



STREATHAM
BAPTIST
CHURCH

SBC Health and Safety Policy

Policy Approved by Church Leaders / Trustees: 25th June 2024

Communicated to Church Staff: By email with read receipt

Communicated to: Activity Leaders (if applicable): By email with read receipt

Communicated to Church Members (if applicable): Church Members' Meeting

Review date: 25th June 2026 or earlier if church needs dictate

Streatham Baptist Church 20-22 Lewin Road, Streatham, London, SW16 6JR.

As a church we understand that we owe a duty of care to ensure the safety of those who visit or use our church premises.

We also know that, where we are an employer or control premises in certain circumstances, we have to meet the requirements of health and safety law.

In particular, we know that as we are an employer having five or more paid members of staff, we are required to have a written health and safety policy. As such, we have drafted this policy to meet our duty under Section 2 (3) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.

The policy is in three sections:

Section A – General Statement of Policy

Section B – Organisation and Responsibilities

Section C – Arrangements

SECTION A - GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

Our policy is to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that our activities are carried out safely and do not pose a risk to the health of our paid and voluntary staff, volunteers, church members, visitors and others who may use the church premises or any other building we are responsible for. This will be in accordance with good practice and any relevant statutory provisions where they apply.

The Trustees accept their overall responsibility for this. We will ensure that adequate resources are made available to achieve this objective. Any decisions we make will have due regard for it.

We have appointed a trustee to have specific responsibility for this policy and its implementation. We will keep health and safety matters under review at appropriate intervals. We will monitor the effectiveness of the policy, amending it where we believe it is no longer valid.

It is the duty of each paid and voluntary member of staff and volunteer to exercise personal responsibility for their own safety and that of others. This policy will be brought to their attention. We will try to ensure that everyone involved with the church plays his or her part in its implementation.

Further details about our organisation and arrangements for managing health and safety are set out in this document. A copy of it will be kept in the church and made available to others on request.

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SECTION B - ORGANISATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Responsibilities of the Leaders / Trustees

The Leaders / Trustees have overall responsibility for implementing our policy. They may delegate specific tasks to a trustee holding this portfolio or particular paid or voluntary staff, activity leaders or volunteers.

They will ensure that:

1. all paid and voluntary staff and volunteers are aware of their health and safety responsibilities;
2. adequate precautions are taken as set out in this policy and related risk assessments;
3. adequate information and training is provided for those that need it;
4. any hazards or complaints are investigated and dealt with as soon as possible;
5. where defects cannot be corrected immediately, interim steps are taken to prevent danger;
6. all accidents are reported in line with the requirements of this policy;
7. advice is sought where clarification is necessary on the implementation of this policy;
8. they set a personal example on matters of health and safety.

2. Responsibility of the Health and Safety Officer

The Church Manager is the Health and Safety Officer and has day-to-day responsibility for implementing our policy.

He / she will ensure that:

1. the standards set out in this policy are implemented and maintained;
2. where necessary, specialist health and safety assistance is obtained;
3. any hazards reported to them are rectified immediately;
4. only competent persons carry out repairs, modifications, inspections and tests;
5. any accidents are investigated, recorded and reported if necessary in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013;
6. relevant health and safety documents and records are retained;
7. they keep up to date on health and safety matters relevant to the church;
8. they set a personal example on matters of health and safety.

3. Responsibilities of Paid and Voluntary Staff, Activity Leaders and Volunteers

All paid and voluntary staff, activity leaders and volunteers have a responsibility to co-operate in the implementation of this policy and to take reasonable care of themselves and others whilst on church business or premises.

They will ensure that they:

1. read this policy and understand what is required of them;
2. complete their duties taking any necessary precautions to protect themselves and others;
3. comply with any safety rules, operating instructions and other working procedures;
4. report any hazard, defect or damage, so that they might be dealt with;
5. warn any new paid or voluntary staff, activity leader or volunteer of known hazards;
6. attend any training required to enable them to carry out their duties safely;
7. do not undertake any repair or modification unless they are competent to do so;
8. report any accidents using an accident form and pass it to the Church Manager;
9. do not misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety.

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SECTION C – ARRANGEMENTS (IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY)

This section sets out our arrangements for managing health and safety and dealing with specific risks.

