Britain Yearly Meeting
Children and Young People's Work

Event & Activity Management Policy
Procedures & Guidance 20a

Social Media: Guidance for staff and volunteers.

Used with the kind permission of the Methodist Church "The Well" the network for Methodist Children and Youth Workers (https://www.methodist.org.uk/media/3990/social-media-guidelines-for-workers.pdf Accessed on 18/09/2019 at 18:25)

1. Internet, email and texting communication guidelines for volunteers and staff

Rationale

We understand that for many children and young people, using the Internet is a regular part of their lives and has a significant impact on their social development.

In accordance with Quakers in Britain's Safeguarding Policy, we recognise that we must take all possible steps to protect young people from significant harm or risk whilst using the Internet or any other form of technology.

It is important to engage with young people using methods that they enjoy and feel comfortable using. However, we need to encourage young people to be in control of their connections with adults. It is equally important to be aware of the implications of our actions and our role and responsibilities as those who work with young people.

Reasons for contacting a young person via the Internet or email

It is not appropriate to have private non-work related contact in the form of electronic communication with the children and young people with whom we work.

We recognise that there will be times when it is necessary and important to use electronic communication. Staff and volunteers should only use electronic communication for reasons relating to work with children and young people, not for general socialising (see email and accountability section below). This must be set up as part of a group communication and not individual (copying in the person with responsibility for the event, or in the case of staff their line manager).

Awareness of young people

The community agreements for events will make clear the role of adult volunteers who are expected to be alongside participants to support and enable a sense of community at the event. They are also encouraged not to make contact with participants outside of the event (with the exception of prior connections or within the context of other events or Local or Area Meeting and within the agreed policies of these events / Meetings). Young people are asked not to make friend requests or follow Adult volunteers and CYP staff on Social Media. If a young person has any concerns they should communicate this to the CYP team at Friends House.

Parental awareness and consent

Parental consent for using electronic forms of communication is essential and is included on event consent forms. CYP staff will outline the mediums in which we will communicate and what we will be communicating (e.g. information about the event, opt in for future promotions and for Arrangements Committee correspondence with young people's Adult Volunteer support).

It is important to inform parents and guardians of the policy and practices and seek to ensure they are aware and are happy that electronic communication is used and to give permission as to the type of electronic communication (e.g. email, mailchimp).

Specific definitions

'Internet' communication specifically refers to the use of social networking sites such as snapchat Bebo, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and other websites of a similar nature.

'Email' communication specifically refers to the use of emails, including written text and/or pictures sent from personal or work accounts.

Email communication

Email should only be used to communicate specific information (times and dates of events, for example). It should not be used as a relationship building tool.

With volunteer communications it is expected that the staff member responsible for the event is copied into any correspondence, with regards to staff it is expected (in line with safeguarding) that the line manager has access to staff email accounts (including files and sent items). The CYP Staff Facebook accounts have a login which is shared among the CYP staff team. This recommendation is to allow communication amongst volunteers, staff and young people to remain safe.

Emails are sent for the purposes of the tasks at an event and not to develop ongoing relationships. Therefore correspondence with the young person should cease once the event is finished.

Email histories of volunteer correspondence with young people should be kept by staff and dated.

Emails, disclosure and accountability

As specified above, email should only be used to convey information and not used as a relationship tool. However, if a young person discloses information or anything of a concerning matter arises via email, the following procedure must be followed:

  i.   Read and follow the Quakers in Britain Safeguarding Procedures relating to disclosures.
 ii.   If you are a volunteer contact the responsible person for the event the young person is connected with.
iii.   Do not respond to the email.
 iv.   The responsible person for the event will discuss with you the next steps, this will include who will contact the young person. This will be done via other methods of communication and where possible, arranging to meet face to face if necessary.

Language

All language should be appropriate, for staff where possible 'standard responses' should be used (e.g. if you have sent an email out containing event details and receive a reply asking for further details, create a standard response with additional details so that all young people receive the same information).

Staff and volunteers should take great care over the language used to reduce the risk of misinterpretation.

