

Safe Working Reminders

Many volunteers do lots of jobs around the church. We want everyone to be safe when doing them and take the safety of others into account too. So the PCC is issuing this annual reminder of some of the things to keep in mind.

This document summarises the key items in the Health and Safety Policy, the Safeguarding Policy and the Lone Working Guidance. These are available on the church website at <https://stjamestaunton.org/guidance-and-reports>. People working specifically with children and vulnerable adults will also have been given a summary of the things they need to do.

When undertaking risk assessments for activities, you may refer to the policy documents rather than reassess everything from scratch.

Accidents

If an accident occurs to you or to someone else, it should be recorded. There are reporting sheets in a holder on the side of the A-Z pigeon holes, and another outside the Large Hall. The report will be reviewed to see if any further action is required, and then kept in the church office. Certain injuries have to be reported officially, so if someone has to go to hospital, you MUST fill in a reporting form.

First Aid

There is a first aid box in the corridor outside the Large Hall, and another one is put on the A-Z pigeonholes during services (it isn't left there, because it would get stolen).

If you would like to attend a first aid course, please speak to one of the churchwardens.

Fire

There are fire extinguishers in various places throughout the buildings. Please keep an eye out for them, so you know where they are should a fire occur. All are marked with the type of fire they are for. The extinguisher in the corridor outside the kitchen is marked "may be used in the kitchen"; other extinguishers should not be used on kitchen fires.

If you would like to attend a fire awareness course, please speak to one of the churchwardens.

Lifting

Please take care when lifting anything heavy – if something is bulky or heavy, stop and think before trying to lift it. If you aren't sure, ask someone else to help you.

The Clavinova is the heaviest thing we have to lift under normal circumstances. This needs three people. Do not try to lift it with two people. If you need to lift it up or down a step, stop and agree between you how you are going to do it.

Ladders

Two people must be present when working off a ladder. If you fall off, the other person can render assistance. If you are on your own, even if you have a mobile phone with you, you might hit your head or fall somewhere there isn't a mobile signal.

Check the stability of the ladder. It should be one unit out for every four units high; should not lean sideways; the base should be secure so that it does not slip or tip (e.g. OK on fixed carpet, but not on soil or smooth stone); and the top of the ladder should rest on a solid surface, and not be twisted.

Don't lean out – if you can't reach with your arms alone, it's not safe.

Needles and other detritus

From time to time, drug users leave needles in unexpected places. If you find a needle do not touch it. Report it to the caretaker or a church officer, who will deal with it.

A check should be made before any children's activity. Crèche: the sofas should be examined carefully by removing the cushions – don't feel between the cushions with your fingers. Churchyard: first search the perimeter and under trees. If any needles are found, consider relocating the activity. Also look for other detritus that would be dangerous for children, e.g. dead birds, broken glass.

Electrical equipment

All church-owned electrical equipment is checked annually. Nevertheless, please watch out for any signs of damage, especially to cables, plugs and the place where a mains cable goes into a device.

If the mains power goes off when you plug in an item of electrical equipment, stop using it! If it belongs to the church, put an “unsafe” label on it and report it to the church office. Don’t put it back.

Lone working

If you are working on your own (in the church, the churchyard or the office, or visiting someone at home), please read the Lone Working Guidance, available on the website (“Information” tab). Let someone know where you are and when you expect to return, and take a mobile phone with you.

If you are staying for a while, look around to see if anyone else is present. If you are uncomfortable, leave and come back later. Consider locking the church until you finish your job.

If someone is verbally or physically abusive, do not tackle them directly. Move away and be prepared to leave the site if you are followed. Call the police on 101 normally (999 if you are threatened) and let one of the church officers know immediately what has happened (contacts in the bulletin).

Cooking

If you are planning any event involving hot food, please speak to the Catering Coordinator so that someone with Food Hygiene training can oversee the cooking arrangements.

Offering Lifts

Please do not offer lifts to unaccompanied children or young people. If you cannot contact their parents, speak to a church officer and let them make appropriate arrangements.

For vulnerable adults who are not well-known to you, please do not enter into a regular arrangement for giving them a lift. Speak to the vicar first.

Off-site events

If you are arranging an off-site event, please consider insurance arrangements. We may need to formally notify our insurers (usually at no extra cost) if the venue or transport providers are not insured. Otherwise, you might find yourself personally liable. Anything involving children not accompanied by a parent, or involving a dangerous activity, should be notified to a church officer.

Safeguarding Children

If you work with children, please refresh your awareness of the CofE’s safeguarding policy: go to www.churchofengland.org/more/safeguarding/policy-practice-guidance and look at the Practice Guidance section.

Photographs: if you wish to photograph a children’s event with a view to making a display or putting a picture in the magazine, you must obtain the permission of the parents or guardians of any child who can be identified in the photograph. There may be good reasons, unbeknownst to you, for a particular child’s identify to be protected.

Comforting: if a child is upset, call their parents. You can take the child to them, or carry a younger child who is very upset, but don’t cuddle and comfort them unnecessarily.

Adult helpers: if you need assistance in running a group, or wish to involve another adult who has not gone through the Safe Recruiting Procedure, consult the Parish Safeguarding Officer or the Children’s Church leader about what to do. A leader or other helper is seen by a child as someone they can trust, and we cannot assume that an adult is trustworthy just because they come to church.

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

If you work with vulnerable adults please refresh your awareness of the CofE’s safeguarding policy: see the link above under Safeguarding Children.

If you are asked by an older person to help them with their affairs, please be aware that you could be vulnerable to accusations of taking advantage of them. Make sure that any relatives know you are helping them, and let one of the church officers know of the situation.

If you have safeguarding concerns

If you have any concerns about the safety or wellbeing of a child or a vulnerable person, do not ignore or dismiss them. Discuss them directly with the Vicar or the Parish Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible (they know the rules the best). If you are concerned that the child or person may be at risk of harm you should report this immediately to Children’s or Adult Social Care, NSPCC (for children), the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer or the Police. (The Diocesan Safeguarding Officer should be informed in any case). Guidance is to be found on the Safeguarding page of the diocesan website, and telephone numbers are displayed on the board in church and on the safeguarding page on the church website: <http://stjamestaunton.org/safeguarding>.