

Safeguarding Online

A quick guide to protecting our members whilst using digital platforms

As a result of face to face Scouting being suspended, we realise that sections, groups, and units are taking to using digital platforms to run their meetings. The internet provides some great tools to be able to deliver this (e.g. teams, zoom, skype, etc). However, they can also pose potential safeguarding risks that we need to be aware of. When creating a safer environment for our volunteers and young people we need to consider various aspects of the digital engagement tool.

Before the online meeting:

- Update leaders with the latest guidance sheets for online and technology use, which can be found here: <https://members.scouts.org.uk/supportresources/2368/emails-and-text-messages?cat=299.304&moduleID=10>
- Use organisational accounts to communicate with parents/carers of young people, not personal accounts
- Understand how the platform to be used works, before accessing with young people. Including any age limits
- Invite members to join via their parents/carers accounts to make sure they are aware of the young persons engagement
- Make sure a parent/carer is present to observe as the young person takes part, in an open area
- Ensure young people and their parents/carers are given information about online safety before the session starts
- Check that the platform allows restrictions on the audience members able to take part, to reduce risk of other people being able to join/watch
- Understand the privacy settings of the platform and know how to report any abusive or offensive content
- Ensure you are in an appropriate place to conduct the online meeting, especially where others will be able to see you and the room setting (e.g. remove any inappropriate imagery from behind you that could be seen on-screen by others).

During the online meeting:

- There must be at least two adult volunteers online before young people join the meeting, and at least two adult volunteers online after all young people have left
- Remind everyone online that they are part of a live streaming meeting, and so any comments made can be seen/heard by everyone on the call
- Do not give out personal information and details. No one should accept contact requests from people they do not know
- Let young people know who they can tell if they see anything upsetting or inappropriate
- Ask for parental permission if you want to take and/or share images of a child for any purpose
- Where possible, switch off any 'private messaging' functions.
- As with any Scouting situation, all adult volunteers must follow the guidance set out in the 'Young People First' code of practice (yellow card) which can be found by [clicking here](#). This outlines how adult volunteers should conduct themselves, but also what to do if there is a cause for concern.

It is the policy of the Scout Association to safeguard the welfare of all members by protecting them from neglect and from physical, sexual and emotional harm.
