



Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service (CSAS) Procedures Manual

14. IT/Communication Technology/Photography

Principle

The internet, mobile phones, social networking and other interactive services have transformed the way in which we live. The new technologies offer tremendous opportunities to reach, communicate, evangelise and engage with those involved in the Catholic Church including clergy, parishioners and those in our communities who may have an interest in the church.

The Catholic Church in England and Wales is keen to promote the safe, and responsible, use of communication and interactive communication technologies within all church activities.

These guidelines seek to ensure the message of safe and responsible use of communication and interactive technologies is understood and guidelines are followed within the Catholic Church.

Photography

As an aspect both of celebration of faith, of personal achievement and evangelisation it has long been common practice to take and display photographs of children and young people on noticeboards, websites and in Diocesan newsletters and newspapers.

We know that the overwhelming majority of images taken are entirely appropriate and are taken in good faith. There are also opportunities however to distort the original intention behind taking such photographs. It is important for this reason to consider potential risks such as:

- The inappropriate use, adaptation or copying of images for use on child abuse website on the internet;
- The identification of children when a photograph is accompanied by significant personal information that will assist a third party in identifying the child. This can lead, and has led, to children being 'groomed.'

In addition under the Data Protection Act 1998 photographs constitute 'personal data' and where it is possible to infer a person's religious beliefs from that photograph, constitute 'sensitive personal data.'

In view of that the following guidelines should be followed.

DO:

- Ensure you have parental consent to use photographic images of a child or young person if it is to be used in the public domain e.g. parish noticeboard, websites, newsletters or papers;
- Where possible focus on the activity rather than the individual;
- Ensure that all featured in photographs are appropriately dressed;
- Be general in labelling photographs e.g. Communion Group 2013 rather than naming or tagging each child. A list of names may always be provided separately;
- **When commissioning photographers ensure they are clear about what is expected by establishing who will hold the recorded images, what they will be used for, where they will be displayed.**

DON'T:

- Publish or display photographs with the full name of a person or person's featured unless you have written consent to do so and have informed parents as to how the image will be used;
- Use an image for something other than which you have obtained permission e.g. publish in a Diocesan or local newspaper when initially intended for parish noticeboard.

Establishing a Website

Websites or social networking profile pages are the centrepiece of any social media activity. The following are recommended guidelines for the establishment of a site. These can apply to a profile or fan page on social networking sites such as Facebook, a blog, a Twitter account, etc.

- Site administrators should be adults;
- There should be **at least two site administrators (preferably more)** for each site, to allow rapid response and continuous monitoring of the site;
- Do not use personal sites for diocesan or parish programs. Create separate sites for these;
- Passwords and names of sites should be registered in a central location, and more than one adult should have access to this information;
- Be sure those establishing a site know these key rules:
 1. Abide by Diocesan/parish guidelines;
 2. Appreciate that even personal communication by church personnel reflects the Church. Practice what you preach;
 3. Write in the first person. Do not claim to represent the official position of the organisation or the teachings of the Church, unless authorised to do so;

4. Identify yourself. Do not use pseudonyms or the name of the parish, program, etc., as your identity, unless authorised to do so;
5. Abide by copyright;
6. Do not divulge confidential information about others. Nothing posted on the Internet is private;
7. Don't cite others, post photos or videos of them, link to their material, etc. without their permission. Once posted material often becomes property of the site;
8. Practice Catholic teaching and morals;
9. Consider adding the Click CEOP Help button [2].

Using Texts and Emails with Children & Young People

It is strongly recommended that texting should not be considered as a method of communication between adults involved in Church ministry and children or young people.

If texts and emails are to be used in specific circumstances then:

DO:

- Get signed consent from parents to allow use of these methods of communication;
- Explain to parents the purpose and method of this, who may communicate with their son or daughter and what that communication is restricted to;
- Only use group texts or emails and always copy parents in;
- Ensure that all such communications are strictly about specific aspects of Church related activity, such as change of date, time or venue.

DON'T:

- Use texts or emails for personal conversation, sending pictures or jokes or other items of a personal nature;
- Respond to emails from young people other than those directly related to Church related activity. Advise the Parish Safeguarding Representative or Safeguarding Coordinator if you receive any inappropriate texts or emails.