

Health and Safety at All Saints



Guidelines for the church community

All Saints Northcote

Version 1.0 Last updated: October 2014

Emergency numbers

Fire	000
Police	000
Ambulance	000
Nurse on Call	1300 60 60 24
Gas leak	13 27 71
State Emergency Service	13 25 00
Poisons	13 11 26

Contacts for health and safety issues

Health and Safety officer – Alma Ryrie-Jones	0409 339 046
Churchwarden – Bruce Clezy	0407 958 867
Churchwarden – Betty Reay	9481 0653
First Aid maintenance – Bruce Clezy	0407 958 867
Electrical testing and tagging officer – Rob Lane	0478 923 899

Fire wardens:

Fr Ken Cahill, Bruce Clezy, Arnaud Gallois, Rob Lane, Joan Harvey

Maintaining a safe environment

Most people seem to consider All Saints a generally safe environment and we have a very low rate of accidents or injuries.

To make sure our church, meeting room and other facilities continue to be safe for everyone for worship and other activities, we need to be alert to any aspects of our buildings or grounds, and the way we use them, that could pose a risk. And then we must take steps to minimise the chances of any injury or harm to people.

Minimising health and safety risk is not an optional activity. It is a legal and ethical obligation. We have a duty under the law and a responsibility to the Diocese of Melbourne, and its insurers, to take all necessary steps to prevent possible accidents – not to mention our responsibility as Christians to care for each other and for all in the community. This includes our many visitors and those who hire our facilities.

Risk is inherent in everything we do and it is impossible to remove all sources of possible harm. But by a careful and vigilant approach we can identify possible risks and take actions to reduce the exposure of people to those risks. This is a shared responsibility and we ask everyone in the community to support this approach.

What to do if you see something that might be dangerous

If it is a situation where someone could be hurt, please don't wait for a person in authority to take charge. Do what you can to reduce the danger. For example, if you see a very young child at an unsecured gate near the road, please secure the gate before locating a parent or other responsible person.

If it is something that doesn't present an immediate danger but could cause injury in the future, please report it to one of the people responsible: the churchwardens, the Health and Safety officer, the Vicar or other community leader. The problem will be added to our Hazard Register, and a solution to reduce the danger will be put in place.

What to do if you see or experience an injury

Beyond seeking immediate first aid, medical treatment or other necessary steps to deal with the injury, please make sure the incident is reported to a responsible person. We are required to maintain an Incident Register. If an incident is serious it must be reported to the Diocese of Melbourne. Incident reporting is not only essential to ensure that insurance and other requirements are complied with; it is also an important source of information about how well we are noting and dealing with hazards.

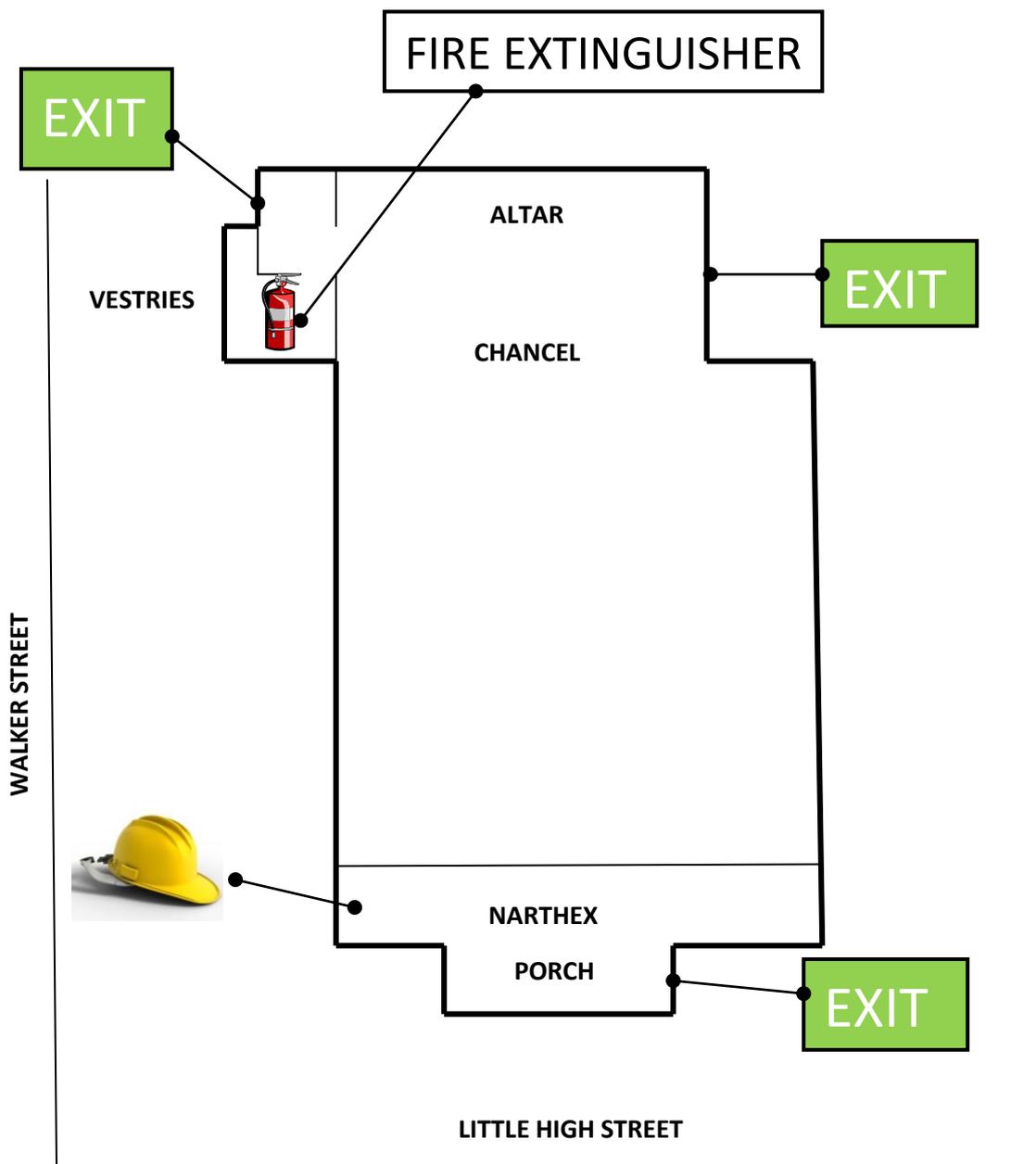
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If there is an emergency

