

Health & Safety Policy

August 2023

Battle Baptist Church

Being Transformed Together



Battle Baptist Church
Mount Street
Battle, East Sussex TN33 0EG

Battle Baptist Church: Our health and safety policy

This document has been drafted in accordance with the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and the regulations made under it. In preparing this policy, advice has been sought from the HSE website, HSE literature, the Baptists Together guideline leaflet L10 'Health and Safety and Fire Precautions', and the Baptist Insurance document 'church health and safety policy'.

The policy is in three sections:

Section A – General Statement of Policy

Section B – Organisation and Responsibilities

Section C – Safety Arrangements

Section A - General Statement of Intent

Our policy, so far as is reasonably practicable, is to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for our employees and our voluntary workers, and to provide such information, training and supervision as they need for this purpose. We aim to prevent accidents and occupational ill-health; and to eliminate hazards in the church buildings where possible.

We will also endeavour to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all members of our fellowship, contractors, visitors and others who may visit the church and its buildings.

The allocation of duties for safety matters and the particular arrangements that we will make to implement the policy are set out below.

The policy will be kept up to date, particularly in the light of any changes to our buildings or activities. To ensure this, the policy and the way in which it has operated will be reviewed regularly and the appropriate changes made.

In order to ensure that health and safety matters are kept constantly under review: an item on health and safety will be on the agenda for all meetings of the Leadership and sub-committees. Employees and voluntary workers will be consulted from time to time in order to seek their views on health and safety matters.

It is the policy of Battle Baptist Church to give proper importance to the health, safety and welfare of persons within our fellowship. It is our intention to prevent accidents and occupational ill health and where possible eliminate hazards in the workplace.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Review Date: _____

Section B - Organisation and responsibilities

Responsibility of the Trustees

Overall responsibility for health and safety is that of the Trustees who will ensure that arrangements are in place to comply with policy and guidance produced by all relevant government departments and the South East Baptist Association. Specific responsibilities may be delegated to church employees.

Responsibility of the Leadership

The whole Leadership Team (pastors, elders and deacons) will have responsibility for the promotion, establishment and maintenance of good health and safety policies, and will ensure that safety arrangements outlined in this policy are updated as necessary.

Responsibility of the Health and Safety Officer

The following person acts as Battle Baptist Church's Health and Safety Officer and carries the responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of the arrangements outlined in this policy:

The responsibility of the Health and Safety Officer shall be to:

1. be familiar with health and safety regulations as far as they concern church premises;
2. be familiar with the health and safety policy and arrangements and ensure they are observed;
3. ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe systems of work are in place;
4. ensure that the church buildings are clean and tidy;
5. ensure the church grounds are properly maintained including the safety of tombstones, garden areas and trees;

6. ensure that safety equipment and clothing is provided and used by all personnel where this is required;
7. ensure that the lift and other equipment such as the photocopier are properly maintained and in safe working condition;
8. ensure that adequate access and egress is maintained for all users of the building;
9. ensure adequate firefighting equipment is available and maintained;
10. ensure that food hygiene regulations and procedures are observed.

Responsibility of employees and voluntary workers

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

1. comply with safety rules, operating instructions and working procedures;
2. use protective clothing and equipment when it is required;
3. report any fault or defect in equipment immediately to the appropriate person;
4. report all accidents (however minor), injuries, near misses or other potential safety hazards as soon as possible;
5. not misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety

The Children's Room

In term time, Caterpillar Pre-School operates from the Children's Room. Caterpillar is a charity in its own right, and has its own Health and Safety policy. At all other times this Health and Safety policy applies to the children's room in the same way as it applies to all other areas of the church premises.

Section C - Safety Arrangements

This section sets out our arrangements to minimise as far as is reasonably practicable risks to the health and safety of employees, voluntary workers, members of the fellowship, visitors and contractors.

1. Accidents and First Aid

First Aid boxes are located:

- in the Manna House kitchen, on the windowsill;
- on the bookcase behind the photocopier in the foyer;
- in the general office upstairs.

