

Young People and Online Safeguarding – Amended April 2021

This is a temporary policy to safeguard young people whilst youth group activities need to be held online due to social isolation. This policy was first amended on 16th July 2020.

E-Safety

A 'child' or 'young person' is defined as anyone under the age of 18. However, some social media platforms have rules restricting the age of users. Always follow the terms set out by Individual social media sites. Within the Parish of St Peter and St Paul's Church, the following policy regarding contacting young people via email and mobile phones will apply from those in school year 7 and above.

Young people below year 7 will not receive electronic communication to their personal accounts. Communication may be sent to parents/carers.

Invites to Zoom meetings will only be sent to private emails addresses of parents/carers.

Details of Zoom meetings will not be included on paper invitations.

Gatherings of children and young people on Zoom (or similar conferencing platforms) will always be accompanied by no less than two leaders who are safeguarding trained. This rule applies to breakout rooms within a meeting as well as the main meeting.

A risk assessment will be completed for all online activities.

This policy must be shared with all parents/carers of the children and young people who attend Cave Youth Club, Climbers and Explorers.

Social Media and Networking

"Social media includes web-based and mobile based technologies which are used to turn communication into interactive dialogue among organisations, communities and individuals".

Below are some guidelines on how social networks should be used within the ministry of the Parish of St Peter and St Paul's Church.

When electronic communication (Communication via Mobile Phone, Social Networking (if aged 13 or over) and Email) takes place between Appropriate Adults and young people the following definitions and practices must be followed:

- Appropriate Adults and Youth Leaders (hereafter referred to as Youth Leaders) are people who are working directly with young people or who have a pastoral responsibility for a young person. (Currently those approved to complete youth work online will have a cleared DBS and have completed Level C0 and C1 training.)
- It is important that parents/carers are aware of and give express consent to Youth Leaders communicating electronically with young people.
- Youth Leaders will not send texts to young people. Phone calls may be made but must be logged as follows:
Youth Leader texts 2nd Youth Leader when call is starting and finishing.
Youth Leader keeps a written log of calls (recipient, time, date, duration).
- Youth Leaders will avoid contacting young people before 8:00am and after 10:00pm, unless the young person contacts them first in an emergency.

- When communicating with a group of young people, the Youth Leader should send exactly the same email message to all recipients, as individually written ones with the same subject could be misinterpreted as favouritism. A 2nd appropriate adult must be copied into all messages.
- When in discussion with a young person, topics which are of a sensitive nature or could be easily misinterpreted should not be discussed electronically.
- Conversations are best written/typed in full and the use of abbreviations avoided. This is due to the risk of a misinterpretation, for example, “LOL” traditionally means “Laugh out Loud” as a response to a joke or funny situation; however this can also be interpreted as “Lots of Love”.
- When using social networking websites and programs that offer live video conferencing, 2 Youth Leaders must be present. All settings must be set to ‘private’. Parents/carers are to be informed when a video conference will take place at least 12 hours beforehand.
- Youth Leaders who minister to children and young people are to set very stringent privacy settings on any social networking profile.
- Youth Leaders should not submit “friend” requests to young people or accept “friend” requests from young people.
- When recommending websites to children, young people and their families, the Youth Leaders will ensure the content is suitable for the age of the children or young people.

Martin Davis
8th April 2021