When sending emails, you should not use informal language such as shorthand or 'text language' as this can often be misunderstood and lead to further complications.

Hours of communication

When using email/the Internet for communication with young people (within the guidelines above), it is advised that it should take place between the hours of 9am-9pm (inclusive)

Social networking sites

You should not add children or young people to your personal social networks who are part of a CYP event you are working on (or have worked on) and who are under the age of 18. CYP staff may set up a Facebook group or WhatsApp for an event and invite young people to be members (that is, if they are over the required minimum age limit – which is 13 for Facebook and 16 for WhatsApp). Staff will use an agreed social networking account for contact with the young people with whom they are working (but should never use a personal account).

Staff and volunteers should not use their personal social networking or instant messaging accounts for contact with children and young people.

Staff and volunteers should seek to ensure that their personal profiles on any social networking sites should be set to the highest form of security to avoid young people accessing personal information or seeing any pictures of a personal nature.

See appendix 2 for guidelines about security when using Facebook.

2. Chat facilities

Messenger and live chat

Use of live chat facilities between staff/volunteers and children or young people is not permitted. You should refrain from engaging in conversation via these mediums. Live chat services and chat facilities cannot be kept on record and are therefore an unsuitable form of communication between workers, children and young people.

3. Skype and other visual methods

Use of Skype and any other webcam or visual communication via the Internet is not permitted, unless it is a group call that enables the planning for an event to progress (with at least one member of staff and one adult volunteer). It is not permitted to use such methods on a one-to-one basis as they cannot be recorded. The staff member involved should always inform their line manger when and where this is taking place.

4. Cyberbullying and the law

Most children and young people use mobile phones and the Internet appropriately. However, when technology is abused there may be legal consequences.

Mobile Phones

The rationale for texting and calling is the same as social networking and email contact.

Risks	Solutions
Accusation of an inappropriate message or receipt of one.	Be very careful in what language you use. It is not encouraged for staff or volunteers to give out their personal mobile number to children and young people.
Texting late in the evening – potential to be viewed as inappropriate	No texting after 9pm. If it is of an urgent nature you should contact the staff member responsible for the event to discuss next steps.
Young person's perception of relationship	Text conversation or phone conversation is not encouraged where it is not about communicating information.
Texting/calling whilst YP in school/college	Make calls between 12noon-1pm and 4-9pm.
Data protection of YP numbers on CYP staff and team member mobiles.	Have a lock on phone and do not allow access.

If you have received a phone call/text or made a phone call/text to a young person that is of a pastoral concern you must make a record of the conversation and report it to the person responsible for the event (volunteers) or your line manager (staff member).

You should not share your personal number with any young person who is not on an event team. At event's CYP staff have work mobiles, if you need to make contact with a young person you should speak to the person responsible for the event, so that they can organise this.

This guidance works in conjunction with the Quakers in Britain Safeguarding Policy (downloadable from www.quaker.org.uk/cyp-policies-procedures)

5. Notes relating to this guidance

With regards to young people who have left the group or are now over the age of 18, please use discretion with regards to this policy and seek advice where necessary. Any contact is strongly discouraged where they have either had a watching brief as a young person and/or where they may be considered to be a vulnerable adult,

For useful resources and support material to use with Parents, volunteers and children and young people visit www.ceops.org.uk or www.thinkuknow.org.uk.

Use these guidelines in consultation with the Quakers in Britain Safeguarding Policy.

Online content

Decide who will be responsible for setting up, managing and moderating (overseeing/ reviewing/ responding to posted content) your web page or profile. This person will oversee the content that will appear, will decide which links to other sites to accept, and will have online contact with the children and young people who interact with your webpage or profile. It is recommended that advice is sought from a reputable organisation and colleagues in relation to linking to other sites and organisations.

Staff activities on social media should be transparent this means that your manager should be able to access and view any interactions on social media. Monitor pages daily during normal working hours (provision will need to be made to cover holiday times, bank holidays etc) removing any content that is inappropriate.