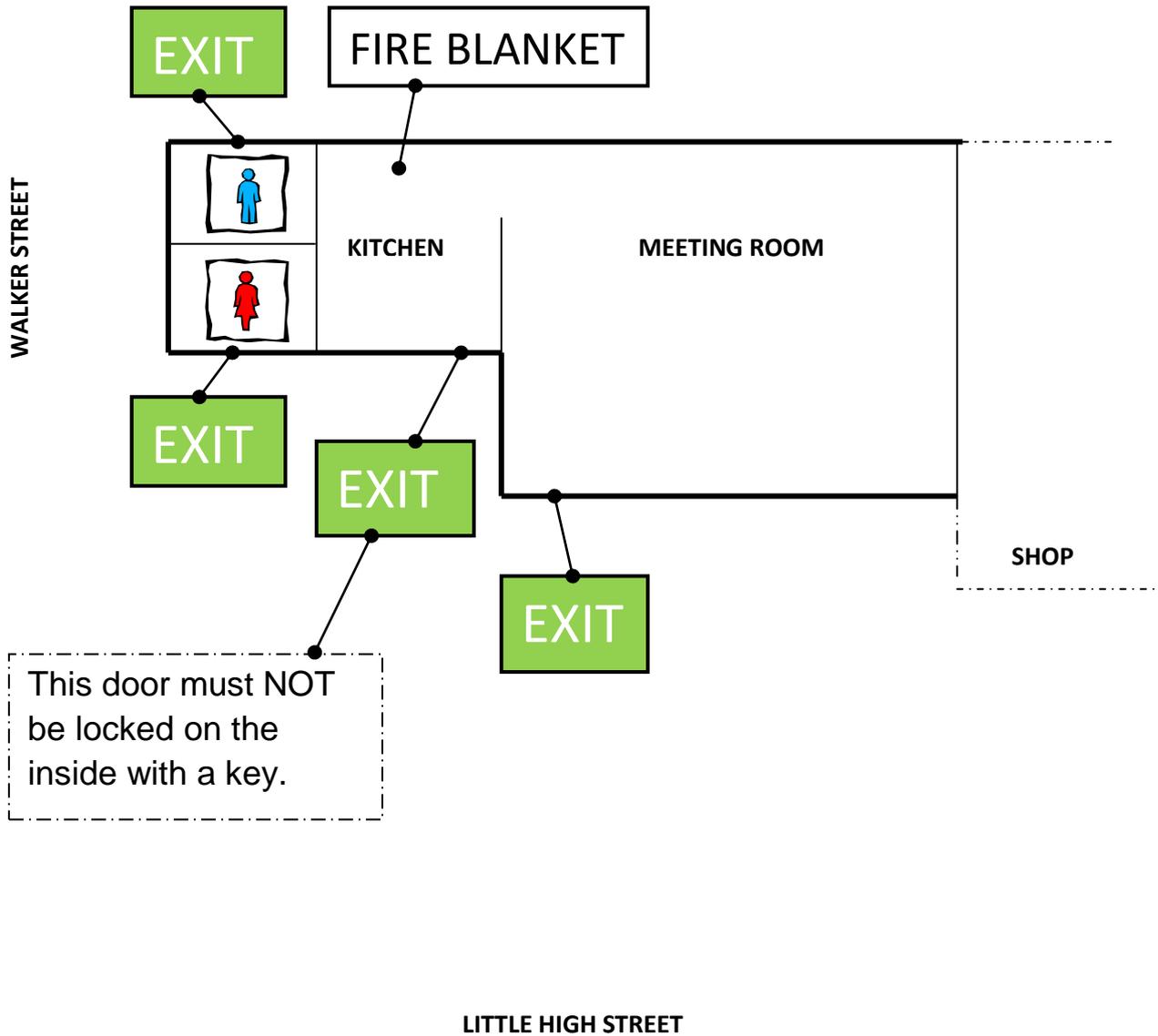
In an emergency you should follow the instructions of the person who raises the alarm or the church leader (churchwarden, Vicar or other person) who has the key information. A person acting in the role of Fire Warden will be distinguished by the Fire Warden hard hat and high-visibility vest. Please follow their instructions.

