

Section 6: Guidelines for Video Conferencing, Social Media, Photographic Guidelines & Online Interaction

Safeguarding is as important offline as online. These guidelines not only serve to safeguard the people under 18 years old in our care, but also protects volunteers, camp leaders and staff.

We require all volunteers, camp leaders, and staff to maintain their own social networking profiles with integrity, showing a lifestyle beyond reproach and practicing safe internet usage.

In an increasingly complex world, the opportunities for child abuse are growing. Cyber bullying is very much on the increase and we must be diligent in pursuing a standard of excellence to prevent such things from happening. (See Section 7)

All those who work with people under 18 need to be aware of the opportunities for abuse on Scripture Union activities through the misuse of video, pictures, and all forms of internet messaging. While the good use of such media can be beneficial, we must be vigilant and alert to the possibilities of misuse and consequent harm to people under the age of 18.

Personal Social Media Guidelines and Practice

It is likely that people under the age of 18 will look up online profiles of team members they have met at SU events. Staff and volunteers must be mindful that content they post online can be difficult to take back and can be shared widely. Staff and volunteers profile (include their profile picture) should reflect their position as a representative of a Christian organization. We strongly recommend that staff and volunteers keep their social media accounts on 'private' settings so their personal information is visible to friends only. Volunteers will not give or obtain their social handles, mobile numbers or contact details to any people under 18 at an SU Ireland activity. Staff and volunteers will not 'add' or 'follow' any people under 18 from an SU activity on any social media platform. Verifiable parental permission is the only accepted exemption to this rule. SU staff and volunteers will never include images or videos of people under the age of 18 from a SU activity on their personal social media platforms.

SU Social Media Guidelines and Practice

Any social media platform that is set up for a SU activity will be done in consultation with SU Staff. Specific camp pages must be "group" or "fan" pages. They will not be personal sites.

Camp leader's details can be used during camp. Volunteer personal emails, postal addresses or phone numbers will not be divulged.

Photography

Since the introduction of the Data Protection Act in 1998, churches & parachurches must be careful in their use of photographs, videos, and webcams of clearly identifiable people.

SU's safeguarding procedure for this area includes:

- Parental permission (written) should be obtained from all people under 18 who will appear in a photograph, video or webcam image before the photograph is taken or footage recorded. Even with parental permission, the photographer will not insist that anyone under 18 has to be in a photograph.
- Photographs of people under the age of 18 are to be only used publicly on a website/advertising flyer/brochure or social media platform by Scripture Union, with consent from parent/guardian or carer. When this happens, the people under the age of 18 should not be identifiable by name or other personal details. These details include email, postal address, or phone number.
- The photographer will carefully consider the location and pose.
- Only official SU Ireland cameras/memory cards are to be used unless an arrangement has been agreed with Youth Development Team in advance.
- When devices are used for any activities/game it is essential for photographic material to be removed from the devices after the event.

Personal Devices

With the increased use of personal devices, leaders and young people need to be aware of appropriate and inappropriate use. With the increase of video and messaging bullying and cyber bullying, it is essential to have rules about the use of personal devices at all SU activities.

Volunteers, camp leaders or staff should not allow a person under 18 to use their personal device. Access to the device of the camp leader is permitted to facilitate an emergency or to contact a parent.

Online Interactive Sessions

- Online interactive sessions may use any appropriate video conferencing software eg. Zoom, Teams, Blue Jeans, Chime etc.
- All volunteers and staff used for any of these activities will be vetted and approved according to the SU Ireland standard.
- 2 volunteers will always be present in all elements of online meetings including breakout rooms.
- All participants will be required to be preregistered by their parent/guardian.
- Emails with codes and passwords will only be sent to the parent or guardians email address. Another layer of consent.
- Sessions will be recorded for record purposes only and archived accordingly.
- Private messaging within the interactive session will be disabled.

Code of Conduct for Online Events

To help everyone enjoy a safe and enjoyable online environment, participants are required to:

- be friendly and welcoming.
- be kind and show respect: do not disrupt or spoil the session for others.
- be careful with their words and actions; think before they post anything online.
- take care not to share personal information about themselves or others; They are not to take screenshots or record sessions.
- dress as they would for a live event; join the event from a family-space in their home or use a neutral background effect.
- remember that we are all different and may not always agree on everything.

Participants will be made aware of this code of conduct before the online event.

If you are worried about anything at the event or need help and advice about a wide range of issues, you can speak to anyone on the team. If you would like to speak to someone else, you can call our Child Protection Officer or one of our Designated Liaison Persons.

For parents and guardians (of people aged 18 or under) at an Online Event

Before the start of the event, consent from parents/guardians in writing (using the online consent for the event) for each child or young person will be obtained.

Parental requirements differ depending on the age of the participant:

- If the participant is under 13, a parent/guardian should be invited and encouraged to be in the room and within hearing distance. The parent is required to launch the session, which indicates their presence at the event. A video conferencing account must belong to the parent/guardian and the name on the account must be known before the session starts to ensure only those who have preregistered have access.
- If the participant is aged between 13 and 17, SU will still require parental permission but the parent/guardian does not need to be in the same room as the event. The initial invitation should be sent to the parent/guardian but subsequent sessions in the same series may run without explicit invitations each time. A video conference account belonging to a Parent/Guardian must be used as end users on video conference software need to be over 16. The name on the account must be known before the session starts to ensure only those who have preregistered have access.

Staff/volunteer Supervision of Online Events

- All staff and volunteers involved in the recording process will be vetted and will have undergone the SU volunteer process.
- All events will be actively managed. There will be a team of adults running the event
- including:
 - ◊ those delivering the content of the session,
 - ◊ those monitoring and managing behaviour.
 - ◊ those administering the event (allowing participants to join, creating breakout rooms etc)

- When breakout rooms are used, two adult team members must always be present. At the end of the Breakout Rooms, these adults will always be the last to leave and no adult must be left in a breakout room unaccompanied when someone under 18 is present.
- If it is necessary to prevent a person under 18 from taking part in the event, this will be done in a way which considers their welfare. Their parents will be notified.
- Session leaders should work from a 'public' space in a home. Volunteers and staff should wear appropriate clothing.
- In the case of an online video series, material will be prerecorded with no interactive elements.
- For more key principles for engaging children and young people online see Appendix 5