

# PCC of St Johns Kenilworth

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## HR Policy for Paid and Volunteer Staff<sup>1</sup> (Version 6, 2021)

St. John's Church Kenilworth is committed to this policy covering the use of paid staff and volunteers to realise its vision and meet its objectives. Although there are clearly differences between paid staff and volunteers, we believe that St. John's Church has responsibilities to both.

Specifically, we are committed to:

- Showing the love of Jesus to all our paid staff and volunteers.
- Providing training where appropriate to ensure that all paid staff and volunteers are able to perform the duties that they are undertaking.
- Protecting staff, volunteers and vulnerable members of the Church by ensuring that DBS registration is carried out for all Church members working with vulnerable people and Safeguarding training is undertaken.
- Ensuring that the Church has adequate insurance in place and that where activities are carried out that are not covered by the Church's insurance all involved are aware of this.
- Making available support mechanisms to ensure that no-one feels unduly under stress or over-committed.
- Confidentiality in all cases where paid staff or volunteers have requested it or where the Church feels that this should be the case.
- Respect for all Church members and sensitivity in dealing with issues that may cause them concern.

As a Church which professes Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, we are committed to the following statement of faith (Evangelical Alliance, 2014). We believe in:

1. The one true God who lives eternally in three persons - the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
2. The love, grace and sovereignty of God in creating, sustaining, ruling, redeeming and judging the world.
3. The divine inspiration and supreme authority of the Old and New Testament Scriptures, which are the written Word of God - fully trustworthy for faith and conduct.

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<sup>1</sup> Prepared following Standing Committee review of v5 on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

4. The dignity of all people, made male and female in God's image to love, be holy and care for creation, yet corrupted by sin, which separates humanity from God.
5. The incarnation of God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ - born of the virgin Mary; truly divine and truly human, yet without sin, bringing the kingdom with words and signs of power.
6. The sacrifice of Christ on the cross: dying on behalf of all, paying the price of individual and societal sin, and defeating evil, so reconciling us with God and each other.
7. The bodily resurrection of Christ, the first fruits of our resurrection; his ascension to the Father, and his reign and mediation as the only Saviour of the world.
8. The justification of sinners solely by the grace of God through faith in Christ.
9. The ministry of God the Holy Spirit, who leads us to repentance, unites us with Christ through faith, empowers our discipleship and enables our witness.
10. The Church, the body of Christ both local and universal, the ministry of all believers - given life by the Spirit and endowed with the Spirit's gifts to worship God and proclaim the gospel, promoting justice, creativity and love.
11. The personal and visible return of Jesus Christ to fulfil the purposes of God, who will raise all people to judgement, bring eternal life to the redeemed and eternal condemnation to the lost, and establish a new heaven and new earth.

We expect all paid staff and volunteers to adhere to these values.

## **Governance**

Responsibility for HR policies lies with the PCC.

## **Induction and training**

### **PCC & Churchwardens:**

On election, the PCC members and Churchwardens will be provided with relevant guidance on their responsibilities as PCC members / Churchwardens and Charity Trustees.

### **Office staff:**

The Church employs a Parish Administrator and Bookkeeper. Basic induction is provided depending on the experience of the post-holder. Should new tools and techniques be introduced that require training, this would be provided. Training needs are assessed at the post-holder's annual appraisal meeting.

## **Clergy:**

Training for clergy is provided by the Diocese. A new incumbent would be provided with in-depth information about the parish and the churches that constitute the parish of St. John's. An amount of this would be available as the Parish Profile, in advance of any appointment.

## **Readers:**

Readers are provided with training by Coventry Diocese prior to their licensing and are encouraged to participate in on-going training afterwards. Training in specific areas of Church life (such as taking funeral services and bereavement visiting) are provided using Diocesan resources where required. The Incumbent may also provide training for certain functions.

## **Youth Minister:**

The Church employs a Youth Minister. Where necessary and appropriate, training is provided to ensure that the post-holder is up-to-date with the requirements of the role. The post-holder would always be DBS checked and receive training in such areas as necessary in order to undertake his/her duties appropriately. Formal induction is provided by the PCC via an appointed representative.

## **Volunteers:**

Volunteers are provided with the general training that is considered appropriate to the role they undertake on behalf of the Church. All necessary legislative requirements (e.g. DBS checks) are met by the Church. Specific training may be identified and may be paid for by the PCC, depending on the circumstances.

