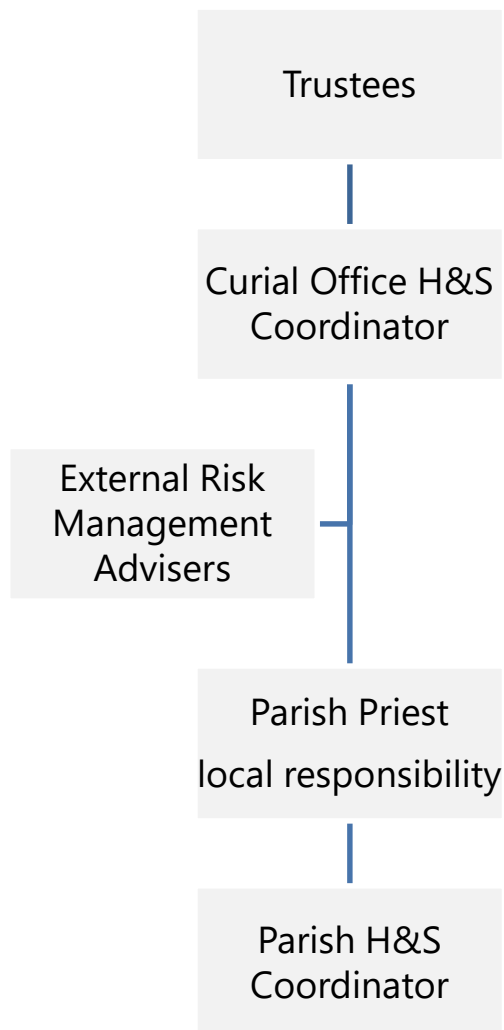
- Nominate, appoint and provide adequate resources to all Health and Safety Coordinator(s)
- Carry out and keep under review a general risk assessment and make a record of the significant findings
- Carry out and keep under review a fire risk assessment (applicable to the premises) and make a record of the significant findings
- Document and communicate the emergency arrangements for the Parish Premises
- Provide first aid equipment and resource and document all accidents, incidents and near miss events
- Provide the necessary resources to carry out, document and progress safety inspections of the Parish
- Carry out checks to ensure parishioners, staff, volunteers and contractors are competent to carry out tasks safely
- Ensure risk assessment is carried out to enable tasks to be carried out safely
- Communicate with others who share your site and co-operate on matters of health and safety
- Ensure meetings held for Parish activities or conduct, have 'health, safety and risk management' as a standing agenda item



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- Periodically review meeting agendas to ensure the above point is happening

2. RESPONSIBILITIES



Trustees - the trustees have the overall strategic responsibility across the Archdiocese for setting the framework and monitoring implementation as well



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as supporting the parish priest and helpers in achieving realistic health and safety solutions. The trustees have nominated one of their number to be the trustee with responsibility for overseeing health and safety on their behalf. Currently, this is Peter Vella.

Curial Office H&S Co-ordinator - The health and safety co-ordinator (nominated by the trustees) works with and assists all those persons identified in the framework in achieving a common safety approach across the diocese. Currently this person is Deacon Paul O'Connor, Head of Planning.

External Risk Management Advisors - Our risk management advisors provide support & guidance with regard to appropriate safety strategy across the Archdiocese. Currently this is PIB Risk Management – main contact is Gavin Leatherbarrow.

Parish Priest – The Parish Priest has day to day operational management for parish activities and Parish Premises and is accountable for ensuring the health and safety policy and associated risk control measures are implemented as far as is reasonably practicable.

Parish Health and Safety Coordinator – The role of the Parish Health & Safety Coordinator is:

- To promote a positive health and safety culture in the parish, in respect of its buildings and the activities undertaken by its clergy, volunteers and those attending to foster a strong and positive attitude towards delivering health and safety performance in the parish
- To support the Parish Priest with their duties as defined in the Archdiocesan Health and Safety Policy
- To use the xCenta online health and safety system to conduct and record sensible risk assessments and document regular safety checks thereby demonstrating health and safety activity is taking place



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- To report issues and situations which are considered to be unsafe and, in accordance with agreed procedure in the parish, resolve them to create safe places for people
- To record accidents and near miss events if they occur in a timely and correct manner ensuring all procedural requirements are undertaken to ensure parish compliance with legislation and regulations
- To work with the Archdiocese externally appointed risk management competent persons (PIB Risk Management)