Our buildings are small and have multiple exits and easy access to the street and grounds. Nevertheless, smoke and other factors can cause confusion and reduce visibility so you should be familiar with the location of the fire extinguisher, the major fire exits and the Assembly Point in the event of an evacuation. In the church, the major fire exits are shown:



The fire extinguisher is located in the left hand vestry room, along with instructions in its use. It is maintained annually through a program of cyclic maintenance.

In the meeting room, the major fire exits are shown:



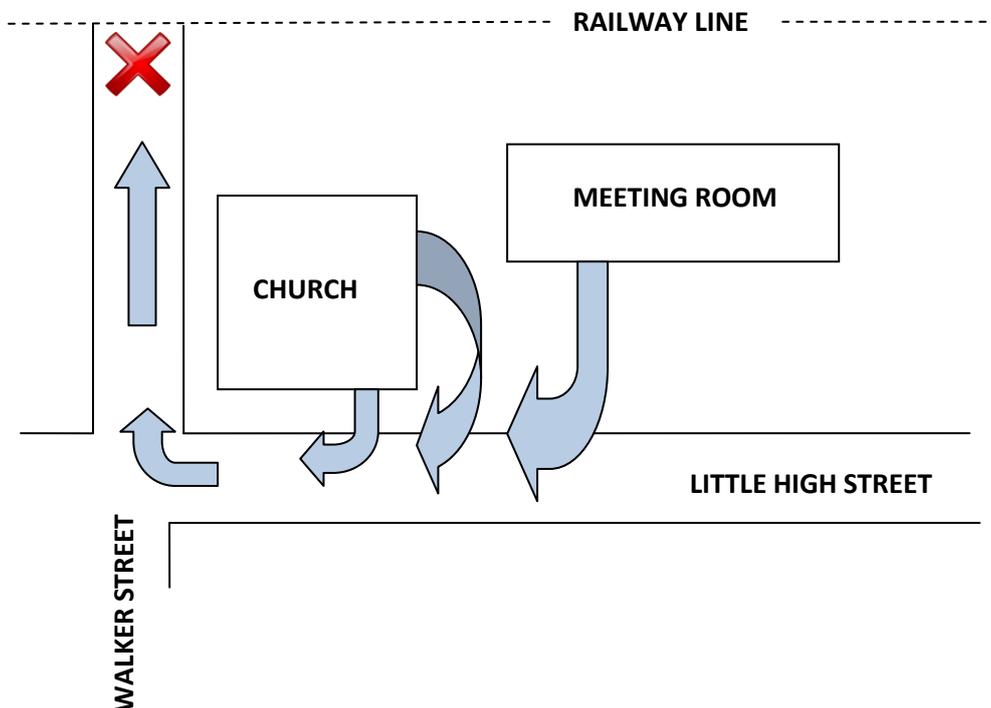
Assembly point

If directed to evacuate the church or meeting room, follow the directions of the person in authority – the Fire warden, Vicar or Churchwardens who have raised the alarm.

If directed to evacuate:

