



Fire Policy

1. Responsibility

Woodside Baptist Church, has given responsibility for overseeing Fire Safety to the Managing Trustees who may appoint a competent person (the Safety Officer) to oversee all practical issues on their behalf.

Those attending the church regularly should ensure that any potential fire hazard is drawn to the attention of the Safety Officer, a steward, or a trustee. No one should do anything on the premises to increase the risk of fire without a risk analysis first being completed and accepted. Leaders of activities need to be aware of what to do in the case of Fire, and usually will produce a risk assessment for the activity.

2. Employment

The Church employs a Minister, and a cleaner, who do not live on the premises. A student lives in a cottage attached to the Church. All of these people have a copy of the Fire Policy. Currently there are no other employees.

Temporary Occupants.

The Church Flat is rented out, and the occupants have a copy of this policy. For contractors or anyone temporarily working on the premises or using them for education or worship, a copy is available in the Church Library. It should be noted that the Church and its buildings are not available for hire to external groups.

3. The Premises and Buildings

A rough diagram of the buildings is shown in the Appendix.

The premises is bounded by a low stone wall along Spring Lane topped by iron railings, a wooden fence along Cleaverholme Close, a high wooden fence separating the alley behind the classrooms from the back gardens of the houses there, and a wooden fence along the back gardens in Woodside Road. Between the Outreach and Fellowship Halls and alongside the Church building there are garden areas. There is a concreted area used as a car park and this has two entrances to Spring Lane that gives access to fire appliances.

The main Church building is brick built and dates from 1898. The ceiling is a timber construction of some architectural interest and the roof is slate. The floor is carpeted, laid on hardboard over a base of concrete strips separated by wooden battens. The Church is capable of seating about 230 worshippers. There are two exits from the front of the church, and one at the rear.

There is a wooden balcony that is in use regularly. The balcony has a brick-built stairwell that is the only exit from the balcony. There are double doors onto the balcony from the stairwell. The ceiling of the stairwell is constructed from heavy boarding.

The rooms and flat at the rear of the Church were completed in 1992, with a brick exterior. The interior dividing walls are mainly of plasterboard construction, but there are some brick walls. There is a double door exit to the car park, a crash bar fire exit from the corridor to the alley between these buildings and the Fellowship Hall, and a further crash bar fire exit from the Lounge/Kitchen leading to the passage at the rear of the Cottage. The stairs from the flat similarly lead to the rear of the Cottage. There is also a second exit leading to the Kitchen/Lounge area, secured from the flat side, at the foot of the stairs.

The Fellowship Hall was constructed in about 1950 and is a wooden structure. It has double doors at the main entrance and a crash bar fire exit at the rear.

There is a storage shed about 14'X8' beyond the Fellowship Hall used for storing spare chairs etc. Behind this is a locked metal shed about 10'X10' used for storage of implements, paint, brush cleaning solvents and gardening chemicals.

The second suite of buildings, the Outreach Hall and associated classrooms, is about 15 feet from the Fellowship Hall. This building was completed in 1966. The walls are externally brick but with a plastered breezeblock interior. The ceiling is a composite material, and there is a parquet style wooden floor laid on concrete. Interior walls in the classrooms behind the Hall are largely constructed of plasterboard. There is a fire exit from the side of the Outreach Hall facing the Fellowship Hall. There is also a crash bar fire exit from the classroom furthest from the main exit. The main entrance is from the car park via a small lobby, and there is an entrance to the corridor leading to the classrooms.

In the last 20 years electrical equipment, such as an amplification system, projectors and some musical instruments have been progressively introduced. After advice from the London Fire Co. fire extinguishers of CO₂, foam, and water types have been introduced throughout the buildings (see section 6).

4. Identification of issues that contribute to potential hazards.

Frequency of fires

No case of an unintentional fire on the premises has ever been recorded in the 110 year (approximate) history of the Church.

Potential sources of ignition

- Note that smoking on the premises is now specifically forbidden by law and has been a church rule for decades past.
- Events using small numbers of candles, such as carols by candlelight and Christingle services, are held, but are strictly controlled.
- The Church and halls are heated by gas heaters that are serviced regularly. These heaters are sited on exterior walls and are ducted through the wall to the exterior.
- Food is cooked on the premises typically several times a year, however, beverages are prepared regularly. There is a gas water-heater, and a gas cooking hob with two electric double ovens in the kitchen of the Outreach Hall, and a water-heater and electric kettles are used in the Lounge Kitchen. Occasionally a barbecue is held in the garden area.
- Boxes of Matches for igniting cooking appliances etc, are kept on the premises.
- There are a number of electrical appliances that incidentally produce low-level heat output, but all of these devices are ventilated in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Electrical devices are Portable Appliance Tested so electrical fittings should not become overheated. Fixed installation tests are undertaken every five years.
- Events such as Nov 5th firework displays have now been discontinued

