

Policy for Video Conferencing with Children and Young People

virtual meetups should only be with secondary school age – 11+

For under 11s Parents should always be present and in control of video functions.

Avoid the use of Skype/Facetime – these are social media tools and as such share contact details with all users, you may inadvertently connect young people up with other people as an unintended consequence.

Instead use a video conferencing platform such as

Zoom: www.zoom.us This is free to use (will give you a 40 min chat) or a paid for account allows you to host longer sessions. Users only need to have an email address for account setup.

or **Whereby:** www.whereby.com - this is a similar platform but doesn't require the downloading of an app and hence is slightly easier to use. There is a monthly cost

Parental consent during the present situation

Since an invite is issued each time a video conference is started, parents will be emailed a copy of this invite (unless under 11) so that they are kept informed and can set up the young people to access the session appropriately with any oversight if they want. NB if a regular meeting is being set up leaders will make this obvious in their initial email.

IMPORTANT - The new 2020-21 consent form includes consenting to the use of video conferencing as part of the families children and youth ministry activity. This is now electronic and you should have received a link to and online form. Please could you complete a consent for each of your children ASAP thanks.

'Normal' youth and children group rules apply

- recruitment and safeguarding process is the same as normal – i.e. you need at least 2 safely recruited youth leaders present who would normally have 'real time' contact with this group.

- If new youth members want to join the group, they should have 'normal' group consent forms filled in as well.
- If you are recruiting new leaders for this group, then a safer recruitment process must be followed before they can participate.
- Appropriate behaviour for leaders should be followed as you would expect in the usual youth group setting.
- As always, be inclusive – are there any young people from your group who would struggle to participate in this way, what extra support can be put in place for them?
- If you normally meet one to one with individuals from your groups we ask now that you start doing one to two's for online contact. To continue this remotely, please inform parents in the same way as above, and make sure others present in your residence. **Please do not start new one to twos.**

TIPS FOR LEADERS

- see above for normal rules
- Best practice would be to try and have both leaders live before young people arrive.
- Ideally use the same time slot as your normal youth group meeting.
- Private messaging during a video conference should be switched off or discouraged
- Be aware of and sensitive to technical difficulties and features that young people may be more familiar with. It may be wise to disable some of these for participants
- see Zoom video tutorials online for lots of good resources on how to use this new medium for youth and children's work.
- **DO NOT RECORD.** Most video conferencing software allows for the session to be recorded – this is an option for the host of the meeting only. Please do not record as you would need separate

permission for data capture and there are all sorts of issues around storage, GDPR etc.

- Ask if you're not sure or need help

TIPS FOR PARENTS

- see above for normal rules
- Treat remote church groups the same as normal church - and encourage young people to act as wisely and kindly as they would face to face.
- Although meetings should not be too long we're doing a lot on line at the moment and regular screen breaks may be needed. Look after your child's mental health and wellbeing
- An open door policy is a great idea
- If you have a pastoral issue you would like to discuss please use the usual lines of communication. In the first instance contact a member of the staff team.
- Be aware of objects, pictures and people that are in the background and remove anything you don't want others to see or that may be unhelpful.
- Please do also understand that many of our team are home alone trying to juggle meetings with family and other things. Due to these challenges there may be some occasions when leaders are not able to interact with youth and children as efficiently as would be desirable.

Do please be in touch with any further questions or issues

“Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.” Hebrews 10:24-25