

**St Nicholas Church Hall, Marston**

**Health and Safety Policy**

Issue 4

Jan 2023

Directors Marston Church Properties Ltd.

## **Preface**

St Nicholas Church Hall Marston is located on the corner of Mill Lane and Elsfeld Road, next door to the parish church. It was originally a school building and consists of a large meeting room, kitchen and toilets on the ground floor, and two smaller meeting rooms on the upper floor. The church hall and adjoining Old School House are owned by Marston Church Properties, a company whose purposes are purely charitable, namely (1) to provide a meeting place for church purposes and (2) to provide funds for church work. The rent from letting these properties and charges made to non-church organisations hiring the hall are used to support the work of St Nicholas Church.

The church hall is used for a variety of church purposes including worship service, coffee after morning service every Sunday, meals for church members from time to time, meetings of the Parochial Church Council and sundry other meetings throughout the year. Meetings can vary in size from a few people to around 100. A large proportion of the Church congregation are retired people, but there are also a significant number of families with young children. Meetings normally involve discussion and worship and for the children various activities.

The Church Hall is also used by various community groups and private parties.

## **General Statement of Policy**

So far as is reasonably practicable we will provide and maintain safe and healthy conditions for all employees, casual labour and voluntary helpers and provide such information, training and supervision as they need for this purpose.

We will endeavour to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all members of the church congregation and other members of the public who use the hall, and also of contractors.

This policy will be implemented by means of the arrangements set out below and will be reviewed by the Directors of Marston Church Properties Ltd. at least once every five years.

Signed

(Director of Marston Church Properties)

Date

# **1 Organisation and Responsibilities**

## **1.1 Responsibility of the Directors of Marston Church Properties**

The Directors have responsibility for health and safety policy and for making sure that it is implemented. The Directors are the Vicar and Church Wardens of St Nicholas Church (ex officio) and such other parishioners as may be elected from time to time. They will appoint a Health and Safety Officer whose contact details will be displayed on the noticeboard. They will have the following duties.

## **1.2 Duties of Health and Safety Officer**

- To be familiar with Health and Safety Regulations as far as they concern the church hall.
- To be familiar with this Health and Safety Policy and ensure that it is observed.
- To ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe systems of work are in place.
- To ensure that the church hall is maintained clean and tidy.
- To ensure that safety equipment and clothing is provided and used where required.
- To ensure that plant, equipment and tools are properly maintained and in good conditions and that operators have received appropriate instructions.
- To ensure that adequate access and egress is maintained.
- To ensure that adequate fire fighting equipment is available and maintained.

## **1.3 Responsibilities of employees and voluntary workers**

Employees and voluntary workers have a responsibility to co-operate in the implementation of this policy and to take reasonable care of themselves and others whilst on church hall business or premises. They must therefore:

- Comply with safety rules.
- Use protective equipment or clothing when required.
- Report any fault or defect to the appropriate person.
- Report accidents, injuries and dangerous incidents as soon as possible.

## **2 Arrangements**

### **2.1 Accidents and First Aid**

A First Aid box and accident book are located in:

- The kitchen

All accidents and dangerous incidents must be recorded in the accident book.

### **2.2 Fire Safety**

#### **Fire Alarms**

The hall is fitted with smoke detectors but there are no fire alarms. It is not expected that people will be sleeping on the premises. Because of the relatively small size of the buildings and the nature of their use, it is possible to raise a fire alarm verbally.

#### **Fire extinguishers**

The church hall is equipped with a number of appropriate fire extinguishers which are kept in strategic positions, generally near to exits. These are checked as appropriate by the Safety Officer. A fire blanket is provided in the kitchen.

#### **Fire Exits**

The church hall is provided with two exits – a double door in the north wall of the ground floor room which is opened by a fire door bar, and an entrance door at the front of the building. The exit from the upper floor is via the main staircase. The main entrance is normally unlocked when the hall is in use. Fire exits are all clearly signposted.

#### **Evacuation**

In the event of a fire, the person leading the meeting will assume responsibility to order evacuation. They will

- Assist in the evacuation of the hall, particularly disabled people
- Telephone the emergency services
- Ensure that children are supervised and kept together, clear of the building
- Attack the fire if possible within his/her capability using the appliances provided, but without taking personal risk
- Ensure clear access for emergency services

- Prevent people from re-entering the building until cleared by the fire service

## **2.3 Electrical and Gas Safety**

### **Routine precautions**

All users must observe the following precautions when using electrical equipment.

- Visually check equipment before use.
- Don't use faulty equipment, but report the fault to the Safety Officer.
- Switch off and unplug equipment which is not in use.
- Take care with flexible cables to avoid a hazard of tripping.

### **Heaters**

The church hall is heated by gas heaters and wall mounted electric fires. Any faults must be reported to the safety officer.

### **Regular checks**

Every five years the fixed electrical system will be inspected and tested by appropriately qualified electrical contractors and a report will be delivered to the Safety Officer. Portable electrical appliances will be checked at least every two years.

## **2.4 Gas Equipment Safety**

The gas equipment will be checked annually by a qualified contractor.