## **Supervision and support**

All paid staff are entitled to appropriate supervision in the course of conducting their work for the Church. The job description will explain how this works in each particular case and will name the person(s) to whom you should refer any issues that might arise in the normal performance of your work. Alternatively, you can approach the churchwardens if your nominated supervisor/manager is unavailable.

All paid staff are entitled to a regular performance review. Your job description will contain details of this. Please note that the review system is not a substitute for regular communication: the Church believes that communication (including regular feedback) between its paid staff, office holders and voluntary staff is very important and is keen to ensure that this is happening in practice.

Each paid member of staff is issued with a job description and contract of employment, setting out details of pay and conditions

## **Resolving Problems (Paid Staff)**

We believe that clear, open and fair procedures for the resolution of problems are necessary both for the success of Church and for the fair treatment of all our team.

## General

Any grievance or complaint can be discussed informally, or through the formal grievance procedure. Often raising issues promptly at the time in a sensible way helps to solve them and prevent further difficulties.

## Investigations

It is not always necessary to hold an investigatory meeting but where it is, everyone is required to co-operate fully with the investigation relating to disciplinary or grievance procedure. The Church will ask a manager, the Church Wardens, or a member of the PCC to investigate a complaint or may for some incidences use an outside consultant to ensure impartiality.

## Suspension

The Church may suspend you on full basic pay. Suspension is not a disciplinary penalty and carries no implication of guilt. Whilst on suspension you must be available for work or meetings as required during your normal working hours. During a period of suspension your passwords will be barred and if you have access to the computer system it will be denied.

## The right to be accompanied at Hearings

You can be accompanied at any formal disciplinary or grievance hearing by:

- a work colleague.
- a full-time official employed by a trade union; or a lay official, so long as they have been certified in writing by their union as having received training in acting as a worker's companion at disciplinary and grievance hearings.

Your representative has the right to explain or sum up your case, and to respond to any views expressed at the hearing. The representative may not answer on your behalf. If the representative cannot attend on the date set for the interview, we will always postpone the interview for up to 5 days or at our discretion longer.

## Notes for Colleagues

We are pleased for colleagues to support each other through these proceedings but you are not obliged to do so. Having a colleague present helps to ensure that matters are dealt with fairly and we appreciate your assistance. You are asked to respect the confidentiality of these proceedings.

## Grievance

### Stage 1

Where there is an issue at work we would ask that you raise it promptly and with the relevant person with the aim of resolving the matter informally. If this fails or you feel the matter is more serious then you can go to the formal procedure.

### Stage 2

To make a formal grievance, set out your complaint in writing, giving a full account of the situation as possible. This should be given to the person to whom you are accountable together with any

relevant documents; this will be your direct line manager if you are a paid employee, or the person responsible for coordinating the work if you are a volunteer. If, however, the person who is accountable is the subject of the grievance, the grievance should be taken to a Churchwarden.

At this stage we will notify the PCC via the PCC Secretary and a panel of three PCC members will be appointed to hear any appeal if relevant. This panel will then be excluded from any further discussion of the matter pending a possible appeal to avoid compromising their impartiality.

We will invite you to a meeting to discuss the grievance and ask how you think it can be resolved. It may be necessary for us to make further enquiries and hold a second meeting.

After the meeting, we will write to you with the outcome of the grievance. The letter will remind you of your right to appeal if you are not satisfied with the outcome.

In serious cases or cases where the accountable person is the cause of the grievance a Churchwarden or an outside consultant will be asked to investigate the complaint.

If you wish to lodge a grievance after your employment has terminated, please write to your manager setting out your complaint.

## Appeals

You have the right of appeal against any grievance decision taken. Your appeal should be in writing and sent to the PCC Secretary within five working days of the decision and state the reasons for your appeal. You will receive a reply within a further five working days setting a date for an appeal hearing. The decision from the appeal hearing will be final.

## Disciplinary Procedure

The disciplinary process has been designed to help and encourage you to achieve and maintain good standards of conduct, attendance and job performance. On occasions people may fall short of the expected standards of behaviour or performance and in these circumstances disciplinary action may be taken.

At all stages of the formal disciplinary procedure you will:

- Be given a right of reply to all and any allegations made against you BEFORE any decision or disciplinary action is taken.
- Be advised of the nature of any disciplinary action taken against you and the consequences of such action.
- Be advised of any improvement in conduct or performance required and over what time frame; and
- Have the opportunity to be accompanied by a work colleague or Trade Union representative to any disciplinary hearing as described above.

