

*Using an Online Communications Platform
with Children and Young People*

“Zoom” Policy & Procedures 2020

Diocese of Waterford & Lismore

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Introduction: Rationale for Using Zoom with Young People

Social media and online communication platforms increasingly dominate how people communicate and relate to each other, particularly in times when more usual ways of meeting up and connecting are not possible or not easy to do.

More and more young Catholics utilise a wide variety of online communication platforms and social media as their preferred methods of communication. Although this “virtual communication” is limited in ways, these methods are also proving to be a valuable resource for effective ministry: connecting people, providing training, catechesis, prayer opportunities and continuing evangelization online. There is great potential in the utilisation of online communication platforms to aid Parish / Diocesan Youth Ministry in deepening relationships with young people, encouraging them in their faith, and promoting opportunities and events for the Diocese of Waterford & Lismore.

However, like social media, using online communication platforms involves challenges for both young people and those who minister to them. We acknowledge the dangers and potential risks these platforms can pose to both our young people and to our Parish / Diocesan Youth Ministry personnel. The Church ministry will always respect the dignity and rights of children. Thus, transparency, prudence and professionalism must guide our digital communication and online interactions with young people. In this way, we can improve ministry effectiveness while ensuring the privacy and safeguarding of everyone involved.

Safeguarding Guidelines for Parish / Diocesan use of Zoom with young people

- In Ireland under the Child Care Act 1991, the Children Act 2001 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, a child is defined as anyone under the age of 18.
- Diocesan policy around safeguarding applies in your online communications with children, young people, and vulnerable adults, as it does in a face-to-face setting.
- The digital age of consent in Ireland is 16 years.
- Zoom is not intended for use by individuals under the age of 16, unless it is through a school subscriber using Zoom for education, or for the purposes of Parish / Diocesan family and children’s ministry.

Parish / Diocesan Youth Ministry Zoom Accounts

- The Zoom subscription should be taken out by the parish / diocese and not by individuals. This should be managed by someone who understands the platform and who is appointed by the priest in charge. *The free version of Zoom should not be used as it does not include the security measures that the subscription versions do.*
- Parish / Diocesan Youth Ministry Personnel must ensure that privacy settings on the Zoom account are set to ensure maximum privacy for participants. This may mean altering the default settings after the Zoom account is set up.
- The most recent version of the Zoom application should always be used as this is the best way to ensure that privacy and security controls are maximised.
- Parish / Diocesan Youth Ministry personnel should not use a private Zoom account to contact young people.
- Young people (Under 18s) should only access the Parish / Diocesan Youth Ministry Zoom meeting through their Parent / Guardian’s email.

Uninvited Visitors (“Zoom Bombing”)

- Zoom-bombing is when uninvited people join a Zoom meeting and then disrupt it – often by sharing inappropriate or even pornographic material.
- The best way to guard against Zoom-bombing is to have your privacy and security settings maximized and to always require a password (passcode) for admittance to the Zoom call. Passwords should be different for every call. If for any reason a meeting is infiltrated from the outside (“Zoom Bombed”), the meeting should be terminated immediately.
- If the Parish / Diocesan Youth Ministry feels that such a breach poses a threat of harm or abuse of the young people taking part, follow the Diocesan Safeguarding policy and procedures, available here: <https://www.waterfordlismore.ie/safeguarding-children/>
- Parents / Guardians must be informed so that they can decide if they want their child to continue using the platform going forward.
- This may also be a data protection breach and the Parish/Diocesan Youth Ministry Personnel should follow the appropriate Data Breach Policy if this occurs.

Parent / Guardian Consent

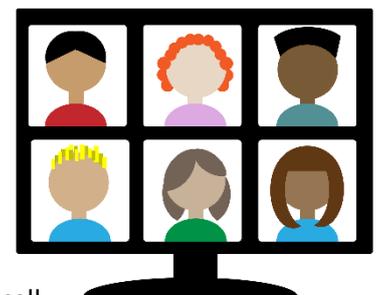
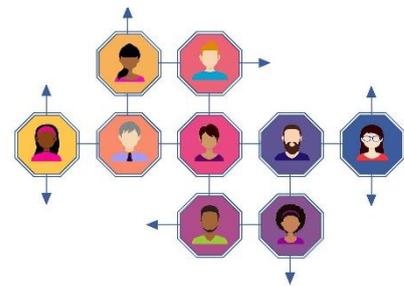
- Parent / Guardian Consent is required for young people under 18 to participate in Parish / Diocesan Youth Ministry virtual programs / events. *[During the Covid-19 Pandemic, this can be secured over a Parent / Guardian’s email. You should also take measures to contact them to ensure that it is the Parent / Guardian’s permission that you have received.]*
- Parish / Diocesan Youth Ministry leaders must use the specific Joint Consent form relating to Zoom.
- Links to Zoom Meetings (with Meeting ID / password) will be sent to the Parent / Guardian’s email address.
- While Parents/Guardians must ensure that the participant has logged out of the call, Parents / Guardians or any other household member should not be able to see or hear the participants in the Zoom call.