Parishioners, Staff, Volunteers, Contractors & Others – Anyone working within the parish environment has a safety responsibility and each is asked to:

- Co-operate on health and safety matters
- Not interfere with anything provided to safeguard their health and safety
- Take care of their own health and safety
- Report any health and safety concerns as soon as possible to the parish priest, parish administrator or the Parish Health and Safety Coordinator

3. ARRANGEMENTS

The following arrangements are designed to help and assist with the successful implementation of sensible risk control measures:

Accident recording, reporting and investigation

- Completed accident forms are to be given to the Parish Office. An investigation will be arranged, if necessary, by the Parish Priest.



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- All 'reportable' accidents are advised to the Curial Office Health and Safety Co-Ordinator who will confirm whether or not a RIDDOR report is required.
- All accidents and incidents are recorded, and trends analysed. Appropriate actions are taken with a view to minimise the chance of further similar incidents occurring.
- Records will be held in the Parish Health and Safety file in the Parish office or on the xCenta online system where available.
- External investigations can be arranged to give a balance/impartial view of an accident or incident.

Asbestos management

- An asbestos survey is carried out in all parish buildings (including any occupied by a third party) to establish if there is any asbestos containing material therein.
- Where asbestos is identified, suspected or subsequently discovered in the parish buildings and where it remains in place, it is made safe as recommended in the asbestos survey.
- Regular checks are made to ensure there is no deterioration and it remains safe.
- Information regarding the location of the asbestos remaining in any of the parish buildings must be given to all contractors before they commence building or maintenance works, however small, and anyone else who may be affected.
- The asbestos register and all other related records are kept in the Parish Health and Safety file in the parish office or on the xCenta online system where available.



Building and maintenance works

- All building and maintenance works are to be carried out in a safe manner by competent persons whether they are parish employees, volunteers or contractors.
- All contractors are required to co-operate with the parish health and safety policy, in particular the safety rules set out in the 'Responsibility of Contractors' section.
- Large building, refurbishment and maintenance works requiring compliance with the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 are arranged and overseen by the Property Team at Cathedral House managed by competent external consultants.

Display screen equipment

- Risk assessments are carried out on all users of computers (who use display screen equipment for an hour or more at a time) and other display screen equipment, together with their workstations to reduce any risks to the lowest possible level.
- Persons using display screen equipment for parish work are encouraged to take regular breaks and ensure they are able to achieve a comfortable position.
- Problems must be reported immediately to the Parish Priest to enable an appropriate solution to be found.
- All records are held in the Parish Health and Safety file in the Parish office or on the xCenta online system where available.



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Driving on behalf of Parish business

- The aim of the parish is to eliminate or reduce the amount of time employees and volunteers spend driving as part of their working day (driving from home to a designated place of work is excluded).
- Employees and volunteers who 'drive on business' (visiting parishioners, travelling to meetings, travelling to other church buildings etc.) must be authorised to do so by the Parish Priest.
- Authorisation is given only if the proposed driver provides:
 - a full driving licence
 - evidence of business cover on the car insurance
 - a valid M.O.T. (if applicable)

Equality Act

- Reasonable adjustments are considered for all Parish Premises, as far as is reasonably practicable.
- Office and welfare facilities are, as far as is reasonably practical, accessible to all. In certain areas these facilities can be made available if required.
- Reasonable adjustments are made to accommodate all less able persons as far as is reasonably practicable.
- Discrimination, whether it be direct, indirect, harassment or violence is not tolerated under any circumstances.

Electrical safety

- The fixed electrical system of Parish Premises is inspected and tested every 5 years by a competent contractor who is a member of the



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National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contracting (NICEIC), Electrical Contractors Association (ECA) or other approved body.

- Regular visible checks of all electrical equipment and appliances are carried out by competent persons. All damage and faults are dealt with immediately by a competent contractor.
- Portable appliance testing is carried out on a rolling programme.
- In addition, all parish employees and volunteers are encouraged to report such deficiencies.

Fire safety

- Arrange for a fire risk assessment of all Parish Premises by a competent person.
- Ensure that a fire can be detected in a reasonable time and that people can be warned.
- Ensure that people who may be in the building can get out safely.
- Ensure that people in the building know what to do in the event of a fire emergency.
- Provide appropriate fire extinguishers/blankets which are to be easily accessible.
- All records are kept in the Parish Health and Safety file or on the xCenta online system where available.