Trained **first aiders**:

- Caroline Dyer (qualified in 'First Aid at Work')
- Esther Dunn, Melanie Gould, Emma Jones, Jo Reeves, Janet Walsh and Chris Williams are all qualified in Emergency First Aid at Work.

The **accident book** is located:

- on the bookcase behind the photocopier in the foyer

All accidents should be recorded in the accident book and the form should be passed to the Health and Safety Officer. Accident records should be reviewed regularly.

There is a folder containing incident sheets where near-misses and incidents of unacceptable behaviour should be recorded.

If the church is used by outside organisations when the Health and Safety Officer is not present, they will be briefed in advance about the location of First Aid points and the Fire Evacuation procedure.

One of the people with responsibility for Health & Safety Policy will deal with any accident that needs to be reported under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR). For details of what to do refer to <https://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/>. Any such incident should also be recorded in the BBC Accident book.

2. Fire Safety

Our policy is to fulfil our obligations under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. In order to achieve this, we undertake to:

- Assess the fire risks in the church premises (as part of our separate Fire Risk Assessment – see copy attached at Appendix 1);
- Check that a fire can be detected in a reasonable time and that people can be warned;

- Check that people who may be in the building can get out safely – including the location of a ramp in the downstairs office to facilitate smooth exit from the fire exit in the Manna House for wheelchair users;
- Provide and maintain reasonable firefighting equipment;
- Carry out fire drills from time to time.

Fire Extinguishers

Fire extinguishers are kept in the following locations:

Location	Type of extinguisher
Chapel Foyer	Water 9l
Chapel stage	CO ₂ 2kg
Chapel gallery	Water 9l
Sound desk	CO ₂ 2kg
Car park entrance	Water 9l
Manna House entrance	Water 9l
Downstairs office	CO ₂ 2kg
Manna House	Water 9l
Kitchen	CO ₂ 2kg and Fire Blanket
Upstairs landing	Water 9l and CO ₂ 2kg
Children's Room	Water 9l, CO ₂ 2kg, and Fire Blanket

The extinguishers are checked annually by **J S Fire Protection Ltd.**

Fire alarm system

The fire alarm system is maintained by **J S Fire Protection Ltd.**

Fire Blankets

The fire blankets are checked annually by **J S Fire Protection Ltd.**

Evacuation procedure

The responsibility for the evacuation of the premises is with the leader of the meeting and the meeting Administrator (the *competent person*). The competent person should identify a First Aider before the meeting begins. If the premises are to be evacuated, the competent person must contact the relevant emergency services. The routes for evacuation are as follows:

- People in the Gallery should be evacuated through the front doors to the Chapel.
- People in the downstairs part of the Chapel should evacuate through the doors in the foyer.
- People in the Manna House should exit by the fire door on to the front patio.
- The Children's room is evacuated through the doors facing directly into the car park.
- The first floor of the premises is evacuated down the stairs and through doors into the car park.
- People should gather on the grass area by the entrance to the Church car park.

Evacuation drills

Fire evacuation drills will be carried out at least once a year for a variety of the activities that take place at the premises. All employees and voluntary workers should ensure that they are aware of the escape routes and that these are kept clear and unobstructed.

3. Water safety

Having taken the professional advice of our plumber, we deem the risk of legionella bacteria developing in our water systems to be low. On site there is one small tank which supplies water to the handbasin in the disabled-access loo on the ground floor. The shower in the same room is electric: no warm water is stored as the water is heated at the point of release.

4. Electrical Safety

A list of all our portable electrical appliances is maintained by the Health & Safety Officer. Every quarter, plugs, cables and sockets will be inspected by the Health and Safety Officer and a member of the Premises Committee to ensure that there are no loose connections, worn flexes or trailing leads. Any repairs needed will be reported to the Premises Committee for action.

Every year all our portable electrical equipment will be tested by a competent person with an appropriate level of electrical knowledge and experience who has the correct equipment to complete the tests, knows how to use it and can correctly interpret the results. Any unsafe equipment will be disposed of.