Flammable materials

- Other than the main structure, identified above, relatively small quantities of inflammable materials are kept on the premises.
- Limited amounts of paper for printing, recycling, flip charts and toilet rolls are stored. Children's artwork may be displayed on the walls. For short periods, scenery may be stored, usually in the fellowship hall. Several movable dividing/display screens and wooden tables are kept in the halls.
- Posters in cardboard tubes are stored above the top of the balcony stairs.
- The Crèche and 'Mother and Toddler' activities use plastic toys and foam mattresses that are stored in a small room at the back of the Outreach Hall.
- Some cleaning uses aerosol-based cans. These are stored in a locked cleaning cupboard behind the Outreach Hall.
- It is one of the Cleaner's tasks to keep litter under control.
- During decoration, paint may be stored in the locked metal shed at the rear of the premises.
- Each year accumulated material and items no longer used are disposed of.
- Arson relating to Churches is not unknown even in the UK. Although this possibility exists, a determined attempt at arson is beyond reasonable control. The premises are locked and alarmed when no one is using the premises and the intruder alarm should be heard by the occupiers of the Flat.
- A car in the car park being set on fire by vandals is also a possibility with the attendant danger of an exploding fuel tank. Such a possibility would

be dealt with according to the circumstances. Until the Fire Service arrived everyone would be kept away from the car park area probably exiting the premises via the path at the rear of the church.

5. People on premises, particularly those at higher risk.

Significant numbers of children regularly use all parts of the premises. All activities are supervised with adult/child ratios 1:8 or less. The supervising adults must be aware of escape routes and must take charge of the children they are responsible for to ensure that they vacate the building safely. Registers/attendance sheets should be taken out of the building with them to ensure that all children are accounted for.

People on the premises with additional needs.

Provision is made in the WBC Health and Safety Policy for such people.

There are typically 30 elderly people in the main congregation, and also in meetings in the Church lounge. Some have walking difficulties and occasionally some are in wheelchairs. These may require assistance if rapid exit was required.

There are registered blind members of the congregation. There are several deaf people who come because signing of services is available. At present, all of these are fit, and able to follow instructions. We also have both children and adults classed as 'special needs'. People unfamiliar with the premises may be on site, particularly for weddings and funerals.

6. Precautions

All fire exits have "Fire Exit" signs above them and instructions to push the bar or pad. Escape routes are also marked. Normal exits are clearly marked.

6.1 Smoke alarms.

Smoke alarms are fitted and checked and distributed as below:-

Fellowship Hall	1 in entrance lobby
Outreach Hall	2 outside kitchen
Cottage:	Top of stairs, outside kitchen
Flat:	Top of stairs, outside kitchen
Manse:	Downstairs hall, upstairs landing

6.2 Fire Extinguishers

Fire extinguishers are maintained on an annual basis by the London Fire Co. A record is kept of the maintenance/replacement. Current sites of fire extinguishers and fire blankets available are noted in the table but adjustments may be made to meet changing needs.

Location	Type	Size	Year purchased
Main Church Building			
Balcony	Water	3L	2010
Balcony	CO ₂	2kg	2007

Vestibule (Entrance area)	Water	9L	2007
Vestibule (Entrance area)	C O ₂	2kg	2010
Church Platform	CO ₂	2kg	2007
Church Platform	Water	6L	2006
Lounge and Vestry			
Lounge Kitchen	Foam	9L	2002
By double doors to Car Park	CO ₂	2kg	2004
Outreach Hall			
Entrance from Car Park	Water	6L	2010
Classroom-end of Hall	Water	9L	2006
Kitchen	CO ₂	2kg	2004
Kitchen	Fire Blanket	1	
Outreach Hall Back Entrance	Water	9L	2006
Fellowship Hall			
Fellowship Hall	Water	9L	2009

- In all fires, except those easily dealt with, calling the Fire Service is a priority.
- The main gates are kept clear for the access of emergency vehicles.
- All new furniture carries the mark ensuring that fabric materials are fire retardant, and the fabrics of the curtains are treated with a fire retardant.
- When the premises are not in use windows and doors are kept closed.
- The fire assembly point is the broad pavement outside the Church.
- Electrical devices are over-current protected by trips in the main switch box.
- Fire marshals will be appointed for all plays using special lighting, and for major productions.

This version of the Fire Policy approved by the Church Meeting 22 March 2010
 First version, 30 April 2007
 Review after March 2013

Appendix

Sketch Plan of main features of site - (Not to scale)

