

Faughanvale Presbyterian Church - Health & Safety Policy

January 2009

Faughanvale Presbyterian Church recognises it has a moral and legal responsibility to provide a safe and healthy environment for members, voluntary workers, visitors and employees. Equally all church users are expected to understand that they have a responsibility to themselves and others to ensure the same safe and healthy environment.

This Policy sets out the Church's approach to Health & Safety in order to minimise, as far as is reasonably practicable, risks to the health and safety of members, voluntary workers and employees of the congregation and visitors and contractors.

Places of worship are not exempt from health and safety legislation. Environmental Health Officers still enforce health and safety legislation in places of worship under the Health & Safety (Enforcing Authority) Regulations 1998.

The Church will, therefore, take all necessary steps within its power to meet its responsibilities in so far as is reasonably practicable by:

- so far as is reasonably practicable the maintenance of the church premises in a condition that is safe and without risk to health and the provision and maintenance of means of access to and egress from it that are safe and without such risks.
- The provision and maintenance of furnishings and equipment which, so far as is reasonably practicable, are safe and without risks to health.

1. ACCIDENTS AND FIRST AID

- The First Aid Box is located in the Kitchen and can be used for minor ailments. If you find that elements of the box are running low please inform Health and Safety officer or top them up.
- The Accident Book is located in the Hot Tank room (beside kitchen).

The reporting of accidents is a legal requirement. To comply with the Data Protection Act all Accident Forms should be completed in accordance with the instructions on the book, sealed, labelled confidential and given to Dr Tom Craig.

2. FIRE SAFETY

- a) The Church has a Fire Policy and Evacuation Procedure which is reviewed on a regular basis.
 - i. If you discover a fire anywhere on the church complex, leave the building immediately raising the alarm as you go using a break-glass unit on your exit route and verbally. Do not stop to collect coats or other possessions.
 - ii. When you are out of the building, call the fire brigade on 999. Give out the number of the phone you are you are calling from including area dialling code. Hall tel. no. 02871812080
State the location of the fire and give the postcode. Fire at Faughanvale Presbyterian Church Hall, Killylane Road, Eglinton, BT47 3DW - on back road between Eglinton and Greysteel
 - iii. Fire assembly point: car park at end of Halls.
- 1v. OUTSIDE – Do not leave muster area until advised.
- b) Adequate fire detection and fire fighting equipment is provided and maintained.
- c) All fire evacuation exits and routes are appropriately signed.
- d) Each church group and organisation should organise their own fire drill at least once a year. A signed record of this must be kept (sign fire book), which can be inspected at any time.
- e) Fire doors and room doors to be kept closed.
- f) Any furniture being introduced into the premises shall comply with current fire safety standards.
- g) No smoking is permitted anywhere on church property.

3. ELECTRICAL SAFETY

- a) PAT (Portable appliance test) tests are carried out on ALL portable electrical equipment at regular intervals. A competent (as per 2005 legislation) electrician will be needed to carry out any repairs.
- b) The fixed electrical system will be inspected and tested by a competent contractor every ten years.
- c) Emergency lighting system shall be tested and maintained regularly including battery replacement following manufacturer's recommendations.
- d) All employees and voluntary workers must observe the following:
 - i. Visually check all electrical equipment before use.
 - ii. Report all faults immediately to the Health and Safety Co-ordinator and label equipment 'Faulty - Do Not Use'
 - iii. Do not attempt to use or repair faulty equipment.
 - iv. Electrical equipment should be switched off and disconnected when not in use for long periods.
 - v. Flexible cables should be so positioned and so protected that they do not constitute a tripping hazard and are not subject to mechanical damage.

4. GAS EQUIPMENT SAFETY

Our gas cookers and other gas equipment is maintained and checked annually by a competent CORGI registered gas installer. Any necessary work required for safety is implemented immediately. Only CORGI qualified engineers may carry out gas work in the Church.

5. HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES - Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1999 (COSHH)?

- a) Where at all possible, we have eliminated the use of hazardous substances. Where this is not possible, hazardous substances should be locked away and only used by persons with the appropriate experience. Personal protective equipment should be used where appropriate.
- b) Chemicals to be used only as directed.
- c) Chemicals must not be stored in unmarked containers.
- d) In the cleaner's room all substances that are irritant, toxic, caustic or marked with an X should be in a locked cupboard.
- e) There should be a register of any acids in the building.

6. SAFETY OF EQUIPMENT AND MACHINERY

- a) Employees and voluntary workers must not operate equipment or machinery that they are not trained and authorised to use.
- b) Equipment and machinery should only be used for its intended purpose and as directed.
- c) Any defect and damage found to any item of equipment or machinery must be reported to Health and Safety officer.

7. SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS

(Condition of floors, steps and paths)

Regular inspections will be made of all floors and stairs in the Church and Hall rooms, and forecourt area. Any defects will be reported and repairs carried out.

8. LIGHTING

Inspection and replacement will be carried out to ensure that the building and exterior is adequately lit. The necessary safety precautions will be followed for replacing bulbs at high levels.

9. MANUAL HANDLING

(Lifting, carrying and moving loads)

All lifting, carrying, pushing or pulling tasks should be assessed before starting and no-one should undertake any manual handling tasks unless all the people involved feel comfortable with the task.

10. WORKING AT HIGH LEVELS

- No one should work at height, or use stepladders, in the Church unless they are familiar with HSE guidance on the selection, risk assessment and use of stepladders and working at height
- No one should work at height, or use stepladders, in the church unless accompanied by a second person who can render assistance in the case of an accident.

11. PREPARATION OF FOOD

- Adequate materials will be provided to enable food preparation areas to be kept clean.
- There are specific Food Safety Regulations for premises which are used occasionally for food preparation and all food handlers should ensure they are aware of the relevant principles.
- A sink to be kept for hand washing and labelled so.
- The water boiler delivers VERY HOT WATER. Please do NOT allow minors to climb on to the work top or to operate the boiler valve.

12. BUILDINGS / GLAZING

- The buildings will be regularly inspected, any defects noted and procedures put in hand for repairs.
 - Where necessary, temporary measures will be taken to ensure that there is no risk of accident or injury until permanent repairs can be carried out.
 - The building will be checked for the provision of adequate safety and glazing.
- Urgent repairs may be authorised only by the Church Secretary, the Church Treasurer or repair committee.

13. CONTRACTORS

Anyone entering church premises for the purposes of carrying out work, other than an employee or voluntary worker of the church, will be regarded as a contractor. All contractors, including the self-employed, must: -

- Have appropriate public and employers' liability insurance in place and to have their own health and safety policy (where appropriate).
- Comply with all the requirements of the Church's Health and Safety Policy and Guidelines and to cooperate with the church officials in providing a safe place of work and a safe system of operation.

14. Lone Workers

No one should carry out potentially hazardous work at the church unless they are accompanied by a second person who can render assistance in the case of an accident.

15 Child Safety -The Protection of Children Act 1999 (NI order 2003) and the POCVA List

The Protection of Children Act 1999 came into force in October 2000 and introduced the Protection of Children Act (POCVA – protection of vulnerable adults and children) List in which the Secretary of State has a duty to record the names of individuals who are considered unsuitable to work with children.

- The 'PCI Child Protection Policy' to be implemented but the Health and Safety Policy takes precedence over it.
- Parents are expected to supervise their own children at all times except when directly under the supervision of a designated group leader.
- No leader should be alone with a child unless for Health and Safety reasons.
- This is a statement of intent that demonstrates a commitment to safeguard children and vulnerable adults involved with the Church from harm. The essential details for a child protection policy have

been outlined to all Church leaders during September/October 2008: This is under the supervision of Dr. M Craig.

Steps Church/organisations have to take

Every year, a number of accidents occur in our Church, Church halls, Churchyards and grounds. Not only does this cause pain and suffering to those people who are injured, it can often result in serious disruption to the smooth running of the Church and its various activities

1. Report to the church Health and Safety Officer all accidents or hazardous occurrence or dangers whether persons are injured or not as soon as is reasonably practicable
 2. It is the responsibility of each organisation to carry out a risk assessment of its activities annually and a risk assessment of any special or outdoor activities. Fill in the risk assessment form. A signed record of this must be kept, which can be inspected at any time.
 3. Carry out investigations of any accidents and recommend measures for preventing the recurrence;
 4. It is the responsibility of each individual to carry out a risk assessment of his/her activities in the Church grounds e.g. lifting chairs/tables, climbing ladders etc.
 5. Each Church group/organisation is required to organise their own fire drill at least once a year and sign the Fire Book (in Hot water tank room - beside kitchen.) indicating that this has been done.
 6. The Church will consult where necessary, with all leaders, helpers, volunteers and employees, on the implementation of any changes to this Policy; It will ensure the adequate funds and resources are made available for carrying out this Policy.
- Failure to comply with these regulations means that the insurance indemnity can be nullified.

Two words used frequently in Health and Safety policy

A "hazard" is something with the potential to cause harm.

A "risk" is the likelihood of potential harm from that hazard.