Every quarter, a visual inspection will be carried out of the fixed electrical installation by a member of the Premises Committee. Any defects will be reported to the full Committee for action.

Every five years, our fixed electrical system will be inspected and tested by a competent contractor who is a member of the NICEIC, ECA or NAPIT. Any necessary remedial work will be carried out.

All employees and voluntary workers must take appropriate care when using electrical equipment. Any faults should be reported immediately to the Health and Safety Officer. Repairs should only be carried out by a competent person, as determined by the Health and Safety Officer and / or the Premises Committee.

5. **Gas Equipment Safety**

Our gas boilers are maintained and checked annually by a competent contractor who is registered with the Gas Safe Register, and who will carry out any work required to ensure safety.

6. **Hazardous Substances**

All hazardous substances (predominantly cleaning products) are kept out of the sight and reach of children, and usually in a locked cupboard.

7. **Safety of the Lift**

The lift is inspected four times a year by **HiWire Lift Service Ltd**. We authorise engineers to carry out any repairs as necessary.

There is an alarm that can be used to alert other people in the building that someone needs assistance in the lift. Signs are on display which tell people not to use the lift if they are on the premises by themselves. Children are not allowed to use the lift without adult supervision.

8. **Slips, trips and falls – condition of floors, steps and paths**

In order to reduce as far as is reasonably practicable the risk of slips, trips and falls, an inspection will be made every quarter by the Health and Safety officer and a member of the Premises Committee of:

- All floors and stairs in the premises; and
- All paths and steps outside the premises. Particular note will be made of moss, algae and leaves on paths. Repairs and / or remedial work will be reported to the Premises Committee and carried out accordingly.

9. **Lighting**

In order to ensure that the church is adequately lit, an inspection of the lights will be made every quarter by the Health and Safety Officer. Any bulbs that require replacing will be reported to the Premises Committee, who will arrange for the necessary work to be done.

10. **Baptistry**

When in use, electrical equipment should be at least 2m away from the pool. People in the pool should never use microphones with electronic leads.

11. Working at high levels

The following areas are designated as high levels:

- The loft
- The gallery
- The tall windows in the chapel
- On the exterior, the windows at first floor level in the offices, the prayer room and the youth room
- The guttering
- The glass atrium

Where it is necessary for work to be carried out in these areas, only approved contractors or competent volunteers may do so, and appropriate safety measures must be put in place.

12. Preparation of Food

We take steps to ensure that any food provided at the activities we run complies with Food Safety law and is safe to eat. We ensure that we have members who are trained in Food Safety for Catering (Level 2) and their certificates are on display in the Manna House. All volunteers involved in food preparation follow the principles and practices set out in Wealden & Rother District Councils' 'Managing Food Safety for Voluntary Lunch Clubs' document, a copy of which is on file in the Manna House kitchen. A summary of our Food Safety Management System can be found at Appendix 2.

13. Manual handling – lifting, carrying and moving loads

Office staff have been trained in Health and Safety Basics and Essentials, which includes training on the safest techniques to use when lifting and moving loads. Where it is not possible to avoid the need to move loads, staff and volunteers make use of trolleys and the lift in order to move things around safely.

14. Display screen equipment

The following factors will be considered when carrying out risk assessments:

- Stability and legibility of the screen;
- Contrast and brightness of the screen;
- Tilt and swivel of the screen;
- Suitability of keyboards, desks and chairs;
- The work station environment;

- The user-friendliness of the software.

Daily work routines will involve periods away from the screen. Where necessary, risk assessments will be carried out by the Health and Safety Officer.

15. Hazardous buildings / glazing

The buildings will be inspected every quarter by the Health and Safety officer and a member of the Premises Committee to ensure that they are safe. Any defects will be reported to the Premises Committee and repairs will be organized.

Where we have glazed doors (both internal and external), the glass is marked as being made of safety material.

16. Safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults

Our policy and practices regarding Safeguarding are set out separately in our Safeguarding Policy & Procedures (August 2023).

A statement upholding our procedures will be made at each AGM and will be suitably recorded.

17. Lone working

Staff and volunteers are discouraged from working alone on the premises. Where this is unavoidable, then a third party should be aware of the staff member's or volunteer's presence and the expected duration of their visit/task. If staff working alone are due to meet with eg a contractor on site, they should alert a third party when the visitor arrives and when the visitor leaves. It is advisable for the person alone in the premises to lock themselves inside the building. Workers should not use the lift when on the premises by themselves.

18. Risk Assessment

Risk assessments will be carried out on all areas of the church premises and all activities that carry a significant risk at regular intervals by a competent person in order to meet our obligations under The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (using the BBC Risk Assessment Form (Appendix 3)). The Health and Safety Officer will support group leaders in completing these if required. All "off site" activities or one-off activities must also be risk assessed. The completed forms will be kept in the Church Office.

An annual inspection will be made of the premises with regard to all matters regarding Health & Safety using the pro forma provided (Appendix 4). The Health and Safety Officer will carry this out together with a member of the Premises Committee, and keep records on file.

Staff and other people wishing to make suggestions or comment on any health and safety matters should raise the issues, in the first instance, with the Church Office. These will then be dealt with by the Health and Safety Officer or passed on to the Premises Committee (unless urgent action is required immediately).

19. Contractors

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

- Have their own health and safety policy (where required by law) and be able to provide a copy of the same;
- Produce evidence that they have appropriate Public and Employers' Liability insurance in place;
- Comply with the requirements of this health and safety policy and cooperate with church staff and / or volunteers in providing a safe place of work and a safe system of operation.

20. Action in the event of a pandemic or other major occurrence

It is possible that BBC may be affected by one or more of the following serious events:

- loss of church premises
- loss of Pastor and / or leaders / or staff
- loss of congregation
- loss of finances
- loss of data
- severe weather
- pandemic

Under such circumstances, Trustees, Elders, Deacons and Staff will take action in line with policy set out in BBC's Contingency Plan (Appendix 5).

21. Information and Enforcement

Environmental Health Service information:

Rother District Council
Environmental Health Service
Town Hall
London Road
Bexhill-on-Sea TN39 3JX

Tel: 01424 787000 (enquiries eg pest control)
01424 787550 (food, health and safety)

Email: envhealth@rother.gov.uk
foodhs@rother.gov.uk

Employment Medical Advisory Service (EMAS) information:

- a. Use the HSE website in the first instance for advice regarding workplace related health issues, or
- b. Submit a written request to the nearest EMAS office:

International House
Dover Place
Ashford TN23 1HU

22. Health and Safety Law poster

A copy of the HSE poster 'Health and Safety Law – what you should know' is displayed in the foyer next to the fire alarm controls and the entrance to the Children's Room.

Revisions

- i. 25/08/20 to update names of first aiders; to correct website address included in Section C point 1 (Accidents and First Aid); to include a para on Water Safety (para 3 - still needs to be researched); to include a para on the Baptistery (para 10); to strengthen lone working protocol (point 17); to include para on action to be taken in the event of a pandemic or other serious occurrence (para 20). And one or two minor drafting amendments.
- ii. 23/08/21 to change name of company which maintains our fire alarm system in Section C point 2 (Fire Safety).
- iii. 13/10/21 to include paragraph on water safety (point 3).
- iv. 20/09/22 to update information about first aiders (point 1); to update reference to our Safeguarding policy (point 16). Minor drafting changes.
- v. 13/10/22 to include paragraph on Preparation of Food (para 12); insertion of page numbers.
- vi. 22/10/22 to include reference to Food Safety Management system summary (para 12); reordering of appendices.
- vii. 24/03/23 to include direction not to use the lift if on the premises alone (paras 7 and 17); minor drafting changes.
- viii. 11/08/23 minor drafting changes and insertion of name of new lift contractor at para 7.