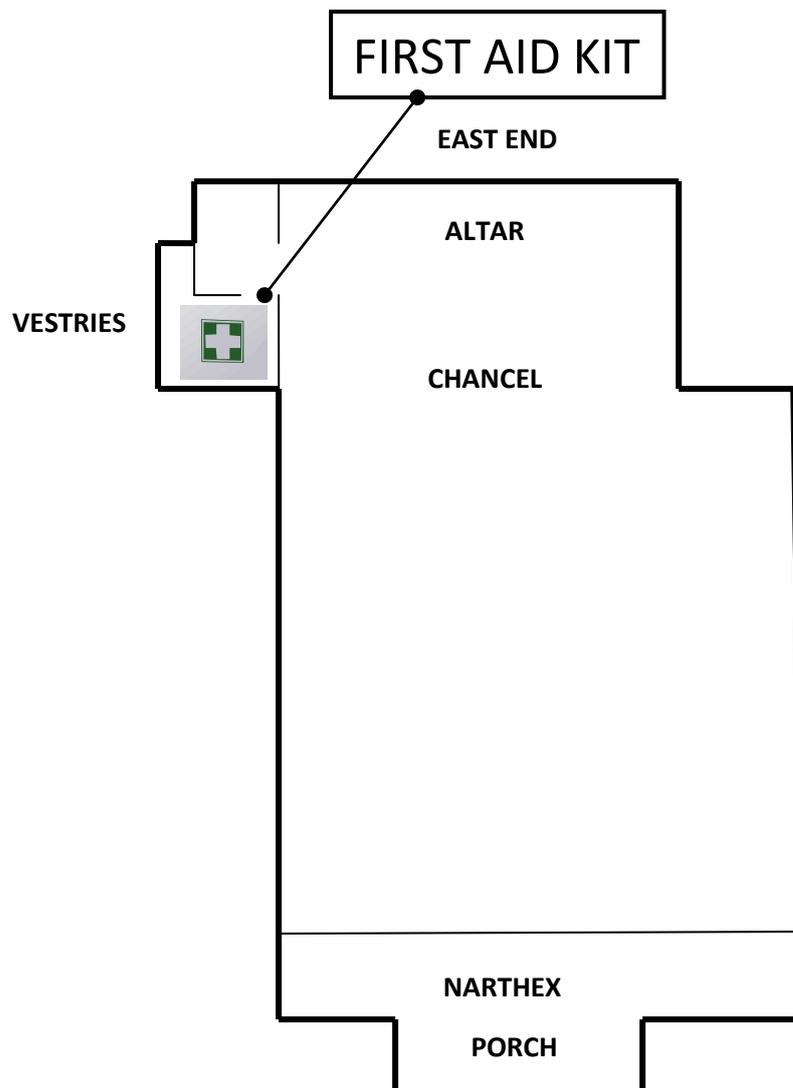
- ✓ Move immediately and calmly to the Assembly Point and wait there until all have been accounted for or until given further instructions.
- ✓ If you are able to help or provide directions to others, e.g. physically disabled persons or children, please do so.
- ⊘ Do not delay leaving or try to re-enter a building to collect your personal possessions.

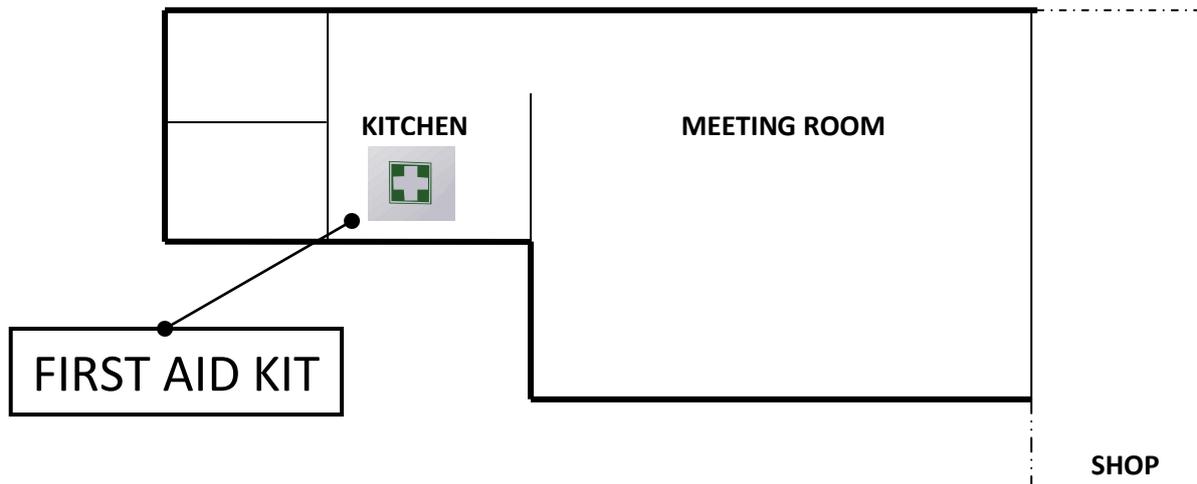
The Assembly Point is as shown at 'X'. Leave the church or meeting room by the nearest Exit and assemble in Walker Street, next to the railway line. There is no through-traffic at this point and it is at a safe distance from the church buildings, while allowing access for emergency vehicles and services. Remain at the Assembly Point so that everyone can be accounted for. Fire wardens or other leaders will tell you when it is safe to return to the building or to disperse.



First Aid kits

For any injury that requires medical treatment, assistance should be sought as soon as possible. For minor injuries, or for temporary protection before getting to a doctor, First Aid kits are located in the left-hand vestry room and in the kitchen of the meeting room building.





Contents of kits

Basic first aid notes, notebook for recording first aid provided

Disposable gloves

Resuscitation mask

Individually wrapped sterile adhesive dressings

Sterile eye pads, sterile coverings for more serious wounds

Triangular bandages

Safety pins

Small and large sterile unmedicated dressings

Non allergenic tape, crepe bandage

Scissors, tweezers

Sterile saline solution

Plastic bags for disposal

 If you are injured or have seen an injury take place, contact a churchwarden or other responsible person immediately and seek suitable first aid.

 Painkilling drugs such as Panadol are not part of the First Aid kit and cannot be dispensed to parishioners.

