**Guidance on using Zoom for youth & children’s work**

Zoom requires users to be aged 16 and over to have an account. This is based on the age of photo consent being higher in USA rather than the UK. The restrictions are about having an account not about using Zoom. With this in mind, and in consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding team , we are suggesting that it is permissible with the following safeguards in place.

* No one under the age of 16 can have their own Zoom account and so must use the account of their responsible adult ( Parent / carer etc.), with their express permission given in advance.
* The purpose for using Zoom must be clearly explained to parents/ carers by the youth /children’s leader responsible for the group. This must be sent, in writing, to all parents and carers and can be done once to cover the general type of activities that are expected e.g. bible study or group meeting. It should give details about the purpose, the frequency of the calls, estimated duration and a rough schedule.
* The parent / carer must give written consent that they agree with this and give permission for the Zoom meetings to happen in line with the schedule laid out by the youth/ children’s leader.
* The youth / children’s leader responsible for the call must check that all the participants of the Zoom call have the right permissions or are 16 years old or over.
* The key is transparency so please make parents aware of what you are doing on Zoom. If you change its purpose, please ensure you get a new written agreement before implementing the changes.

These are here to help us still use this useful tool but stay safe and compliant.

Rob Dillingham

Deputy Director for Apostolic Life

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