

Communication with Young People via Mobile Phones

Leaders of youth organisations need to be aware there are opportunities for abuse through the misuse of mobile phones and text messaging. While good use of such media can be beneficial, they must be vigilant and alert to the possibilities of misuse and consequent harm that can result to young people. Leaders must also take care to protect themselves and Kirk Session will ensure that good practice is followed.

Leaders involved in Youth and Children's work should only have children's mobile numbers if the nature of their involvement requires them to phone or text children. Such leaders might include those running an organisation for older teenagers, or a leader supervising a group of teenagers on a DofE, BB or GB expedition. Leaders-in-charge and their representative elders should be informed which leaders need to contact children for their specific roles.

- Parents' permission should be sought if the leader in this role will be contacting children via mobile phone.
- If a leader has a child's phone number, it should only be used for the purposes it has been given, i.e. the leader should not share this information with other church members.
- Once the activity is completed the leader should delete the child's contact details.

Texting - Communication Not Conversation!

- Texts should be used for the purpose of reminding young people about events which are forthcoming.
- Texts can also be used to encourage young people if it is appropriate e.g. "keep going, you are nearly there".
- Texts should be short, direct, and impersonal.
- If it turns into a conversation, communication should be ended.

PARENTAL CONSENT FORM – USE OF MOBILE PHONE

EVENT	
DATES	
VENUE	
LEADER(S)	

Use of mobile phone is required for:

.....

.....

Details of Young Person

NAME	
ADDRESS	
POSTCODE	
MOBILE PHONE NUMBER	
AGE	
DATE OF BIRTH	

Parental Consent and Authorisation

I give consent for the young person named to participate in the above-mentioned activity. I acknowledge the need for them to make and receive mobile phone calls and to send and receive text messages as described above during the event.

SIGNATURE	
DATE	
NAME	
PARENT'S EMAIL ADDRESS	
PARENT'S MOBILE PHONE NUMBER	

In line with GDPR the data you provide on this form will be stored securely for a period of one year from the date of signature, after which it will be destroyed. It will not be passed to any third parties without your expressed consent, except in a medical emergency or where lawfully requested by police.