Code of Conduct for Zoom Meetings

- A specific Code of Conduct for Zoom meetings must be in place, ideally devised by the young people participating in the event. A template of this is included in the consent form. This must be read and signed by both the young person and Parent / Guardian.
- At the beginning of each meeting, the code of conduct should be displayed so each young person is aware of it.
- Breaches of the code of conduct will result in the young person being removed from the meeting. Incidents should be recorded with as much detail as possible immediately after the meeting has ended and records stored as per Parish/Diocesan Data Retention Policies. Parents / Guardians are to be informed of the breach and consequences.

1.3A (2) Online Code of Behaviour (netiquette) for children / young people

- **Be kind:** No judgmental attitudes, hate speech or bullying. Negative, hurtful or derogatory comments will not be tolerated. We work to encourage each other. The group should be a safe space for members to express themselves.
- **Respect others:** Respect the different opinions of everyone in the group and listen. Healthy debates are natural, but kindness is required. Keep discussions to the appropriate, designated time for discussion. Follow the instructions of the leader(s).
- **Respect privacy:** No photo-taking, screenshots, screen or voice recordings of meeting. Do not share group codes or passwords with people outside the group. Do not tag other people in photos or posts on social media without their permission.
- **Be honest:** Make a leader aware if you are feeling uncomfortable due to a person or topic being discussed. If you need a break do not be afraid to ask.
- **Be prudent:** Being part of this group requires mutual trust. Authentic, expressive discussions make groups great, but may also be sensitive and private. The group 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 safeguarding concern the Diocesan Safeguarding details can be found at <https://www.waterfordlismore.ie/safeguarding-children/>
- **Respect confidentiality and do not gossip:** if you are telling a story about someone, ask yourself, "Is this my story to tell?" Do not talk about other people without permission: this includes your family members. Always respect confidentiality: what is said in the group, stays in the group, unless there is a safeguarding concern.
- **Appropriate Dress Code and Surroundings:** Only use the online platform from an appropriate location i.e., bedrooms and bathrooms are not appropriate. Make sure people around you cannot be seen or heard on camera unless they are part of this group. Dress appropriately e.g., pyjamas are not appropriate.
- **Breach of the Code:** Anyone who breaks the rules or acts inappropriately while on the online platform will be removed from the meeting and parents / guardians will be informed.
- **Attendance Log:** I acknowledge that an attendance log of the Zoom call will be retained by the parish/Diocese in accordance with Safeguarding Policies and Procedures.



Garda Vetting and Safeguarding training

- All Parish / Diocesan Youth Ministry Leaders must be Garda Vetted by their parish / diocese and must attend appropriate Safeguarding training.
- All Parish / Diocesan Youth Ministry Leaders who use Zoom must be trained in the use of Zoom; this includes being trained in the role of Tech Host.

Zoom Leader Roles and Responsibilities:

Tech Host: Duties and responsibilities

- Scheduling the meeting on Zoom and passing on the link to the MC. Each Zoom Meeting has a unique Meeting ID and password. A new link with new password and ID should be set up for each meeting to prevent young people passing on the link. The link will be sent close to the scheduled time to avoid the danger of intrusion or interference by third parties. Ask participants not to share the link. The link for the call should only be sent by email to the relevant parents/guardians and Youth Ministry Personnel. Under no circumstances should the Zoom log in details be displayed on a parish or Diocesan website or social media page.
- Admitting people into the meeting
- Muting participants' microphones on entry
- Helping participants who are struggling with the technology (sharing their screen if needed)
- Setting up / opening breakout rooms.
- Locking the meeting once all invited participants are in attendance.