Safety of children

Children are an essential part of church life and are warmly welcomed in worship and in other activities. However we have a particular responsibility to ensure that the environment is as safe as we can make it for children of all ages.

Parent supervision

The main responsibility for children while at church or taking part in activities in the meeting room or grounds remains with their parents. Any formal or informal activity in which children take part is subject to parental approval.

During church services, children are under the direct supervision of their parents, except when undertaking formally arranged activities provided in the Narthex or the meeting room, in the care of a voluntary worker.



Parents are asked to ensure that their children are not left unattended in the Narthex during services.

Dietary risk

Parents must manage any dietary risk faced by their children in terms of anaphylactic reaction to egg, nuts, milk, wheat, sesame seeds or any other allergy. We cannot guarantee that community food will be free of allergens, and you need to monitor your children's food intake.



Parishioners must NOT offer children sweets or other food without checking with parents.

Child-proof gates

The 'child-proof' gate between the porch and the Narthex is intended to create a barrier between very young children and access to the exit door and the street outside. Gates are far from 'child-proof' if children can open them easily or if adults open them and then leave them open when entering after the commencement of services.



Adults who open the gate to the Narthex MUST leave it securely fastened after them, whether there are children in attendance or not.



Adults who open the gate to the organ stairs to gain access to the organ loft MUST lock the gate again, whether there are children in attendance or not.

The use of candles

Candlelight is an important part of church tradition and plays a significant role in particular seasons and festivals, such as Easter, Advent, Christmas and Candlemas.

- ✓ Children may light, handle, carry and extinguish candles under supervision, using correct equipment such as the candle snuffer, and with due care by supervising adults.

Restricted access to hazardous areas

The simplest way of protecting children is in some cases to place a barrier – physical or administrative – between them and known risks. For this reason, the following rules should be supported by parents and observed by all others in the community:

- ⊘ Children under 12 are NOT permitted in the following areas at any time:
 - The shed in the church grounds. It contains toxic chemicals and sharp garden tools, and harbours insects and spiders.
 - The walk-in storage cupboard under the organ loft stairs. This contains cleaning equipment including household cleaning chemicals.
 - The stairs to the organ loft, and the organ loft itself.
- ⊘ Children under 12 are NOT permitted in the following areas except when under parental or other authorised adult supervision:
 - The vestry rooms attached to the Chancel. These contain some untidily stored boxes and crates, low grade tap water, matches and other minor hazards.
 - The kitchen attached to the meeting room. This contains ordinary kitchen hazards such as hot water, knives and cooking appliances, but without the familiarity children have with their kitchens at home.

Fans, electrical equipment and installations

At different times of the year freestanding fans, candle stands and installations such as the Christmas Crib are temporarily located around the church. Although these are placed with due care for the hazards they can create, parents are asked to stay alert to children's movement near and around these.

In the grounds

Local parking restrictions mean that a limited number of cars are accommodated in the grounds, to make it easier for clergy and a few others to park on Sundays.

- ✓ Those who park in the grounds must check carefully that the area is clear of children before reversing or driving out through the main gate. If any children are present please ask another adult to watch while you manoeuvre your vehicle in the grounds. Parents must stay alert to the whereabouts of their children in the grounds while there is movement of cars before or after services.
- ✓ The enclosure of the grounds on the Walker Street side (the fence on that side has no gate) is intended to create a safe place for children free of cars or other hazards. Ball games or other outdoor activity should be restricted to this area.

Prohibited activity

- ⊘ Children under 15 are NOT permitted to operate power equipment in the church grounds, even under adult or parental supervision.
- ⊘ Unless under the supervision of the authorised adult rostered to ring the church bell, children under 15 are NOT permitted to ring the bell.

Work practices for people working with children

The church has a particular duty of care towards children in their relationships with clergy and with voluntary or paid church workers. Anyone working with children in this capacity must hold a Working with Children Check card and must pass a Police Check, and must work within the guidelines provided by the Diocese of Melbourne.



Duty of Care: a Handbook for Leaders of Youth and Children's Ministry contains detailed guidelines for the conduct of activities and relationships involving children, A copy of this document is available on request or from the Diocesan website at <http://www.melbourneanglican.org.au/mission/youthchildrenfamily/childrenfamily/Documents/Duty-of-Care-Handbook-Nov2012.pdf>

Personal security

We do not believe the church or meeting room to be subject to unusual threat or risk associated with people. However, all paid staff and volunteers should avoid working alone in these buildings unless the doors are secured.

-  If you are working on the site alone, ensure that external doors are secure and if available have a mobile phone with you in case you need to call for any form of assistance, because of illness, accident or personal threat.
-  Fire exits may be bolted or otherwise secured, but must NOT be deadlocked with a key. This applies to the kitchen exit door in the meeting room.

Steps and stairs

Steps and stairs create a hazard for nearly everyone, but especially for those with joint problems or impaired balance.