Food safety

- The Parish makes every effort to follow good hygiene practice governing the preparation and storage of foodstuffs.



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- Food handlers have access to appropriate information on safe food handling.
- Appropriate assessments of risk are carried out for the foods to be prepared and stored including storage at correct temperatures and storage in correct areas.
- Before food preparation commences, all surfaces are washed down and disinfected.
- Hirers of church buildings who wish to provide foodstuff are advised of our facilities and are encouraged to follow safe procedures to avoid fire, accident and hygiene hazards.

Gas safety

Misuse and abuse of gas is a significant cause of fires and injury. Faulty gas equipment can kill. Accordingly, the parish is committed to ensuring a high standard of gas safety:

- All gas boilers and fires within Parish Premises are maintained and tested annually by a competent contractor who must be Gas Safety Registered Engineer. Any remedial works identified are carried out immediately.
- if there is a smell of gas:
 - o the person smelling the gas must call the British Gas emergency service.
 - o ventilate the building by opening doors and windows.
 - o do not turn lights on or off and avoid using other electrical appliances or switches.
 - o do not smoke, light a match or any other naked flame.



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- Records and Gas Safety Certificates are kept in the Parish Health and Safety file in the Parish office or on the xCenta online system where available.

Hazardous substances

Risk assessments based on the manufacturer's data sheets are provided to highlight the risks involved with their use and what to do if the substance is ingested, comes in contact with the skin or gets into the eyes. When ordering substances every care is taken to ensure the most effective but least hazardous product is identified. Anyone using hazardous substances will:

- receive appropriate training and be provided with appropriate personal protective equipment;
- not bring any substances from home
- not mix substances together (unless specifically instructed);
- not store substances in unmarked containers;
- not leave substances where they could do harm to others e.g. children

Home working

When someone is working from home, permanently or temporarily, the Archdiocese of Birmingham will:

- Put in place suitable arrangements to keep communication with the home worker
- Agree which tasks can be performed safely
- Agree which plant and equipment is suitable for use when working at home



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- Put in place the necessary control measures
- Inform the home worker of the necessary policies and procedures to follow

Hiring of rooms

- The approved Archdiocese of Birmingham Hall Hire agreement form is completed prior to any hire being formally agreed.
- A safety check of the room to be hired is completed prior to the hired event taking place.

Legionella management

The Parishes is aware of its responsibilities with regard to Legionella legislation and have made arrangements to comply:

- a risk assessment and survey has been carried out on all Parish Premises;
- all air-conditioning units are inspected annually;
- water temperatures and showerheads are tested regularly;
- records are kept in the Parish Health and Safety file in the parish office or on the xCenta online system where available

Lifting and handling

- It is the aim of the parish to eliminate lifting and handling objects entirely as far as reasonably practicable. When this is not possible and lifting and handling of items is required by employees and volunteers, the task will be assessed taking into account the job, the load, the individual and the working environment to establish a safe system of work.



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- Competent training is provided if manual handling is a regular part of the duties of the employee or volunteer.
- The guidance given is to:
 - o think before doing the task; plan the task
 - o move obstacles from the intended route, including opening doors
 - o make sure your vision is not blocked by the object being carried
 - o how heavy is the object? – get help if too heavy
 - o bend knees whilst keeping back as straight as possible
 - o ensure a stable safe footing and the ground is even and not slippery
 - o carry the object close to the body

Lighting

It is the aim of the parish to provide a good standard of lighting to assist persons to move around the parish buildings in a safe manner.

- consideration has been given to the risk of occupants in the event of a power failure.
- regular checks are carried out to ensure the lighting provided is working and sufficient, especially outside lights. Identified remedial work is completed in a timely manner.
- employees and volunteers are encouraged to report all defective lighting to the Parish Priest or Parish Health and Safety Coordinator.
- only authorised parish persons or contractors are permitted to replace bulbs or repair light fittings.
- the emergency lighting is inspected and maintained every six months. Remedial action identified is carried out in a timely manner.
- records are kept in the Parish Health and Safety file in the parish office.



