

St John's Youth Communication and Media Policy

The use of social media, phones and internet are part of everyday life for young people. When used effectively and safely they can be extremely effective tools to help connect, build relationships, organise events and inspire youth. These methods of communication can be efficient and easily accessed for most but it is important that safeguards are put in place to ensure safety and accountability for both the young people and youth workers.

The following guidelines relate to communication between youth workers, parents and youth using internet, email, mobile phone and social networking. They are designed to clarify the necessary boundaries and create accountability to safeguard both the youth worker and the young people.

This policy lists all the ways that we will communicate with young people, and our guidelines.

Communication Policy

- Youth Team communicating with young people via the internet, social networking or mobile phone are safely recruited and have read and signed St John's Code of Conduct in which they agree to always operate within the guidelines produced by the church for safeguarding young people.
- The aim is to promote "visible" communication. This means that in the majority of cases, communication should take place in an open forum. Safeguarding policies promote that one to one conversations with Young People happen in full sight of others, and therefore written communication should follow the same basic principle.

Phone Calls and Texts

- Texting is used predominantly for group texts and communication should show that it is a group text – i.e. "hi everyone"
- There may be times when it is appropriate to send individual texts, (e.g. birthday wishes/ good luck for exams etc.). In these instances the texts should be brief and avoid engaging in extended conversations. Individual texts will not be used for long conversations, which will be arranged to happen face to face.
- Phone conversations will generally not happen, though there may be times such as during an event where it is appropriate.

WhatsApp

- WhatsApp is a smartphone application which allows group messaging, similar to text messages. We will do most of our communication in WhatsApp through group messages that involve multiple leaders. So messages are visible and traceable.
- WhatsApp's other services are messaging and calling ones, and so fall under the same guidelines shown in the Phone Calls and Texts section.

Email

- Emails from team should be sent either from the youth@stjohnshamptonwick.org email account or by including it, or another Youth Team member as a CC in the email.

Instagram

- We have a St John's Youth Instagram account, the username is *sjhwyouth*.
- Young People and members of Youth Team may follow each other's accounts, as what is posted is publicly visible.
- The messaging policy is again consistent with what is outlined above.
- Comments may be left on images between Young People and Youth Team as they are publicly visible.

YouTube

- We have a St John's Youth YouTube account, called St John's Youth.
- Young People and Youth Team may subscribe to each other's accounts, meaning that YouTube posts are visible.
- The messaging policy is again consistent with what is outlined above.

Twitter

- We have a St John's Youth Twitter account, the username is *stjohnshwyouth*.
- Young People and Youth Team may subscribe to each other's accounts, meaning that tweets are visible.
- The messaging policy is again consistent with what is outlined above.
- Tweets may be sent between Young People and Youth Team as they are publicly visible.

FaceTime/Skype

- We generally won't use these services, however during an event with multiple Youth Team present it may be appropriate to use them to communicate with someone who is away, or on a trip.

We will not use Snapchat with any Young People as there is no visible trail.

Media Policy

Any content that raises concerns should be saved/printed and passed on to Ben Phillips, Penny Miller or Jerry Field. Concerns should be discussed as soon as possible.

If you do not wish your son/daughter to be contacted in any of the ways listed above, please let us know at youth@stjohnshamptonwick.org

As part of our activity, we'll sometimes be taking pictures/videos. Occasionally these will end up online through social networks. Photos and Videos could go online through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Youtube. Parents and Young People will always have the right to ask that they not go online.

In terms of storage, media involving young people will only be stored on shared St Johns folders, not on any team member's personal devices.

We will only use photos/videos of your son/daughter if you've consented in your registration form.