ONLINE YOUTH GROUP SAFEGUARDING POLICY

SAFEGUARDING / SET-UP

1. All online youth activities must respect individual platform age restrictions.
   a. Children's groups for children under 13 must be run through Zoom
   b. Youth groups for children over 13 may run on Facebook Messenger, provided leaders use a professional account as laid out in the Phone & Social Media Contact section of the church's regular Safeguarding Policy for Youth and Children's Work.

2. Leaders must all have been recruited following the Safer Recruitment guidelines
   a. DBS checks and self-declaration forms must be in place..
   b. Leaders must have read the regular Children's and Youth Safeguarding Policy and also this supplementary policy for Zoom Youth Group Safeguarding.

3. Minimum leaders required for in-person meetings are also required for online meetings
   a. Leaders should behave in a way appropriate to a normal youth group setting (i.e. no drinking alcohol, be fully dressed/not wearing pyjamas etc.)
   b. If possible, avoid being in bedrooms

4. One to ones may not run, but they may be replaced with two to twos.
   a. Where possible mixed gender groups should have a male leader and a female leader.
   b. Where possible all boy groups should have two male leaders and all girl groups should have two female leaders.

5. Leaders must all be present before children are allowed to join the meeting. We will use the waiting room feature to enable this
   a. Should a leader's internet cut out, all children must be put back in the waiting room until the leader is able to re-join.

6. Leaders should all be made co-hosts by the host account
   a. This enables you to screen share, change people's screen names, and to allow people to join from the waiting room (or to put them back e.g. for a game, or for bad behaviour)

7. The zoom sessions will not be recorded in any way. This includes taking photos of the screen or screenshots.

8. Chat function is disabled to prevent kids distracting each other, and to stop leaders from being able to privately message kids.

9. Parental consent is required. Ideally this is in the format of a written/signed form.
   a. For under 11s parents should be present in the room throughout the call, either in the background or active in the call.

10. All meeting details are sent to parents' contact details (not directly to kids)
    a. This means we can take a parent allowing the child to join the meeting as consent (but a form would be better!)
    b. Parents must say hi/set up the screen at the beginning – need to be seen by leaders
    c. Parents must come to say goodbye at the end of the meeting – must be seen by leaders

11. Participant screen-sharing is disabled to prevent kids sharing inappropriate or irrelevant things

12. Everybody must have their video turned on to ensure that each user is who they claim to be
    a. Sometimes video drops out due to poor internet connection, this can't really be helped

13. Leaders should ensure all screen names are appropriate, and, if necessary, change kids' names

14. If a child is behaving inappropriately or being overly disruptive, they may be put in the waiting room (for a "time out")
    a. If this is repeated, they may be removed from the meeting
    b. I f this is repeated over several weeks, they may be asked to take a break and not join the following week

15. When the meeting is over, ensure you click "end meeting for all"
    a. No leaders should leave until all kids have
    b. Parents must come and wave goodbye at the end as their kids leave

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BEHAVIOUR / RULES

1. Your parent/guardian must say hi at the beginning and end of the meeting (to "drop off" and "pick up")

2. Try to avoid being in your bedroom if there's another quiet enough room in the house for you to be in

3. Don't change virtual backgrounds during the talk/study

4. Please don't take photos or screenshots

5. Turn off notifications on other apps/devices (for minimal distractions)
   a. Some games might require you to use your phone, but otherwise, please don't go on other devices during the session

6. Try to minimise background noise
   a. During the talk, the leaders will mute everybody to ensure everyone can hear well

7. Try not to talk over each other
   a. This is hard – the easiest way to do this in a big group is to mute yourself and only un-mute when you're about to talk

8. If your behaviour is deemed to be disruptive or inappropriate, you may be sent out the waiting room.
   a. I f this happens consistently, you may be asked to leave the meeting and/or have a break the following week to ensure you behave appropriately and don't distract others