Disciplinary hearings will usually be conducted by the Vicar, the Church Wardens or a member of the PCC.

You must take all reasonable steps to attend the meeting. Where you are unable to attend more than one meeting the Church may, in certain circumstances, hold the meeting in your absence and make their decision based on the evidence available to them at the time.

At the meeting you will be given the opportunity to respond and to put forward any defence or arguments you want. You may ask questions, present evidence and call witnesses.

Depending on the severity of the offence and taking into account all the circumstances the disciplinary action may take any one of the following forms:

### **Stage 1**

Informal counselling to give you an opportunity to rectify the situation.

### **Stage 2**

A verbal warning will be issued if improvement does not result following informal counselling or for more serious breaches. You will be told of steps you must take to improve your conduct and if appropriate the time limit for improvement. This will be confirmed in writing and recorded on your file for a period of time, normally 6 months.

### **Stage 3**

For more serious matters or where you have failed to meet the required standards after having being given a verbal warning, you may be given a written warning.

This will state the nature of the complaint, the required standards that must be met and where appropriate a time limit for improvement. It will also state that further disciplinary action will be followed if the required standards are not met. One copy of which will be retained by you and one placed on your file normally for a maximum of 12 months.

### **Stage 4**

For serious matters or where you have failed to reach the required standards after being warned you may be given a final written warning. This will state the nature of the complaint, the required standards to be met and where appropriate a time limit for improvement. It will also state that you will be dismissed if the standards are not met or if there is further misconduct. One copy of which will be retained by you and one placed on your file, normally for a maximum of 12 months.

### **Stage 5**

Where there has been Gross Misconduct (in which case the first 4 stages may be omitted) or where you have failed to meet the required standards after due warnings have been given to you, you may be dismissed. In extenuating circumstances, we may apply another sanction such as disciplinary transfer, disciplinary suspension without pay or where you are in a supervisory or management role demotion to a lower grade role. This will be confirmed in writing. In case of gross misconduct, the dismissal will normally be without notice (or pay in lieu of notice).

## Appeals

You have the right of appeal against any disciplinary decision taken against you. Your appeal should be in writing and sent to the nominated person within five working days of the decision and state the reasons for your appeal. You will receive a reply within a further five working days setting a date for an appeal hearing. The decision from the appeal hearing will be final.

The following are examples of Misconduct and gross Misconduct. These are examples only and not an exhaustive list.

## Misconduct

- Poor time keeping.
- Unauthorised and unreasonable absence from work.
- Failure to meet the adequate standard of job performance.
- Failure to comply with procedures.
- Failure to answer a question during a properly constituted investigation.
- Minor violation of safety practices.
- Minor breaches of Church regulations.
- Improper use of Church funds or property.
- Inappropriate standards of dress.
- Disruptive behaviour.

## Gross Misconduct

The following acts are examples of gross misconduct and as such are considered so serious that you may be liable to instant dismissal.

- Theft, wilful damage of, or negligence which leads to loss of, property or goods belonging to the Church, members of its congregation, suppliers, or other associated persons.
- Unauthorised disclosure or use of confidential information from the Church, or about any member of its congregation.
- Conduct likely to damage the reputation of the Church.
- Intimidating or threatening behaviour.
- Drunkenness, or being under the influence of illegal drugs or psychoactive substances.
- Discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation or harassment or bullying of colleagues, members of the congregation or other associated persons.
- Accepting bribes or offering bribes.
- Fraud, dishonesty or any other offence which would be a breach of the law of the land.
- Indecent, violent or offensive behaviour, assault or attempted assault of other employees, members of the congregation, associated persons or members of the public.
- Failure to carry out a reasonable order given by a manager during working hours.
- Serious disregard of duties.
- Serious negligence.
- Serious insubordination.

- Serious breaches of IT Security.
- Slanderous or defamatory statements made regarding the Church, its employees, members of the congregation or associated persons either verbally, in writing (electronically or hard copy) or posted on social networking sites.
- Serious breaches of the Health and Safety policy.

## **Resolving Problems (Volunteer staff)**

Because of the nature of work done by volunteers for the Church, it is not considered possible or appropriate to treat conduct issues or grievances in the same way as for paid staff. Nonetheless, the Church believes that volunteer staff have a right to expect certain standards of treatment in the course of their voluntary activities.