1) General Arrangements

Accident Reporting

We will keep accident forms in the Main Office to record details therein. We will report to the enforcing authority and keep records of certain accidents to paid and voluntary staff, activity leaders, volunteers and members of the public in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations. Completed accident forms will be held by the Church Manager to maintain confidentiality.

Competent Assistance

Where necessary, we will appoint someone who is competent to assist us in meeting our health and safety obligations.

The person appointed to assist us is: Office Test Ltd, New Penderel House, 283 - 288 High Holborn, London, WC1V 7HP

Consultation, Information and Training

We will consult with our paid and voluntary staff, activity leaders and volunteers to ensure that health and safety concerns are identified. We will record any concerns and ensure that they are addressed as far as reasonably practicable. We will provide any necessary information and training for our paid and voluntary staff, activity leaders and volunteers in a timely manner and will include provision for this in the annual SBC budget. We will keep a record of what is provided. We will also give relevant information to contractors and self-employed people who may need this to complete their work safely.

Contractors

When we employ contractors, we will make sure that they have their own health and safety policy and Public and Employers Liability Insurance by asking to see copies of the relevant documents.

First Aid

We will provide adequate first aid facilities including, as a minimum, suitably stocked first aid boxes and a person who will take charge of the first aid arrangements. We will also provide relevant information for paid and voluntary staff, activity leaders and volunteers.

Our First Aid boxes are located in:

- Main Office;
- Main Kitchen;
- Norton House Kitchen;
- Atrium Servery;
- Crèche.

The person in charge of first aid arrangements is the Health and Safety Officer.

Monitoring

We will make regular health and safety checks to ensure that our precautions remain effective and adequate. We will also ensure that any lifting, work or electrical equipment and church utilities are inspected as necessary to ensure that they remain safe. We will keep records of the checks we make.

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Record Keeping

Our Health and Safety Risk Assessments and other relevant documents are kept on our electronic record system or by the Church Manager.

Risk Assessments

We will complete risk assessments to identify what we need to do to comply with health and safety law. We will record our findings, implementing any necessary precautions. We will review and revise these where we suspect that they are no longer valid. Guidance on Risk Assessments can be found in the SBC Staff Handbook and the SBC Activity Leaders' Handbook.

2) Specific Arrangements

Asbestos

We will take steps to identify the presence of asbestos in our buildings and, if so, assess any risk from it. We will then implement a plan to manage that risk. We will also provide relevant information to others who might need it (for example, building contractors). We will keep records of the checks, assessments and plans we have made.

Baptistry

Whenever the baptistry is used we will ensure that it is prepared, filled, used, emptied, cleaned and closed in a safe manner. Operation of the Baptistry can only be undertaken under the supervision of the Premises Manager or their nominated representative and will be done in accordance with the Baptistry Operation Procedure.

Church Buildings

We will ensure that the fabric of our buildings is regularly inspected to make sure it is safe. Defects will be repaired as soon as is practicable. Where necessary temporary measures will be taken to prevent danger until permanent repairs can be made. This will include glazing.

Church Boundaries and External Spaces

We will ensure that boundary walls, gates and external spaces are kept in good repair. Defects will be repaired as soon as is practicable.

Construction Work

Where maintenance, refurbishment and restoration work is planned for our church, we will identify what we need to do to ensure the safety of all those concerned before work starts. We will also determine if we have any responsibilities under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations and comply with these if necessary.

Display Screen Equipment

Where our paid and voluntary staff, activity leaders and volunteers regularly use computers daily, for continuous periods of an hour or more, we will analyse workstations to identify precautions, implementing these as necessary. We will also provide information, training, eye/eyesight tests (on request) and special spectacles if prescribed for work purposes only.

Electricity

We will ensure that any electrical system, fixed machine and portable appliance is inspected and maintained so as to prevent danger. Any defective equipment will not be used until it is repaired or replaced. We will keep records of the checks made where appropriate.

Emergency Situations

We will follow counter terrorism guidance and advice from the government to protect users of our premises from a terrorist attack. Details of our arrangements for managing emergency situations are recorded in our Emergency Procedures document which is reviewed regularly to ensure our policy and practice reflect current good practice.

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Events

Where we intend to hold large or unusual concerts, services and fundraising events, we will identify any additional precautions that are necessary and implement these. Arrangements for managing such events are recorded in the SBC Event Management Policy.

