



Online events and safeguarding

For the purpose of this document we have focussed on Zoom as the online platform, the guidelines will be similar for other platforms however, users should be aware that other platforms may operate differently and therefore organisers should be familiar with the platform being used.

To be read in conjunction with NCSC and CSAS'; 'Guidance on safeguarding whilst using videoconferencing platforms for ministry'

[See separate NCSC Document linked]

Can I use my personal email address to set up Zoom meetings for my Parish?

The use of personal email addresses should be avoided and where possible a separate email account that more than one person can access should be set up for the online event.

An example of good practice would be to create an email account specific for online events, this can then be used to advertise as a point of contact and individual enquiries can be made through this email account.

Should I set up a password and a waiting room for my Zoom meeting?

Ensuring that your Zoom meeting has a password and a waiting room facility reduces the risk of unknown participants entering the call.

An example of good practice would be to create a password and a waiting room for your Zoom meeting, the host then has to approve every participant's request to join and would be able to decline any requests from unknown participants.

Can I advertise the Zoom link on my Parish newsletter or can it be shared during a live mass feed?

The Zoom link should not be advertised on newsletters, websites or during live streams as this increases the risk of unknown participants joining the call.

An example of good practice would be to advertise a point of contact, who can answer any queries about the event and who can provide the access code or password where appropriate.



What's the difference between a Zoom meeting and a Zoom webinar?

A Zoom meeting is a more interactive platform as it allows all participants to join with audio and video if they choose to do so, they are able to use the 'chat' feature to freely type messages to everybody in the call. Zoom meetings are freely available to all users who create an account, the maximum length of time for a free Zoom meeting is 40 minutes.

A Zoom webinar can only be hosted by those who have purchased a Zoom Pro account however all webinars are free to watch. A webinar allows a panel of people to lead a session whilst participants are invited to view the session as observers. In a webinar, participants are not able to use their audio or video and are only able to ask questions during the allotted Question and Answer time.

In a webinar the risks are reduced because the organiser has complete control over what information can be shared with all participants, providing a safer platform to deliver information, the risks are also reduced as participants are unable to join with audio or video and are only able to comment during the allotted question and answer time.

An example of good practice when leading a Zoom meeting would be to inform all participants that it is their choice whether they choose to use audio or video and to make them aware that they can use the 'stop video' and 'mute' settings at any time throughout the call.

Do I need separate consent forms for children to take part in the children's liturgy online?

Parental consent should be obtained before any Zoom meeting or online event, parents should be given clear information about the purpose of any online activity, the range of people participating e.g. children, adults, mixed, and the names and contact details of those responsible for the activity.

An example of good practice would be to encourage parents to remain in the room or nearby whilst children are participating in online events. Parents should be spoken to about an 'open door' approach to help to keep their child safe online, this means that children should take part in online activities in a public place in the home and not in their bedroom or in a room with their door closed.

[See Case4.doc]

Can I record the Zoom meeting?

Consent needs to be sought from participants prior to the recording of audio or video during Zoom meetings. For children or individuals who lack capacity, consent must be obtained from the person legally able to provide this. Those giving consent must be informed of the purpose the recording will be used for and for how long it will be retained. More information on image capturing during Zoom calls is available in the Guidance document that is referred to at the top of this page.

[See Adult Photo Consent document]



Can I still record if children are present for example, if it is the children's liturgy?

Yes, as above consent should be sought from parents or carers prior to the online event taking place.

An example of good practice would be to explain to parents what the recording will be used for, where it will be stored and shared and who will have access to the recording. All parent's views should be taken into account and if a parent does not consent for their child to be involved in recording their wishes must be respected.

[See Minor Photo Consent document]

What should I do if somebody I don't know enters in to my Zoom meeting or requests an access code?

If an unknown person attempts to access the Zoom meeting, the waiting room feature will allow the host to decline their request. If an unknown participant manages to enter the meeting the host should immediately end the meeting and generate a new meeting.

An example of good practice would be to explain to all participants before the meeting begins the policy for responding to unknown participants entering the call, this would ensure that all are aware what is happening should this occur.

Can I deliver the children's liturgy by myself or should there be 2 group leaders?

There should be two adult facilitators during online ministry to children, adults at risk or who are otherwise vulnerable, one of whom must be familiar with safeguarding policies and procedures.

Can I use pre-recorded videos of children during live streaming or to upload as part of a pre-recorded liturgy/mass on YouTube?

Yes, but as in previous questions you must have the consent of the young person and their parent/guardian.

An example of good practice would be to provide those involved with the photo consent form clearly stating when and how the recording will be used, where it will be available and how long it will remain on a YouTube channel.