

Online Scouting with Young People

Safeguarding Guidance for Online Meetings and Communication

You must ensure that appropriate safeguarding policies are followed in all online communications with young people (refer to FS103011 “Social Networking Sites and Scouting”).

- Remember the Young People First, Code of Behaviour (Yellow Card) at all times (<https://www.scouts.org.uk/volunteers/scouts-child-protection-policy/>)
- Conduct yourself in an appropriate way as you would face-face
- Don't engage in one-to-one conversations with young people via chat or online messaging – start all meetings with another adult
- All communication with Beaver or Cub Scouts should be done through their parents or carers
- All communications with Scouts should be copied to another adult

General tips for online meetings and communication:

- First and foremost, share your ideas for carrying on with Scouts on a digital platform with parents. Clearly set out your expectations; i.e. not everyone needs to join in at every session, but when people are joining in you expect the same behaviour online as you would at your face-to-face meeting.
- Use email to communicate activities that are being shared online. This ensures transparency and parental engagement. It also promotes the hard work of the volunteers.
- Make sure all parents are aware of what the activity is, what platform it will be presented on, and when. Give parents enough time to allow them to set up new accounts if they need to.
- Remind parents to keep an overview of what their young people are doing online, so they can ensure they are acting responsibly. Make sure parents know that you'll still be following the Yellow Card guidelines and why you're doing this.
- Remind parents to check their young person's devices regularly, including checking search history to make sure young people are staying safe.
- Take the time to check in with your young people. It's a stressful and scary time for them
- Limit screen time and don't meet online for the full duration of your usual meeting
- Consider splitting into two shorter sessions if having the full section meet this way challenging
- Mute everyone before you start and then turn them on for those you want to hear from
- Ensure that the programme is adapted so everyone can participate including those who do not have regular internet access at home
- Ensure that everyone participates in the meeting giving everyone a change to be heard
- Encourage everyone to wear uniform, hold an adapted opening and closing ceremony

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Ensuring privacy and security for online meetings and communication:

- Always use OSM to send emails to our young people and their parents and carers
- If you have to send emails outside OSM use the official scout email address and use BCC to avoid sharing email addresses
- Inform all attendees before recording video or audio of your meeting
- Cover internet safety with young people in your first online meeting
- The Scout Association has provided guidance for staying safe on line (<https://www.scouts.org.uk/volunteers/scouts-at-home/staying-safe-online/>) and the use of digital platforms (<https://www.scouts.org.uk/volunteers/scouts-at-home/digital-platforms-for-scouts/>). Please take the time to visit these sites and familiarise yourself with the guidance.
- There are a number of key points to call out:
 - **Ratios: There must be at least two adults present at all times during any online activity. Ideally both adults should be Scout volunteers, but you can use a parent rota to support as you might normally do. Young people must never be left in a one-to-one situation with an adult. This protects us all and also ensures that young people understand that even in these difficult times, the Scouts take safeguarding seriously.**
 - **Video Calls:**
 - **When using live video calling, two adults must be present at all times and both must remain on the video call until all young people have logged off. This ensures no young person is left alone with an adult online. Ideally both adults should be Scout volunteers, but you can use a parent rota to support as you might normally do.**
 - **If you're calling from home and there are other people around, make sure those people are dressed appropriately and know how to behave when you're talking to young people. It might be best to ask them to stay out of the room that you're making the call from. Make sure your background space is child-friendly, ensuring nothing inappropriate is on display. You shouldn't be drinking alcohol or have alcohol in the video.**
 - **Leaders should outline the behaviour expected on the video call at the outset.**
 - **For Beavers and Cubs, a parent should be present in the room.**

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Key points for using Zoom (our recommendation for online meetings)

Good for: Can be used for interactive video calling for free for up to 100 participants for up to 40 minutes.

Not good for: Should not be used as a file store

Security: Complex passwords required, Encrypted site, as a US company alignment to GDPR is adequate

Minimum age: 18 years old (this is a US-based platform).

The ease of use of Zoom makes it very attractive to use however there has been a lot of stories in the news about uninvited users on Zoom 'gate-crashing' video calls. Whilst it creates friction, we are recommending that we protect our Zoom meetings from uninvited guests.

- Never post a meeting URL on social media/LinkedIn
- Keep the default option of generating an automatic Meeting ID instead of using your static Personal Meeting ID
- Require a meeting password for particularly sensitive meetings
- After the meeting begins, lock the meeting to prevent additional attendees from joining even if they have the meeting ID and password
- Enable the waiting room feature for your meeting to manually admit participants into the meeting

We will monitor the security situation and, in the future, we may recommend changing the meeting to only allow signed in users which would mean each participant will need an account. As the minimum age for Zoom is 18 this means that all accounts need to be set up by parents/carers.

Read more on the [Zoom blog](#) on keeping your meetings private and setting up the meeting with the appropriate security.

Other guidelines:

- Ensure that the background is suitable and it is conducted in a public area of the house (i.e. not the bedroom)
- Use the waiting room feature to ensure Leaders join first
- If you use break out rooms you still need to follow the ratio guidance for each room
- Switch off private chats
- If you are recording the session be clear that you are doing this and why and make sure to delete it once you have reviewed it.

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Zoom Tips

- Set a custom virtual background
 - Choose what others see behind you when you're on video. Select one of Zoom's default images (a beach with palm trees anyone?), or upload your own.
- Facilitate small group discussion via Breakout Rooms
 - Try using the built-in Breakout Rooms function to split participants into groups, then bring everyone back together once discussion is over. It's amazingly intuitive.
- Use the unique meeting ID
 - By default, Zoom generates a unique ID for each meeting (called "generated ID" in the meeting settings). Keep this selected to avoid someone dialling in to your meeting before its time.
- Try out a virtual whiteboard (and annotation!)
 - Want to write on what's being presented? Next time you're sharing content or a whiteboard, use your "annotation" feature to be able to write and type on the screen. Save it to your laptop when done.
- Turn off the meeting entry "doorbell" sound
 - The meeting Host can turn off the "chime" that sounds when someone enters or exits their Zoom meeting (especially helpful when you have lots of participants). Look under "More" after clicking the "Meeting Participants" button to see this option.

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Data protection and GDPR

We have considered the Data Protection and GDPR issues and will follow the principles for all virtual scouting and scouting at home activities. Continuing to use OSM for all data is a key component of our policy. We will not use Zoom or our new private Facebook group for sharing data, videos or pictures (without permission). We will use our Smugmug site (password protected) to allow the young people to upload videos and pictures if required as part of an activity and if it is not supported through the new OSM Badges at Home and Programme at Home features.

Limit personal data usage: Many collaboration platforms allow the sharing of files but this should only be used as required and with limited personal data.

Limit access to any personal data: Access to the collaboration platform and the data within it should be limited to only those who require it. Collaboration platforms should be used among closed/private groups. This means the administrator only invites people to join who are part of their local Scout Group.

Retention of personal data: It's important that any personal data captured in collaboration platforms is only kept as long as necessary. Data should be deleted as soon as possible to avoid the potential for any breaches of personal data and in line with the individuals' expectations.

Inform the participants of personal data usage: Where personal data will be captured or used you should inform the participants of this. This will need to be clear and transparent so the participants can make their own decision about whether they are comfortable to take part.

Is the platform secure? Most collaboration platforms out there take security seriously and are transparent about the measures they adopt to keep data safe. When assessing the security principles of a platform, it's important to consider these questions:

- Does the platform require a strong password?
- Can you create roles based on access requirements?
- Is the platform encrypted?