

## **POLICY AND GUIDELINES FOR THE SAFE USE OF IMAGES, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL MEDIA**

Images, information technology and social media have a significant part to play in Church life.

To protect the integrity of our church and ensure the safety of those with whom we have contact, DD&CW will ensure that all volunteers are advised in the safe use of images, IT and social media.

DD&CW acknowledges the popularity, opportunities and hazards of the internet and social networking sites as a common form of communication and information gathering today. Inevitably, information technology and social media have an increasingly significant part to play in DD&CW life.

DD&CW staff and volunteers are often placed in positions of trust and the relational approach to our work means that we have ongoing contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

DD&CW models and practises positive relationships and communications that value, nurture and protect children and young people through open, accountable and safe practices to reflect our Christian ethos.

### **Guidelines**

The following guidelines are provided to assist leaders in the safe and responsible use of images, IT and social media.

#### **Images (including photos / videos)**

Photography and video recording are important ways of creating an historic record of events – illustrating important moments in the life of our Church. It is, however, a powerful and personal process, and we must therefore respect the rights of everyone to make the choice whether or not to be photographed or recorded.

<b>Images in general</b>	Pictures of children and young people should only be taken if a second adult is present
<b>Images of under-18s</b>	Pictures of children and young may only be taken if parental consent has been received. This may be sought using the Consent Form for events which should be kept indefinitely
<b>Image Content</b>	The content of pictures should be considered for good taste e.g. all children and young people featured must be appropriately dressed and group photos are preferable to individual shots
<b>Identifying under-18s in images</b>	Care should be taken when identifying children and young people by name. It is good practice to avoid using surnames but if the full name is to be printed then parental consent will need to be obtained
<b>Details of those in images</b>	No personal details such as email or postal addresses, telephone or mobile numbers should be revealed. Addresses should never be given out and care should be taken to avoid pictures clearly showing where the young people come from (e.g. easily read group names)
<b>Parents/Guardians taking images</b>	Parents/ guardians of children may use cameras to take photos of their own children at DD&CW events but should be advised that these are for personal use and that if other children appear in the pictures they should not be displayed in any publicly accessible space, including social media or any web-based site

## Facebook (and other Social Media)

DD&CW expects leaders and young people involved in communication on Facebook to use a corporate account, not personal accounts. This can be achieved by applying the following principles:

<b>Group Account</b>	Set up a group Facebook account to make connections with young people (under-18s) avoiding inappropriate one-to-one interactions through private social media/Facebook accounts
<b>Closed / Secret Groups</b>	Apply a 'Closed' or 'Secret' group setting when you set up and maintain your group. This will keep all content outside the public domain
<b>Administrators</b>	Ensure that one or more leaders (over 18) act as administrators for the Facebook group taking responsibility for approving new members
<b>Posting info</b>	All news, events, information and reminders should be posted on the wall this then avoids inappropriate one-to-one private /inbox messages
<b>Keep up to date</b>	Keep up to date with Facebook/social media policies e.g age, privacy settings etc. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat require all users to be over the age of 13 years
<b>Photos on Facebook</b>	The administrator should be responsible for the addition of photographs and making sure that no picture is 'tagged' or used as a personal profile picture
<b>Working with others</b>	To engage the group in good practice, involve the young people in creating a positive code of conduct relating to behaviour, purpose, management, setting, monitoring and use of the site

## Mobile Phones, Email and Texts

Mobile phones may make a positive contribution to the safety and welfare of young people and workers, particularly when an emergency occurs. However, there are clear good practice and child protection issues in relation to the appropriate use of mobile phones and other electronic forms of communication.

<b>General communication</b>	Group texts/emails should be used to communicate information related to the group. Always include another adult in the distribution list and ensure that you have consent to contact people
<b>Language</b>	Ensure that language used is clear and appropriate and cannot be misinterpreted e.g. never use terms such as 'love' or 'xxx' to end messages
<b>Time of messages</b>	Be aware of the time when texts or messages are sent and avoid communicating early in the morning or late at night
<b>Individual messages</b>	Try to avoid contacting individual young people by phone, text or email. If necessary this should only be undertaken with parental/guardian knowledge or consent.
<b>Texts</b>	Text and email communication should be saved and not deleted
<b>Sending out images</b>	Make sure that images are appropriate and that hyperlinks do not lead to inappropriate content.