Stairs to the organ loft

The stairs to the loft are steep with shallow treads, and are not suitable for anyone with physical impairment or balance problems. Our intention is to provide an additional handrail, but movement on these stairs and access to the loft should in the interim be kept to a minimum. Any authorised people who cannot use the stairs with confidence should avoid them: organists may opt to play the ground floor piano instead.

-  Use of the stairs to the loft is **RESTRICTED** to organists and other authorised voluntary or paid workers, such as psalm cantors and the organ curator. Organists and others are asked to limit their use of the stairs to movement necessary for cleaning and for the conduct of services.
-  These stairs are **CLOSED** to other adults and to all children.

Organ console step

Organists and other authorised people should exercise great care in the organ loft itself as the step down from the organ console has been the site of a trip and fall incident in the past, resulting in minor injury.

Chancel steps

To approach the communion rail, parishioners must negotiate two carpeted steps to the Chancel. Readers and intercessors must also use these steps. Our intention is to provide a handrail on the right hand side near the lectern, but in the interim parishioners and clergy are asked to exercise care in the use of these steps.

If you find it difficult to manage the steps, we encourage you to take communion in your pew. Please speak to the sideperson on duty or to Betty Reay or any other person present, if you would like to receive the Sacrament without climbing the steps. It is no trouble for us to do this, and we are all present at the Eucharistic table regardless of where we take communion in the church.

For those who wish to approach the communion rail with assistance, sidepersons and others stand ready to assist you.

Narthex steps

Entering and leaving the church via the Narthex involves negotiating lino covered steps. Handrails are provided on both sides and we encourage parishioners to use these. Sidepersons or others offering to assist please follow the basic rules of assisting those with impaired mobility: never touch or take control of a walking frame or other mobility aid – this destabilises the user and takes away their control of their balance.

The non-slip edge of the steps is inspected regularly. The lino is not slippery when wet; however, parishioners are asked to exercise particular care during wet weather.

At least three known incidents of trips or falls have occurred from these steps, although no major injury has resulted.

Meeting room and other external steps

All other steps are provided with handrails, non-slip edges in the concrete, and high visibility tape. Parishioners are asked to use care in going up and down these steps and to use handrails where they are provided.

The meeting room steps may be avoided by entering through the kitchen, which involves only one low step. This provides good access for prams, walking frames and other mobility aids, so please seek access by this route if it is easier for you.

If needed, a ramp can be provided to make access through the kitchen easier. Please talk to Betty Reay or another churchwarden if wheelchair access is needed.

Lifting and carrying

The ordinary activities of the church community do not involve major lifting tasks, but parishioners are asked to exercise care in any work involving the movement of furniture, setting up of equipment, or lifting and carrying any heavy objects.

The risks of lifting and manual handling are not always obvious. It can be more dangerous, for example, to carry 20 kilos of feathers than 20 kilos of gold. This is because, even though the weight is the same, anything small that can be carried against the chest is safer in ergonomic terms than something in a big box that requires you to stretch out your arms and take the weight in your lower back.

-  Parishioners should place sensible limits on what they attempt to lift and carry and should use correct lifting techniques involving bending of the knees and holding weight high and close to the body. Please comply with any guideline given by a churchwarden or other person in helping to lift and move furniture or fixtures.
-  A person must not carry more than two chairs at a time between the meeting room and the church.
-  Do not lift and carry anything which you think it is not safe for you personally to lift. An alternative method of moving equipment can always be found.
-  Do not lift and carry the tea urn in the meeting room with the tap turned towards your body. The urn should only be lifted when it is empty or near empty, and it should be carried against the chest and with the tap turned outwards.

Use of ladders

The Diocese has particular concerns about the use of ladders in parishes and regards this activity as one of the most serious areas of risk.

All Saints seeks to restrict the use of ladders to qualified and insured tradespeople and to limit the occasions on which ladders of any height are used. Ladders are now stored in inaccessible areas and their condition is regularly inspected.



Do not use any ladder without first consulting a churchwarden and arranging that safe work practices are observed. The Diocese has standards in place for working safely with ladders in churches.

Contractors may have insurance and specialised equipment for working at heights. Churchwardens must ensure that contractors have safe practices and equipment in place for working at heights, when they are engaged to work in the church.



Falls Prevention – Using ladders in the parish contains guidelines on risk assessment for using ladders and for working at heights above two metres. A copy of this document is available on request or from the health and safety section of the Diocesan website.

Uneven floor surfaces

The church floor is currently uneven in places and there are areas where the timber floor is compromised or carpet is torn or poorly joined. The kitchen linoleum has areas where the joins have lifted and this may need to be replaced. Areas of improvement and floor covering replacement have been identified in our plan, but in the interim we ask parishioners to treat any marked area of carpet or linoleum with caution.

We are endeavouring to remove any cord hazards progressively by installing new power points but in the interim we ask parishioners to be careful in any area where cords are temporarily taped to carpets or floors.

