

Appendix 4

Freeschool Court Church

Online Safety

Online safety is the collective term for safeguarding involving the use of electronic devices and applications to communicate and access the Internet.

Policy guidelines for Church Workers

- Generally, maintain good and open relationships with parents and carers regarding communication with them and their children.
- Use an appropriate tone: friendly, but not over-familiar or personal.
- Be warm and friendly, but do not suggest or offer a special relationship.
- Be clear and explicit about information that you need to share; don't abbreviate or shortcut your communications.
- Be circumspect in your communications with children to avoid any possible misinterpretation of your motives or any behaviour which could be construed as grooming.
- Do not share any personal information with children, or request or respond to any personal information from a child other than that which might be appropriate as part of your role.
- Only give personal contact details, such as your mobile number, if available to other members of the church.
 - If children want you to have their mobile phone numbers, e-mail addresses or similar, to communicate with them this way, make sure that their parents know and have agreed.
- Only contact children for reasons related to the work of the church and retain an electronic record.
- Respect a child's right to confidentiality unless abuse/harm is suspected or disclosed.
- Email should only be used to communicate specific information. (e.g. times and dates of events). It should not be used as a relationship building tool.
- Email history should be kept.
- When using email/internet for communication with children, it is advised that it should take place between the hours of 9am-5pm. Where working with children outside normal office hours workers should seek advice from their leader but there should be no email communication after 9pm.
- Use of web camera or visual communication via the internet is generally not permitted.
- Workers should refrain from using such methods on a one to one basis as they cannot be recorded. (It can be used for conference calls and is considered appropriate if a project or group uses a web camera in a group environment for project purposes and has clear aims and objectives for its use).

Social Media Policy

- All social media interaction between workers and children under 18 shall be limited to monitored/administrated groups.
- Any safeguarding concerns/allegations arising from social media shall be referred to the safeguarding co-ordinator.
- All users of social media must be above the minimum age limit i.e. 13 for Facebook
- Workers should ensure their privacy setting ensure the highest levels of security to restrict children being able to see any more than what is relevant to communication within the group

Consent for photographic images and videos online

- Photographs that include children will be selected carefully and will endeavour to prevent children being easily identified.
- Children's full names will not be used on the website in association with their photographs.
- Permission will be sought before any images are taken or displayed and images will only be used for the specific purpose for which permission was sought for and how the image will be stored if not destroyed. If the intention is to use an image on the internet this must be clearly stated, and further permission must be acquired if an image is to be used in a way not originally stated.
- Use of images will reflect diversity of age, ethnicity and gender of the activity.
- Live streaming of events must be clearly advertised in advance and where children are involved permission should be sought in line with the photographic guidelines.