If you believe that you have been treated unfairly as a volunteer, you should, in the first instance speak to the person directing the activities in which you are involved. If this fails to result in a satisfactory outcome, you should approach either the Incumbent, or one of the Church Wardens. They may ask you to put your grievance in writing.

If the Church has concerns regarding your conduct, they will, in the first instance, be discussed with you. If the Church is not satisfied with your reply, this may lead to the termination of your volunteer position with the Church.

## **Anti-bullying Policy**

St. John's Church recognises the contribution of its paid staff and volunteers and is committed to supporting them in their work for the Church. If, in the course of the duties you undertake on behalf of the Church, you feel that you have been subjected to treatment that is unacceptable, by employees of the Church, Clergy, Church Wardens, PCC members or people appointed to roles of responsibility within the Church, you have the right to raise this as a matter of concern. This may be, for example, as a result of:

- bullying (to include being subjected to public humiliation, innuendo or malicious suggestion, physical contact, coercion, threats, manipulation)
- discrimination (to include inappropriate humour, offensive remarks, unfair selection for duties, ignoring or marginalising)
- harassment (to include persistent and inappropriate pressure, continual requests beyond what is reasonable)
- unwelcome attention (to include unsolicited phone calls, visits, emails, gifts, stalking or other physical proximity that causes concern, offence or fear).

Should you feel that the treatment you have received is unacceptable, you are encouraged to submit your complaint formally in writing to the Incumbent or the Church Wardens. If this is not appropriate, you should write to the PCC Treasurer or PCC Secretary, being members of the Standing



Committee of the PCC. We would respectfully ask each person to think carefully through the possible consequences of raising such a complaint.

The procedure for dealing with cases raised under this heading is the same as for cases raised under the “Resolving Problems” section.

## **Safeguarding Policy**

The Church has adopted the Safeguarding Policy for the Diocese of Coventry, and conducts recruitment in line with the Church of England’s Practice Guidance for Safer Recruitment.

## **Conflicts of Interest**

The Church has a separate policy for dealing with Conflicts of Interest (both potential and actual).

## **Insurance**

All paid staff are covered by the Church’s insurance policy for times when they are acting on behalf of the Church in accordance with the terms of their employment.

All volunteers are covered by the Church’s insurance policy for times when they are acting on behalf of the Church as ‘authorised volunteers’. If you are undertaking an activity which may fall outside normal activities (especially if it is a new venture) or performing a responsibility for the first time or in place of someone else in the Church, you are advised to check with the relevant member of the PCC or the Church Wardens to ensure that you are covered by the Church’s insurance policy.

If you believe that an incident has occurred that may arise in a claim against the Church or against yourself as a representative of the Church, you should report the situation to the Church Wardens, PCC Treasurer or Parish Administrator as soon as possible, giving as much information as possible.

## **Health and Safety**

The PCC conducts regular Health and Safety checks of Church property. This covers the Church building (including the office, the vestry, toilets and side corridor), the Church halls, the car park and surrounding land and the garden belonging to the Church.

The Church also has responsibility as a landlord for 23 Leyes Lane, a domestic property owned by the Church.

For the avoidance of doubt, the Church does not have, neither does it accept in any way, Health and Safety responsibility for the Vicarage or the associated Vicarage gardens, or any other Diocesan owned buildings.

The Church has a separate Health & Safety policy. An accident book is kept at the back of Church with the first aid box. Accidents should be recorded on a removable sheet and filed in the church office.

## **Confidentiality**

All Church members, whether paid staff or volunteers, who are appointed to positions of responsibility, are likely to come into contact with personal information and be party to knowledge of situations of a sensitive nature. St. John's Church is committed to abiding by the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act and to ensuring that confidential information is only transmitted to people who officially have a need to know the facts.

Data that is out of date will be securely disposed of. Staff or volunteers coming into contact with sensitive information to which they are not entitled, or being aware that sensitive information is in the possession of someone who has no reason to have it, should inform the Church Wardens as soon as possible.

## **Change History**

Version 2 of this policy was approved in 2008. Version 3 of this policy was approved on 13 December 2016 by the PCC of St. John's Church, Kenilworth. Version 4 was prepared in February 2019 following review and advice for HR Department (external HR advisers). Version 5 was prepared following PCC on 20 May 2019 when version 4 was discussed, and was agreed at PCC on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2019. Version 6 was prepared after consideration by Standing Committee on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

To be reviewed annually by Standing Committee and at least every three years by PCC