Chemicals handling and storage

We do not believe that the church, meeting room or garden shed pose major chemical hazards but we expect parents and parishioners to exercise reasonable care in areas where toxic chemicals may be stored. In particular household cleaning chemicals and fuel for garden equipment are stored in locked areas which are not accessible to children.



Do NOT use the tap water in the right hand vestry room for drinking. We believe it is suitable only for flowers and have provided signage to this effect.

Overhead storage

Untidy or uncontrolled overhead storage is hazardous to adults and children. Over time we intend to reduce the amount of accumulated stored materials on the tops of cupboards or on high shelves. In the interim:



Cupboards in the vestry rooms are not available for any extra storage. Nothing may be stored on top of the freestanding records cabinet in the left hand vestry room.



Nothing can be left or stored in vestry rooms, the kitchen or the meeting room, the organ loft, the shed or the cleaning cupboard, except by consultation with Betty Reay or others responsible for the good order of the church and other buildings.

In the garden

The garden shed contains tools and equipment for maintenance of the grounds and garden beds.

In general garden maintenance, weeding, planting and mowing, should be carried out under supervision and leadership to ensure that participants work in safe working conditions.



Children are NOT permitted in the garden shed at any time (See Safety of Children section).

Use of the motor mower and line trimmer

All Saints owns a cordless battery-powered motor mower. This was purchased partly for environmental reasons and partly for its safety advantages. An electrically powered mower has nearly instantaneous motor cut-out, so that in an emergency the blades stop rotating much more quickly than petrol-powered motor blades. A battery operated mower has the extra advantage that there is no hazard associated with a cord and it cannot be started without a key. However, no motor mower is safe if operated without training or information about the safety procedures required, including standard operating advice such as not mowing while walking backwards.



The motor mower and line trimmer ('Whippersnipper') may not be operated while any children under ten years are present in the grounds or the meeting room.



The motor mower and line trimmer may not be used by any person who has not been trained in safe working practices as outlined by the manufacturer.



The mower and line trimmer may not be operated by any person under the age of fifteen years, even under supervision.



The mower and line trimmer may not be operated by any person who is not wearing appropriate protective equipment including eye protection, body protection (by being fully clothed), and foot protection in the form of leather or other sturdy shoes.



Children are NOT permitted to operate any garden power equipment, even under supervision (See Safety of children section).

- ✓ Motor mower batteries and the line trimmer fuel must be stored in locked areas to which children have no access.
- ✓ All power equipment must be returned to the locked garden shed after use. The mower batteries and key must be stored separately from the mower.

Barbeque gas

Gas for the All Saints barbeque is stored in the garden shed. The barbeque may only be set up and used by someone who has received training in the use of barbeque gas.

- ⊘ Children are NOT permitted to help with the set up of barbeque equipment involving the connection of gas.

Weeding and planting

Spiders, caterpillars, insects and bacterial hazards reside in soil and on plants, so gardening gloves should be worn and appropriate footwear should be used. Hats and other forms of sun protection should also be used.



- ✓ Any person taking part in gardening activity in the church grounds should use appropriate personal protection.

Peppercorn trees

The peppercorn trees in the grounds may drop foliage or peppercorns on parked cars, so car owners park their vehicles at their own risk. However, any evidence of risk from dried limbs breaking or dropping should be reported. Protracted drought weakens the internal structure of trees and makes them more prone to drop limbs during periods of high winds. One incident of dropped limbs was recorded in 2013. Fortunately this did not affect any vehicles or people.

The peppercorn trees were inspected for general health by a qualified arborist at the end of 2013 and were declared safe. They will be inspected regularly for any weakness or signs of disease.

- ✓ Please report anything about the trees which you believe indicates any risk of damage or injury from broken or falling limbs.

In the kitchen and meeting room

The kitchen and meeting room present some minor hazards which church users and hirers should be aware of:

- The tea towel rack is at eye-height for some people when it is turned outwards from the wall.
- The kitchen floor is currently uneven and presents some joins in the floor covering.
- Brooms are stored in a niche near the kitchen door. In recent years a dropped broom caused an incident with potentially serious consequences.
- Some kitchen users use the tea towels for hand washing and drying. This is unhygienic.
- Some parishioners are in the habit of taking hot water from the urn and remaining close to the tap, unaware that other users are trying to reach the urn or that children are moving around them close to the boiling water tap. This is dangerous to children and to themselves.
- Locking the kitchen fire exit door with a key on the inside is a fire hazard.

Taking these circumstances into account:

- ✓ The tea towel rack is not safe when turned directly perpendicular to the wall and should be laid flat against the wall.
- ✓ Brooms and mops are a tripping hazard and must be returned to the storage place when not in use.
- ✓ Signage will direct users away from drying their hands on tea towels. A paper towel roll is provided for this purpose.
- ✓ The hot water urn has been set back from the edge of the bench and placed on a platform to allow for safer dispensing of near-boiling water.
- ⊘ Please do NOT congregate near the hot water urn when you have used it, but move well away to ensure safe use of the urn by others and to reduce the risk of injury to yourself and others.
- ⊘ Do not use a key to lock the fire exit door from the inside. This door may only be locked with the key from the outside, when you are leaving.