MC: Duties and responsibilities

- Sending and receiving the Parent / Guardian Consent forms
- Communicating with Parents / Guardians (e.g. emailing the link to the meeting)
- Highlighting the code of conduct
- Recording Attendance
- Welcoming the young people and leading the session

Small Group Leaders: Duties and responsibilities

- Helping to guide discussion in a safe and respectful manner.
 - Helping participants who may struggle with the technology.
 - If an issue / concern arises from the Chat Function during a Breakout Room session, the Small Group leaders should highlight this to the Parish / Diocesan Youth Ministry leader.
-

A Guide to Zoom Features and Requirements

Record Meeting / Screenshots

- Meetings on Zoom with young people are never to be recorded.
- Participants are not allowed to record or take screenshots. This is outlined in the Code of Conduct.

Waiting Room

- Enabling the waiting room automatically disables the setting for allowing participants to join before host.
- When participants join a meeting, place them in a waiting room and require the Tech Host to admit them individually.
- Display a welcome message and any disclaimers in the Waiting Room e.g. *“Meeting in Progress” / “Welcome to (insert meeting name / purpose) / The host will let you in soon” and a reminder to participants to have their Christian name displayed on screen.*

Video / Camera

- Participants should have their cameras on and their Christian names displayed.

Microphones

- The Tech Host should mute all participants’ microphones when they start the Zoom meeting.
- Ask participants to mute their microphone when not speaking (otherwise, with background noise it can get very distracting).
- 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 Feature

- The Chat Feature is a great tool for participants who may feel uncomfortable speaking aloud in a Zoom meeting.
- The Tech Host has the responsibility for the Chat feature.
- The Tech Host should review the Chat text before ending each Zoom meeting to make sure that no issue arose during the meeting.
- Zoom has two security features which should be used in Zoom meetings with young people:
 - Prevent participants from saving the chat.
 - Prevent participants from sending each other private chats. Young people can still communicate with the hosts through private chat if necessary.

Screen Share

- Screen Share is a great function for showing PowerPoints, videos etc.
- Zoom has the option to only allow hosts and co-hosts to share their screens. This option should be enabled in the account settings before the meeting starts.

Breakout Rooms

- Breakout rooms allow you to split your Zoom meeting into separate sessions for facilitating small group discussions.
- The Tech Host can choose to split the participants of the meeting into these separate sessions automatically or manually.
- The 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.
- There must be a minimum of two designated Parish / Diocesan Youth Ministry personnel per breakout room
- Leaders should never be on their own in a breakout room with a young person.
- Tech Host and MC should always remain in the main session in cases where a participant drops off the call and tries to join again or accidentally leaves the breakout room.

Parish / Diocesan Youth Ministry Zoom meetings for a School Setting

In instances when physical visits to a school / class group may not be possible, a Zoom meeting may be a viable option to take place between Parish / Diocesan Youth Ministry personnel for the purpose of a ministry outreach, presentation or retreat-style event. If students are not visible for the Zoom Meeting, and the necessary technology is managed by the designated teacher, this ministry can be offered in a Primary and Post-Primary setting.

- Church personnel must also adhere to the policies of the organisations within which we are ministering.
- The purpose and outline of content for the Zoom Meeting will be discussed and agreed to in advance with the designated teacher.
- The designated teacher arranging the “Zoom visit” on behalf of the school / class group should provide evidence that the children / young people, along with their Parents / Guardians who will be part of the Zoom meeting have given consent to the activity. Those students who do not wish to be part of the activity should be accommodated as per the school’s own policy and procedures.
- The designated teacher will be sent the secure link and password for the Zoom meeting. He/she will log in, mute his/her camera (or turn their device away from the students so only the teacher themselves are visible), so that students will not be visible on the host’s screen. A notice that a Zoom meeting is taking place in the classroom should be put on the classroom door to discourage any unnecessary interruptions.
- The teacher can pass questions / feedback to the host(s), either verbally or through the chat feature, unless Parents / Guardians have given written consent allowing the students to be visible to the Parish / Diocesan Youth Ministry Zoom hosts.

