

Below is advice taken from the Gateway Church Safeguarding Children Policy that is relevant for anyone who attends Gateway church meetings. A full policy can be requested by emailing office@gatewayleeds.net

10.7 Information Communications Technology (ICT) and E-Safety

E-safety stands for electronic safety, it is not just about keeping safe on the internet but also keeping safe on all electronic devices such as mobile phones, games consoles, use of emails, social networking and other information communications technologies (ICT).

ICT offer excellent resources and effective communication tools but there are unscrupulous individuals who use the technologies to gain access to exploit and even harm children, young people and Adults with Care and Support Needs. Workers, parents and carers, children, young people and Adults with Care and Support Needs all need to gain an understanding of e-safety.

E- safety considerations are very fluid as technology is constantly changing. It is worth remembering that although children are digitally competent at an early age they don't have the maturity to deal with and the understanding of the dangers being online can expose them to. We can teach children to be safe both offline and online, as safeguarding principles apply equally in every environment. There is now a merging between the two, and therefore it's not helpful to draw a distinction where safeguarding is concerned.

- We recognise that young people increasingly communicate through Social networks and that they will take risks and express themselves through these outlets. We wish to engage with young people through social media in a safe and positive way.
- We encourage parents to set appropriate online protection and controls on all home internet devices
- Any youth leaders contacting youth or children through social media about an event or meeting should include parents/carers/social workers in the details of the invitation
- If a discussion is started between a youth worker and young person through social media, we would encourage both parties to follow these guidelines:
 - Keep conversations short, if you enter into a deep conversation suggest meeting to talk any issues through face to face.
 - Contact is discouraged after 10pm and before 8am or during school hours
 - Appropriate language should be used by both parties, avoid using ambiguous abbreviations, curse words or kisses on messages
 - If a youth or youth worker is online and not engaging in communication respect their privacy and do not pester them for conversation.
 - If either party feels uncomfortable at any time to try to close the conversation down and talk to the safeguarding officer about the discussion.
- Photographs and videos are to be shared with the knowledge of the persons in the photo/video. If anyone objects to the photo being shared they should be removed from public viewing.
- Adults and young people following one another on a media site is discouraged unless they are a youth worker (where they should abide to the above guidance) or they have gained consent of the parent/carer/social worker.

10.28 Family hospitality

- This is outside the jurisdiction of Gateway Church, however we hope to advise parents in the church concerning Safeguarding in their homes.
- Gateway Church wishes to create a friendly, hospitable and trusting environment, as we aim to be an "all sorts" church/community.
- We encourage families to be open with each other and the leaders in the church. If a child feels uncomfortable around an individual, or speaks out then we urge parents to listen and share this concern with a Safeguarding officer.
- We encourage families to sensitively and appropriately educate their children what is 'good' and appropriate play/ what is a 'good' secret.
- Parents should set their own boundaries for guests in their homes, and ask members visiting their homes to respect these boundaries. (for example not being alone in a room playing computer games with a child or youth)

- Wisdom and forethought should be taken by parents to safeguard themselves, their children and their homes from “grooming” or other tactics employed by predatory sex offenders.
- Despite all of the boundaries and education put in place we recognise that opening your home to strangers can be at a risk to a family, and if anything does happen that causes a concern about another member of the church, then we encourage you to talk to a Safeguarding Officer.

10.29 Filming and Taking Photographs

Since the introduction of the Data Protection Act in 1998, organisations must be careful if they want to take photographs or film footage of people, and how images are used. This does not mean that photographs should not be taken or that filming is prohibited, but there are certain protocols that must be followed to comply with data protection legislation as well as to ensure that children, young people and Adults with Care and Support Needs are kept safe.

- Permission must be obtained of both children and adults before a photograph is taken or film footage recorded. However, it is perfectly acceptable to ask parents/carers to let the organisation know if they do NOT want their child photographed or filmed.