Asbestos

Like all sites of a certain age, various parts of the All Saints buildings contain asbestos. However, please be assured that all parts of the site have been audited for asbestos content, and asbestos is only dangerous when it is friable (when it crumbles and turns into dust, which can be breathed). If sealed, stable and painted over, as is the case in many instances, building materials containing asbestos are quite safe until disturbed by renovation.

During renovation any asbestos will be removed and disposed of by correct procedures so that no one is exposed to risk. Asbestos has been identified in the backing plates of electrical switchboards and in the construction materials used for the men's and women's toilets. Asbestos in the vicarage, around the flue of the heater and in the ceiling above the shower, was identified and removed in 2010.



All Saints maintains an *Asbestos Register* developed by an external specialist and updated regularly by the Diocese. The register is available for inspection on request.

Electrical switchboards and appliances

All appliances are subject to an annual testing and tagging regime, required by the Diocese and in our case carried out by a qualified parishioner. Any defective appliances are decommissioned, discarded and replaced by new purchases.

Over time we intend to upgrade our electrical switchboards by the addition of safety switches, both in the meeting room and the church. A major rewiring project in 2015 is the opportunity to take this work forward.

In the interim if you notice anything that might constitute an electrical hazard, please report it.



Double adapters or powerboards may NOT be plugged into the power points on the north and south sides of the nave. This is a hazard to children and adults, as adaptors can easily be dislodged while maintaining the electrical current.



The All Saints *Testing and Tagging report* must be submitted to the Diocese on an annual basis. It is available for inspection on request.



The *Essential Services Report, 2013* and Certificate, must be made available to the Metropolitan Fire Board on request.

Gas heating appliances

The gas heaters in the church are regularly checked and maintained and have recently been certified safe.

- ✓ As an additional precaution, the gas supply to wall heaters is turned OFF after services in order to ensure that gas leaks cannot occur during the week through a faulty pilot light.
- ✓ If you notice a smell of gas or any other indication that there may be a leak, please report this to a responsible person immediately or, if this is impracticable, take action to report a possible gas emergency.

Bins and rubbish disposal

Full wheelie bins pose a hazard for anyone with poor balance or muscular weakness and are a common cause of injury to older people, especially on uneven ground.

- ✓ Bins may only be put out by physically fit people using the concrete paths through the grounds to the street.
- ✓ Broken glass or ceramic materials must be securely wrapped and disposed of in the garbage bin, not the recycle, for the safety of persons handling the recycle bin and the Council workers collecting it.

Behaviour and relationships

The Diocese of Melbourne sees issues affecting the wellbeing of parishioners as part of the health and safety of the community. Anyone who has a concern about the behaviour of a person in the position of priest or any other significant role may wish to make a complaint. The Diocese has detailed structures and independent people in place to deal with such complaints.



You are referred to advice provided by the Diocese: *Information for people thinking about making a complaint*. Copies are available from the church. Other information about making a complaint is available from the Diocesan website at <http://www.melbourneanglican.org.au/Whowere/Governance/professionalstandards/Pages/professionalstandards.aspx>

Resources

The following documents are all part of the risk assessment and mitigation process at All Saints. A copy of any of these documents is available on request.



The *All Saints Health and Safety Plan* is updated regularly at meetings of the Vestry. It provides an overview of the regulatory requirements with which the work must comply and the actions authorised by the Vestry.



The *All Saints Hazard Register* is updated regularly, It outlines all the hazards identified on the All Saints site and the actions to be taken to mitigate the risk of injury.



The *All Saints Asbestos Register* was created following audit by a specialist consultant. It identifies the presence of asbestos and sets out requirements for handling it during renovation. Asbestos audit must be carried out on a regular schedule, and is due to be completed again in 2015.



The *All Saints Incident Register* records any events that lead to injury or nearly led to injury. Any serious incidents must be reported to the Diocese. The *Incident Report Form* is provided for this purpose.



The All Saints *Testing and Tagging report* must be submitted to the Diocese on an annual basis.



Duty of Care: a Handbook for Leaders of Youth and Children's Ministry contains detailed guidelines for the conduct of activities and relationships involving children, Also available from the Diocesan website <http://www.melbourneanglican.org.au/mission/youthchildrenfamily/childrenfamily/Documents/Duty-of-Care-Handbook-Nov2012.pdf>



The *Essential Services Report, 2013* and Certificate, is retained in the church and must be made available to the Metropolitan Fire Board on request.



Information for people thinking about making a complaint is available from the church. Other information is available from the Diocesan website at <http://www.melbourneanglican.org.au/Whoware/Governance/professionalstandards/Pages/professionalstandards.aspx>



Falls Prevention – Using ladders in the parish contains guidelines on risk assessment for using ladders and for working at heights above two metres. A copy of this document is available from the health and safety section of the Diocesan website.



The *Safety Inspection Report 2013* was an essential basis of the risk assessment and mitigation process for All Saints.