General Guidelines

- A Hazard Assessment should be carried out prior to organising virtual events for children / young people. [1.8A Template 2 for “*Hazard Assessment for using online communication platform with children and young people*” available on <https://www.waterfordlismore.ie/safeguarding-children/>]
- The Zoom meeting should commence with Parish / Diocesan Youth Ministry leaders at least ten minutes prior to the main meeting, where the meeting objective and any other relevant information is covered.
- Parish / Diocesan Youth Ministry leader to visually confirm members when allowing access to the meeting before the next member is given access.
- All Leaders should remain in the meeting until all participants have left.
- Keep a log of Parish / Diocesan Youth Ministry Zoom meetings: Attendance record, time and date, duration of call. Also include a brief description of what was covered and if any issues arose. Record to be securely stored as per Diocesan GDPR policy and procedures.
- For Parish / Diocesan based Youth Ministry Zoom meetings, Parents / Guardians are to be informed of upcoming dates and times of when the virtual group will gather.
- **Online Safety:** Encourage Parents / Guardians to discuss online safety with their young person prior to session. <https://www.webwise.ie/parents/> Parents / Guardians should also be encouraged to review Zoom’s Privacy terms and conditions carefully before registering for an account: <https://zoom.us/terms>
- **Consider inclusivity and accessibility:** Do any of the young people have technology issues or additional needs that might prevent them from fully participating?
- If streaming movies through Zoom, the movie must be fully viewed in advance by the Parish / Diocesan Youth Ministry leaders: it must be age-appropriate for the children / young people who will be watching and in line with the ethos and guiding principles of the Diocese of Waterford & Lismore. Parents / Guardians must be informed in advance of the choice.
- A **“Tech check-in”** will be carried out in advance or at the beginning of the session to cover the following features of Zoom with participants:
 - Identify the meeting hosts / leaders clearly.
 - View options: Speaker View / Gallery View
 - Reactions button
 - Privacy settings
 - Functions of live chat (in main group and breakout rooms: both are recorded)
 - Breakout rooms (including help button)
 - Polls (if being used)
 - Raise Hand function
 - Share screen (will be restricted to host only)
 - Silencing email notifications / phones etc.
 - Chat options – private chats between participants will not be enabled but you can privately chat with the meeting hosts if you are concerned about something.

- **Participants to be advised in advance how best to prepare for the Zoom Meeting:**
 - Charged laptop / phone with access to camera and microphone. (Note that laptops are needed to access the full features of Zoom.)
 - Strong Wi-Fi connection (In the event of a weak Wi-Fi connection, contact your Parish / Diocesan Youth Ministry leader to discuss alternative ways of participating in the Zoom Meeting.)
 - Within the Zoom session:
 - Ensure your background is free from any personal images / items that can identify personal information.
 - Do not give out any personal information about yourself or your family members e.g. home address, email address or phone numbers, alternative social media profile information or personal images / videos.
- **Generic Backgrounds:** Be mindful of requesting people especially young people to join group video chats or share video content from their home, as some may feel uncomfortable with this. Certain platforms (e.g. Zoom) enable users to use generic backgrounds when sharing video content. Encourage people to choose this option where possible.
- Zoom meetings will be live and the Parish / Diocesan Youth Ministry will take all necessary precautions to provide a secure platform. However, there still may be a minimal risk of a participant sharing or saying something they should not. Participants should be informed who they can talk to through the private Chat Feature if they have an issue.
- If there is a safeguarding concern, contact details for the Diocesan Safeguarding Office can be found on <https://www.waterfordlismore.ie/safeguarding-children/>. The Designated Liaison Person for Safeguarding in the Diocese of Waterford & Lismore is Fr. John Harris 087-9661959, or can be directly reported to Tusla, Child & Family Agency: 051-842827 or An Garda Síochána: 051-305300.
- Any allegation, suspicion, concern or knowledge of child abuse will be reported in line with the Diocese of Waterford & Lismore's reporting procedures.
- Upon conclusion of the online ministry, a review should always take place to ensure that at all times risks were identified and managed and to evaluate whether the social media platform used, was fit for purpose.
- These policy, procedures and guidelines will be reviewed regularly and updated based on feedback and experience.