Fire Safety

We will complete a specific fire risk assessment to identify what steps are necessary to prevent, detect and take in the event of a fire. We will record our findings, implementing any necessary precautions. We will review and revise these where we suspect that they are no longer valid. We will record our fire safety arrangements and appropriate fire procedures in our Fire Safety Policy.

Heating Systems and Cooking Devices

We will ensure that all gas heating systems and cooking devices are suitably maintained and checked annually by a competent person. Any defects found will be corrected immediately and we will keep records of checks made.

Hazardous Substances

We only use domestic cleaning or horticultural products. We will ensure that these are stored, used and disposed of in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions taking any necessary precautions that are specified.

Home Working

Whilst we provide office accommodation for paid and voluntary staff there are occasions where they work at home. For these situations we will provide a simple risk assessment template to ensure that they can work safely.

Legionella

We will complete a specific risk assessment to identify what steps are necessary to prevent legionellosis. We will record our findings, implementing any necessary precautions. We will review and revise these where we suspect that they are no longer valid.

Lifting Equipment

We will ensure that any lifting equipment is properly maintained and thoroughly examined periodically by a competent person.

Lightning Protection System

We will ensure that our lightning protection system is suitably maintained and checked annually by a competent person. Any defects found will be corrected immediately and we will keep records of checks made.

Manual Handling

We will avoid the need for lifting or carrying heavy objects as far as possible. Where this is not practical, we will make use of lifting aids (such as trolleys) or other precautions including team lifting.

Pandemics

When a pandemic situation occurs we will follow Baptist Union guidance and government instructions and advice to ensure the safety and wellbeing of paid and voluntary staff, activity leaders, volunteers, church members, visitors and users of our church buildings.

Passenger Lift

We will ensure that our passenger lift is properly maintained and thoroughly examined periodically by a competent person. Any defects found will be corrected immediately and we will keep records of checks made.

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Preparation of Food

All food prepared on the premises shall be purchased from reputable suppliers, stored, prepared and served safely, following the principles of preventing cross-contamination, cleaning effectively, chilling correctly, cooking safely and managing responsibly. We will provide the equipment needed to facilitate this including hand-washing facilities and suitable arrangements for the disposal of waste. We will regularly inspect to ensure that the church kitchen and equipment are maintained in a manner that facilitates high standards of hygiene and the storage, preparation and service of safe food, recording details and correcting any defects. Details of the SBC food safety arrangements are recorded in our Food Safety Policy and our Safer Food, Better Business Management System.

Safeguarding

We will implement suitable precautions to safeguard children, young people and adults at risk taking account guidance from the Baptist Union and other relevant guidance. Details of the safeguarding arrangements are recorded in the SBC Safeguarding Policy which is reviewed regularly to ensure the policy and practice reflect current good practice.

Slips and Trips

We will implement suitable precautions to prevent slips and trips, taking account of any difficulty the frail, elderly or disabled may have in negotiating access / egress. We will make periodic checks to ensure that floors, coverings, steps and pathways remain in good condition, free from obstruction and that any precautions (such as handrails or lighting) remain adequate. We will correct any defects identified, keeping records of the checks we make. We will have arrangements in place to manage pathways in winter weather.

Smoke Free Legislation

We will ensure that the church buildings are a smoke-free environment and will display relevant signage to notify users of our buildings.

Welfare at Work

So far as is reasonably practicable, we will provide adequate and appropriate welfare facilities for our paid and voluntary staff and key volunteers in line with Baptist Union and government guidance.

Working at Height

Where possible, we will try and avoid the need to work at height. Where this is not practicable, we will ensure that any work is properly planned to identify suitable precautions. We will make sure these are implemented, including the provision of any training and checks to ensure the safety of any equipment used. Procedures have been produced for the safe operation of the Extension ladder, Telescopic ladder and Scaffold Tower owned by the church.

Work Equipment

Any work equipment (including any hand tools) we provide will be suitable, in good condition and properly maintained. Where necessary, some equipment (such as ladders) will be regularly checked to make sure they are safe. We will keep records of any checks we make.

Working Alone

We will identify circumstances where our paid and voluntary staff, activity leaders and volunteers work alone, and implement suitable precautions to ensure their safety. Guidance on working alone safely can be found in the SBC Staff Handbook and the SBC Activity Leaders' Handbook.

A Personal Safety Plan for Pastoral Visitors has been developed and is issued to all Pastoral Visitors.