Carbon monoxide alarms are installed.

## **2.5 Hazardous substances**

The following types of hazardous substances may be used.

- Domestic cleaning materials

These will be stored in clearly marked containers in suitable areas out of the reach of children.

## **2.6 Plant and machinery**

The following types of equipment may be used by adult employees or voluntary workers who are suitably experienced.

- Cooking equipment
- Water heater
- Dishwasher
- Ladders
- Hand tools, including power driven hand tools
- Audio visual equipment

The following precautions will apply, so far as relevant.

- Visually check that the equipment is in safe working condition before use. Do not use faulty equipment, but report the fault to the Safety Officer.
- Switch off powered equipment and gas after use and before making any adjustments to it.
- Ladders may only be used where they can be safely and correctly positioned, or secured if necessary
- Wear suitable clothing, including safe non-slip shoes and protective clothing (e.g gloves) where appropriate.
- Make sure cooking is adequately supervised by a responsible adult

The kitchen is equipped with a water boiler for preparation of hot drinks and a high-speed dishwasher. Both of these can become very hot during operation. They must not be operated by children.

Every year the condition of equipment owned by Marston Church Properties will be inspected by the Safety Officer and it will be repaired or replaced as found necessary.

## **2.7 Floors, paths and steps**

The Safety Officer will inspect the condition of floors, paths and steps within the church hall and surrounding area at least once a year and more often when conditions require and will, so far as is reasonably practicable, take any necessary action to repair damage, to remove moss, algae, leaves, snow or ice and/or to post warning notices in order to reduce the risk of slips, trips and falls.

All church hall workers and users will take care to prevent situations which could cause trips or falls by keeping the church tidy and reporting any potentially dangerous conditions.

## **2.8 Lighting**

To ensure that the church hall is adequately lit, the Safety Officer will inspect the lights will be checked at least once a month and arrange for the replacement of bulbsbulbs will be replaced as required.

## **2.9 Preparation of food**

The Church Hall kitchen has been awarded a 4 star hygiene rating by Oxford City Council and hot meals are served from the kitchen. Furthermorehot or cold drinks, biscuits and food freshly prepared by volunteers at home may be served in the church hall.

The following precautions apply to the Church Hall kitchen:

- Relevant government or local authority regulations are followed.
- Food handlers have adequate experience or are appropriately supervised. Regular users are encouraged to undertake the Level 2 Food Safety and Hygiene certificate.
- Food is prepared and stored at appropriate temperatures.
- Promptly after any meals are finished, crockery and cutlery will be washed, waste will be disposed of and the kitchen will be tidied and left in a clean state
- No perishable food items will be left or stored in the kitchen and any items which are stored there (eg coffee, tea, sugar, squash) will be in clearly labelled containers in a high level cupboard.
- Any sign of infestation by insects or vermin will be reported promptly to the Safety Officer who will ensure that appropriate action is taken.

## **2.10 Manual handling**

- As far as is reasonably practicable we will avoid the need for manual handling of heavy objects.
- When necessary, loads will be moved by sufficiently fit and competent adults, using suitable lifting aids as far as possible.
- The Clavinova keyboard will be moved carefully by two adults using the sack trolley provided in the church hall.
- The collapsible tables used for meetings will be stacked carefully after use using the chain provided to secure them upright. Chairs will also be stacked carefully.

## **2.11 Hazardous buildings and glazing**

Our policy is to ensure that the church hall is safe and without risks to the health safety and welfare of all who work in it or use it. Defects are reported to the Directors or other responsible person and repairs are arranged. If necessary, temporary measures may be taken to ensure

there is no risk of accident or injury until permanent repairs can be carried out.

An inspection of the buildings will be carried out by the Safety Officer or a qualified consultant on a regular basis. The Directors are responsible to ensure that actions recommended at this inspection are carried out.

There is no glazing below waist height in the church buildings.

## **2.12 Contractors**

Anyone carrying out work in the hall other than employees or volunteers must abide by the following.

- Have their own health and safety policy (if required by law) and be able to provide a copy.
- Have appropriate public and employer's liability insurance and be able to provide a copy.
- Comply with this policy and cooperate with the Safety Officer to provide safe systems of work.
- Be able to show that portable equipment has been appropriately inspected and tested.
- Use subcontractors only with the express permission of the Safety Officer. However, responsibility will remain with the contractors.

## **2.13 Care of Children**

All children's activities will be supervised by competent and suitable adults in compliance with the policies in "Safeguarding Handbook for the protection of children and vulnerable adults (Diocese of Oxford)". They will be responsible for avoiding situations which are hazardous to children. Any items used in children's activities will conform to current EU safety regulations. The floors of all children's play areas will be kept clean and tidy, without sharp edges or items which children could pick up and swallow. The gate at the bottom of the stairs will be latched shut when small children are present.

## **2.14 Cleanliness –kitchens and toilets**

In the interests of hygiene, the kitchens and toilets will be kept clean at all times. Floors will be cleaned regularly, and if they are wet after cleaning warning notices will be erected. The toilets will be disinfected regularly. Food preparers will wash their hands before handling food.