Personal safety

- The aim of the parish is to ensure that all employees and volunteers are provided with a safe working environment as far as is reasonably practicable.
- Full consideration has been given to the risks of working in the Parish Premises, travelling between these buildings, working alone, accepting people into their homes, visiting people's homes and handling cash and valuables.
- Appropriate risk assessments are compiled, and procedures drawn up to cover such activities.
- The appropriate control measures identified to protect employees and volunteers are communicated to them and acknowledged by them.
- All persons are asked to report any concerns to the Parish Priest. Such concerns will be treated confidentially.

Plant and equipment

- Persons under 18 are not permitted to use any power-driven plant or equipment. They are only permitted to use non-powered hand tools.
- Ladders, step ladders and other working at height equipment may only be used by authorised persons and must be used in accordance with the current legislation and risk assessment.

The following procedures apply:

- do not use any equipment if training has not been received in its use and/or authorisation has not been given for its use;



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- do not use the plant or equipment for the purpose it was not intended;
- always switch off the plant and equipment before any adjustments are made;
- always check the equipment is in safe working condition, correctly adjusted, and there are no other defects before use;
- ensure the safety guards are in place following carrying out minor maintenance;
- always wear the appropriate personal protective equipment for the task as detailed in the relevant risk assessment;
- all defects must be reported to the Parish Priest immediately. The equipment must not be used until the defect has been rectified;
- all plant and equipment must be regularly maintained and serviced in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Risk assessment

All Parish tasks and activities undertaken by their employees or volunteers are assessed for hazards and whether those hazards could cause significant harm. If significant hazards are identified, a record of the significant findings is made, kept and reviewed.

Risk Assessments include:

- description of the identified hazard
- who is at risk
- what controls are in place to reduce the risk
- whether additional controls are needed



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- what action is required, who will take it and by when
- a review process

Slips, trips and falls

All Parish Premises and grounds are checked regularly in order to reduce, as far as is reasonably practicable, the risk of slips, trips and falls. These checks include:

- floors and stairs in buildings; driveways, paths and steps in grounds;
- handrails associated with steps and ramps; guarding to protect persons falling from height
- features placed to highlight hazards e.g. warning signs, warning tape / paint, contrasting material;
- temporary hazards e.g. maintenance works, moving offices;
- lighting, in particular outside lighting on steps, walkways and paths.
- Any defects found will be repaired. Temporary remedy may be used if safe to do so.
- All employees and volunteers are encouraged to report all defects to the Parish Priest or Parish Health and Safety Coordinator.
- All inspection records are kept in the Parish Health and Safety file in the parish office.



Smoke free premises

- Parish Premises are smoke free and all persons using the parish facilities either as a place of work or for worship or fellowship have a right to a smoke free environment. This includes the smoking of cigarettes, cigars, e-cigarettes and all types of pipe.
- Smoking is prohibited in all enclosed and substantially enclosed buildings. This applies to all employees, volunteers, parishioners, contractors and visitors.
- The responsibility for implementing this policy rests with the Parish Priest. However, everyone is obliged to adhere to & give support to the policy.
- No smoking signs are clearly displayed on all entrances to the Parish Premises.

Volunteer safety

The Parish commits to:

- Provide induction, training, information, instruction and supervision when necessary;
- Provide regular support for staff and volunteers in their role and a named contact in case of need;
- Treat volunteers in line with the Equalities Act 2010;
- Provide insurance cover.

Volunteers commit to:

- Following policies and procedures relevant to themselves and the tasks being undertaken and to meet mutually agreed expectations around the role such as standard of work and time taken.



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- Records of all volunteers are kept in the Parish Health and Safety file in the parish office

Working alone

- Appropriate risk assessments are compiled, and procedures drawn up to cover such activities.
- Appropriate control measures identified to protect employees and volunteers are communicated to them and acknowledged by them.
- All persons are asked to report any concerns to the Parish Priest. Such concerns will be treated confidentially.

Work related stress

- The parish aims to determine working methods and behaviours that avoid exposure to excessively stressful situations for the employees and volunteers.
- Everyone is encouraged to work in a manner which reduces the likelihood of work-related stress and to report symptoms of stress to the Parish Priest. Such cases are treated confidentially.
- Access to counselling provided via the Diocesan Director of Human Resources (Gerry Dryden).

Signed on behalf of the Trustees and dated:

+ Bernard Longley

**+Bernard Longley
Chair of Trustees, Birmingham Diocesan Trust**

4 March 2021