Any relevant queries please contact safeguarding@waterfordlismore.ie

1.8A (3)

Summary Checklist for Using an Online Communications Platform with Children and Young People (ZOOM)

Issue	Completed by and date	Approved by and date
Step 1- Initial Approval		
Written rationale for using this format		
Hazard Assessment carried out 1.8A available at in the "Using an Online Communications Platform with Children and Young People "Zoom" Policy & Procedures" available at www.waterfordlismore.ie/safeguarding-children/		
Which technology / platform will be used?		
Step 2 – Planning		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Practical details completed and shared with participants: - Leader checks that Joint Zoom Consent forms are signed by Child and Parent / Guardian. Template available at www.waterfordlismore.ie/safeguarding-children/ - Leader checks that Code of Conduct has been agreed to 		
Check that all leaders have been vetted and have attended appropriate safeguarding training.		
Plan for session - including timings, alternative facilitation skills, resources etc		
Supervision ratio complied with		
Step 3 – Running the Ministry		
Check that leader roles and responsibilities have been assigned as per "Using an Online Communications Platform with Children and Young People "Zoom" Policy & Procedures" available at www.waterfordlismore.ie/safeguarding-children/		
Keep a log of meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Template 1.4A Template 1 Attendance Register for Large Groups</i> • <i>Parish / Diocesan Youth Ministry Zoom Log</i> available at www.waterfordlismore.ie/safeguarding-children/ 		
Step 4 – Evaluation		
Evaluate the event / meeting		

1.2A (2) Code of Conduct for Leaders working with Children and Young People in Online Ministry

"We require you to sign and agree to the following the Code of Conduct for online ministry to ensure clear boundaries between you and the young people whom you are ministering to".

I agree -

- To keep my ministry with children / young people separate and not accept children, or their Parents / Guardians as 'friends' or "followers" on my personal page / account.
- To follow the Digital, Social Media and Online Communication with Children and Young People Policy & Procedures and not bring the Diocese of Waterford & Lismore into disrepute.
- To observe confidentiality by not discussing children and young people, Parents / Guardians unless there is a safeguarding risk.
- To consider how my social media conduct may be perceived by others and how this could affect my own reputation and that of the Parish / Diocese.
- To report any known breaches of the above to the Designated Liaison Person for safeguarding, Fr. John Harris and the social media administrator (*name here*)_____.
- To report any potential data protection breaches (i.e. unauthorised disclosure of personal data) to the parish priest or Diocesan secretary immediately.
- I understand I am in a position of trust and my actions could be misinterpreted by others and I am conscious of this when sharing information with others on a digital, social media or online communication platform / site belonging to the Parish / Diocese.

Name (**BLOCK CAPITALS**): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Data Protection -This form will be used to facilitate your participation in Youth Ministry. The form will be stored confidentially and will only be shared outside the parish/group where there is a legal obligation on the parish/group to do so. The information will be retained for as long as necessary in compliance with Safeguarding laws and policies. Your data will be processed under Articles 6 (1) (d), 6 (1) (f), 9 (2) (c) and 9 (2) (d) of the General Data Protection Regulation, 2016.

This form should only be used if the event/activity has the prior approval of either the Diocese or the local parish within the Diocese.

1.8A (2) Hazard Assessment Form for using Online Communication Platform (Zoom) with Children and Young People

Name of Group: _____

Date of hazard assessment: _____

Person completing the hazard assessment: _____

Hazard	Who is at risk?	Likelihood of harm (Low – moderate – high)	Consequences	Controls needed
Risk of unsafe contact between adults and young people e.g. visitors from outside chat, inappropriate venues used for calls, inappropriate dress code				
Risk of inappropriate behaviour or cyberbullying amongst young people				
Risk of photos or screenshots being shared which identify individuals by photograph and full name				
Risk of young people contacting adults on their private accounts				
Adults or young people sharing opinions that are misleading / contrary to church teachings, racist, sexist, abusive, inflammatory, prejudiced etc.				

Encouraging use of candles during prayer sessions at home, engaging in physical games during icebreakers				
Young person suddenly drops off their contact: e.g. their Zoom window suddenly goes dark, or in a Facebook / WhatsApp group chat you receive a notification that says "X has left the group".				
Leaders engaging in Zoom meetings during time-off, managing new roles and responsibilities digitally				

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Data Protection - This form will be used in connection with on-line youth ministry. The form will be stored confidentially and will only be shared outside the parish/group where there is a legal obligation on the parish/group to do so. The information will be retained for as long as necessary in compliance with Safeguarding laws and policies. Personal data on the form will be processed under Articles 6 (1)(d), 6 (1) (f) and 9 (2) (c) and 9 (2) (d) of the General Data Protection Regulation, 2016.