Got a public online space for young people? Go to page 8 on http://bit.ly/methodist_social_media See the flowchart to know what do with any concerns you have.

Appendix 1 **Some useful resources**

Cyberbullying **-** See CYP Anti-bulling procedures at www.quaker.org.uk/cyp-policies-procedures.

Cyberbullying – a whole school approach (DFCSF)
www.kidscape.org.uk/assets/downloads/dcsfcyberbullyingsummary.pdf

Cyberbullying – Are you switched on? www.respectme.org.uk/cyberbullying_intro_txt.html

www.respectme.org.uk
The respectme website offers practical advice and guidance for adults on addressing bullying. There is also a section for children and young people offering practical advice on what to do if they're being bullied.

www.digizen.org
'Digital citizenship' is about building safe spaces and communities, and using online presence to grow and shape your world in a safe, creative way.

www.childline.org.uk
ChildLine's website has a bullying section for children and young people and adults.

www.childnet.org.uk
Childnet International works in partnership with other organisations to help make the Internet a safe place for children and children and young people.

www.kidscape.org.uk
Kidscape has a range of information for both children and adults, with some interactive sections for children and young people on responding to bullying.

www.stoptextbully.com
Stoptextbully has a lot of information on text bullying specific to children and children and young people.

www.ceop.gov.uk
The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre's website.

www.nspcc.org.uk/helpline
When you think a child needs protection, you can contact the NSPCC - 24/7 by phone or by going online. It's free and you don't have to say who you are. Call **0808 800 5000**, text **88858**.

www.net-aware.org.uk
Net Aware – a guide to social media sites that young people use. Call **0808 800 5002**.

Appendix 2 **Security when using Facebook**

How to create a secure profile when setting up a group:

i. Select the friends list from your profile.

ii. Each young person has a 'add to list' option. Add them to the 'limited profile' group.

iii. Once the group limited profile is created, select 'Settings' and 'Privacy Settings' (top of page).

iv. Select 'Profile' within the privacy settings page.

v. The privacy settings are then broken into profile, basic info, photos etc.

vi. On each item that needs to be kept private select 'Edit custom settings'. A pop-up box will appear. At the bottom it will say "Except these people". Type "limited profile" into that box.

vii. Do this for every part of your profile to be kept private.

You can also change the privacy settings to 'Only Me'.

Click on 'Privacy Shortcuts' (the padlock icon in the right hand corner of your Facebook page), then click on 'Who can see my stuff?', and then select 'Only me' from the drop-down menu under 'Who can see my future posts?'). The process is now complete.

How are pages different from groups? Which one should I create?

Pages allow real organisations, businesses, celebrities and brands to communicate broadly with people who like them. Pages may only be created and managed by official representatives.

Groups provide a closed space for small groups of people to communicate about shared interests. Groups can be created by anyone.

Other differences include:

Pages

Privacy: Page information and posts are public and generally available to everyone on Facebook.

Audience: Anyone can like a page to become connected with it and get news updates. There is no limit to how many people can like a page.

Communication: Page admins can share posts under the page's name. Page posts appear in the news feeds of people who like the page. Page admins can also create customised apps for their Pages and check Page Insights to track the page's growth and activity.

Groups

Privacy: In addition to an open setting, more privacy settings are available for groups. In secret and closed groups, posts are only visible to group members. Audience: Group members must be approved or added by other members.

When a group reaches a certain size, some features are limited. The most useful groups tend to be the ones you create with small groups of people you know.

Communication: In groups, members receive notifications by default when any member posts in the group. Group members can participate in chats, upload photos to shared albums, collaborate on group docs and invite members who are friends to group events.

How do I create a group?

i. From your home page, go to the 'Groups' section and click on 'Add Group'.

ii. Click on 'Create New Group'.

iii. A pop-up box will appear, where you'll be able to add a group name, add members and select a privacy setting for your group. Click the 'Create' button when you're finished.

iv. Once the group is created, you will be taken to the group's page. To get started click at the top right of the page and select 'Edit Group'. From here you can add a group description, set a group email address, add a group picture and manage members. .