



Child Safeguarding & Protection Service

Safeguarding Guidelines for the use of Zoom with teenagers in a parish/diocesan setting

For the purpose of clarity, a teenager is a person aged thirteen years of age and older. Zoom should not be used to engage with children under the age of thirteen.

Parishes/diocesan agencies should not use the free version of Zoom as it does not include the security measures that the subscription versions do. The subscription should be taken out by the parish and not by individuals. This should be managed by someone who understands the platform and who is appointed by the priest in charge.

Church personnel should NOT use a private Zoom account to contact teenagers.

Teenagers should only use a parent/guardian Zoom account.

If for any reason a meeting is infiltrated from the outside (Zoom Bombed), that is, if somebody not invited to the meeting appears, the meeting should be terminated immediately. The breach should be reported to Zoom and in the event that the organisers feel that such a breach poses a threat of harm or abuse of the teenagers taking part, this should be reported to the Diocesan Child Safeguarding and Protection Service (CSPS) without delay. Parents should also be informed so that they can decide if they want their child to continue using the platform going forward.

Consent Forms

Parental Consent is required to participate in virtual youth programmes. [During the Covid-19 Pandemic, this can be secured over a parent/guardian's email. You should also take measures to give them a call to ensure that it is the parent/guardians permission that you have received. The standard Parental Consent Form used in parishes is not sufficient for this. The group leaders must use the specific form relating to Zoom.

The Code of conduct is included in the consent form. This must be read by both teen and parent/guardian and signed off on.

Code of Conduct:

1: Be kind and courteous

We're all in this together to create a welcoming environment. Let's treat everyone with respect. Healthy debates are natural, but kindness is required.

2: No hate speech or bullying

Make sure that everyone feels safe. Bullying of any kind isn't allowed, and degrading comments about things such as race, religion, culture, sexual orientation, gender or identity will not be tolerated.

3: No promotions or spam

Give more to this group than you take. Self-promotion, spam and irrelevant links aren't allowed.

4: Respect everyone's privacy

Being part of this group requires mutual trust. Authentic, expressive discussions make groups great, but may also be sensitive and private. It should be explained at the beginning of the meeting that the forum is not a suitable place for anyone taking part to disclose that they themselves or someone they know is at risk of abuse. Should anyone have a concern, they should be encouraged to contact the relevant agencies. All leaders should be fully conversant with the reporting procedures as set out in the "*Child Safeguarding in the Archdiocese of Dublin: Statement, Reporting Procedures and Good practice Guidelines 2018*".

This document is available on the CSPS website.

At the beginning of each meeting, the code of conduct should be displayed so each teen is aware of it.

Breaches to the code of conduct will result in the teen being removed from the meeting. Incidents should be recorded with as much detail as possible immediately after the meeting has ended.

Garda Vetting and Safeguard training

- All Youth Leaders must be Garda Vetted by their parish or diocesan agency.
- All Youth Leaders must attend appropriate diocesan Safeguarding training
- All Youth Leaders should be trained in the use of Zoom; this includes being trained in the role of Tech Host.

Tech Host

Duties and responsibilities

Scheduling the meeting on zoom and passing on the link to the MC. A new link should be set up each week to prevent teens passing on the link.

- Admitting people into the meeting
- Muting participant's mics on entry
- Helping participants who are struggling with the technology
- Sharing their screen if needed.
- Setting up/ opening breakout rooms. (Tech Host and MC should remain in the main session at all times in cases where a participant drops off the call and tries to join again or accidentally leaves the breakout room)

Participants should know who the MC and Tech Host are so participants can report any problems to them using the chat function.

MC

Duties and responsibilities

- Sending and receiving the consent forms
- Communication with parents (emailing the link to the meeting out)
- Highlighting the code of conduct
- Record Attendance
- Welcome the young people and lead the session

Small Group Leaders

Duties and responsibilities

If you are planning on using the breakout room facility, there needs to be at least 2 leaders in each meeting room. E.g. If you have a group of 24 and you break out into 3 meeting rooms, you should have 6 leaders plus the tech host managing the tech in the background and MC.

- Help guide discussion in a safe and respectful manner.
- Help participants who may struggle with the technology
- Save the chat when the breakout room has ended.

Waiting Room

When participants join a meeting, place them in a waiting room and require the host to admit them individually. Enabling the waiting room automatically disables the setting for allowing participants to join before host.

Video

Encourage participants to have their cameras on and their first names displayed, however if they are not comfortable with their camera on they can leave it turned off too.

Microphones

Tech Host should mute participant's mics when they start the call.

Ask participants to mute their mic when not speaking (otherwise, with background noise it can get crazy)

There is the option of using the "Raise your hand" feature to talk next if there is a lot of people on the call. This would mainly be used in the main session.

Chat Function

This is a great tool for participants who may feel too shy to say something. It allows them to engage in conversation in a way that they will feel more comfortable with.

Tech host has responsibility for chat feature. The chat feature can be saved both automatically or manually. The Tech host should review the chat directly after each zoom meeting in order to make sure that nothing untoward happened during the meeting. The chat should be immediately deleted after review unless there is a concern.

Zoom has two security features which should be used on calls with under 18's:

You should prevent participants from saving the chat, this means only the tech host and M.C can save the chat.

You should prevent participants from sending each other private chats

Screen Share

This is a great function for showing PowerPoints, videos etc.

Zoom has the option to allow participants to share their screens. This should never happen on calls with under 18's. The only person that should be able to share their screen is the Tech Host.

Breakout Rooms

Breakout rooms allow you to split your Zoom meeting into separate sessions. The tech host can choose to split the participants of the meeting into these separate sessions automatically or manually.

Great function for small group discussions.

Tech host can set a timer for the rooms. When the time is up, the breakout rooms automatically close and send all participants back into the main session. The tech host can also choose to close the breakout room early if needed.

Minimum 2 Leaders per breakout room

Leaders should never be on their own in a breakout room with someone under 18.

*Meetings on zoom with under 18's are never to be recorded! All Leaders should remain in the meeting until all participants have left

Archdiocese of Dublin