



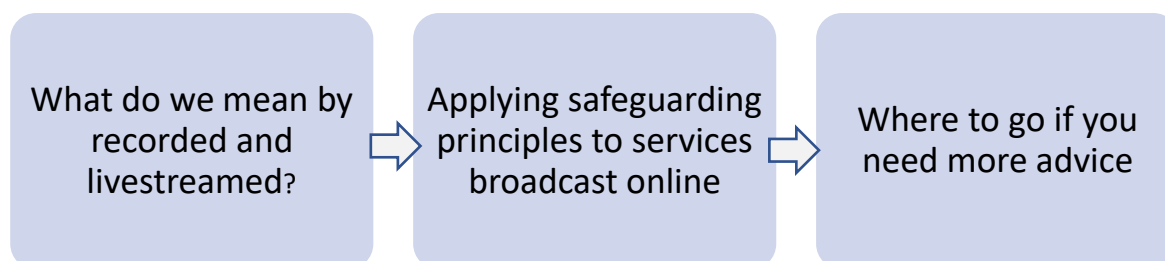
RECORDING AND LIVESTREAMING SERVICES AND EVENTS: SAFEGUARDING GUIDELINES FOR CHURCHES

Safeguarding Guidelines for Church Leaders and the Designated
Person for Safeguarding

May 2022

Introduction

In March 2020 we entered an unprecedented situation as the Coronavirus pandemic swept across the world. We have had to adapt to so many new ways of working both individually and collectively as a result. We continue to live, work and worship in a “hybrid” world where events take place in person but are also available either livestreamed or watched later as a recording. As we hear from church leaders, we are aware that whilst some churches will choose to go back to a purely “in person” model of service, others are looking to continue to offer both in person and online content. This guidance is intended to support those in the second group to think about how they can ensure that their safeguarding procedures reflect their new practices and continue to protect those who are in attendance. In this guide we will cover the following areas:



Aims

We recognise the significant advantages of making church services accessible to a broader audience, both within the conventional church community and beyond. However, there are aspects of church life that may need some additional consideration when church is taken beyond its own four walls. As you think about live streaming in your own church you will want to think about:

- ⇒ Ensuring that children or young people are safeguarded whilst a service or event is being livestreamed.
- ⇒ Ensuring that no children can be identified as being present without the permission of their parents / guardians, or if there are legal reasons why their attendance cannot be identified.
- ⇒ Ensuring that adults also have the choice whether to be seen on camera.
- ⇒ Ensuring you are operating to the highest standards of best practice as an act of worship and service to God and the wider community.

What do we mean by “recorded” or “livestreamed”?

When we refer to church services being recorded this specifically refers to a planned visual recording of a service. We now see far more use of live streaming of a service as it happens with the congregation present using resources such as YouTube, Facebook Live or Zoom. These are all online platforms which enable a user to view an event, such as a church service live, as it is happening from wherever they happen to be. In some cases, the recording made through the livestream is then available as a recording via the church website, Facebook, or YouTube pages.

For more information on how churches can use digital media to live stream or share their activities please follow this link:

https://www.baptist.org.uk/Articles/582341/Coronavirus_Advice_Webinar.aspx

A checklist to help with applying safeguarding principles to services broadcast online

The following safeguarding checklist will help you as you prepare for church activities which you are planning to broadcast online such as church services, prayer meetings, Alpha or other discipleship courses.

Live Streaming Safeguarding Checklist		✓
Assessing risk	<p>In preparing to livestream or broadcast a service or activity it is important that you complete a risk assessment which considers the following safeguarding points alongside the general health and safety risk assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is going to be involved in the service? • Are there going to be children taking part in the service or do you call the children to the front of church for the children's talk? • What is the make-up of your congregation – are you aware of any additional vulnerabilities that might make it hard for some church members to attend a service because it is being filmed. (For example are you specifically aware of children who are adopted or in foster care, people seeking asylum or survivors of domestic abuse?) • What are the practical issues that you need to consider when preparing to live stream or broadcast the service? Do those involved in the filming and uploading of material for broadcast understand the practical measures that are needed to safeguard people online: how to blur people out who have not consented to being filmed; not panning the camera round to film the congregation; managing the "chat" function on Facebook or Zoom to ensure the content is appropriate. • What needs to be done to ensure that everyone attending in person is aware that a service or activity is being filmed and broadcast? 	
What the camera sees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the area(s) that will be covered by the camera(s). • Ideally you want the camera to focus only on activity taking place on the platform/stage and not show images from beyond the left and right edges of the stage. • Ensure that you have areas that can be easily identified within the church as places to sit which are not covered by the camera(s). This can be done with signs placed at the demarcation points. 	
Protecting children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where there are children or young people who should not be shown, or adults who do not wish to be shown, they should be encouraged to sit at the sides of the church, or beyond the camera recording zone, to ensure that they are not going to be on camera accidentally. (There may be some who would have the back of their head shown because of the position of the camera and where they sit). • The participation of children in a service should not be livestreamed or recorded and later 'broadcast' on your website or social media without the explicit, signed permission from parents / guardians. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any children without such permission who accidentally appear on screen should be obscured by blurring the stream (make the camera out of focus) or blacking out. 	
Communicating your approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Posters informing those attending that the service is being livestreamed or recorded for later broadcast should be placed within the foyer of the church. In addition, a slide to this effect could be added to the introductory PowerPoint which is displayed before the service. (That slide could also contain a reminder if the church has a policy not to allow photographs or videos to be taken in the service). 	
Gaining Consent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permission to be shown on livestreams should be included as a category and consent requested in the permission forms that are signed on behalf of children and young people who attend the church. Without this consent no child or young person may be shown on the livestream. You should ensure that such children are given the opportunity to participate in the service in other ways when their groups are taking part on the stage during the service (for example, learning about the sound / vision desks, welcoming (with parents and guardians), and being asked how they would like to serve. 	
Using Zoom to broadcast services	<p>Where a service is livestreamed on Zoom the church should ensure that there is an identified Zoom host who will be monitoring the livestream and the “chat box” throughout the service. They will also be responsible for ensuring that the following guidelines are adhered to:</p> <p>All attendees should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that their camera is on at all times. Ensure that their username is their full real/known name, i.e. not a technical/computer name, nickname/joke name, or just their Christian name. Any unknown people should be asked for more information about their attendance online. Whilst we wish to maintain a welcoming ethos in all churches, whether people are attending in person or online, anyone who refuses to comply with the above requests, or fails to satisfy the Zoom host of their bona fide interest should be removed from the Zoom meeting. The Zoom host should regularly remind those online that if they have concerns, they can share them with the host and they will pass on safeguarding concerns to the Designated Person for Safeguarding. 	
Intercessions and Prayers	<p>It is important to think about the appropriateness of streaming different parts of the service online. A time of reflection and intercession for the church and for the world seems a significant part of the service that all can engage with and benefit from. However, consider the information that will be broadcast at this time.</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember that livestreaming or making a recording available online mean that people will be accessing the service who are not necessarily known to the church. • Bear in mind confidentiality and avoid sharing things about individuals without their express consent, even for the purposes of prayer or intercession. • Consider that even sharing details of a mission partner’s work in another country could, in some situations increase the risk to them and the communities they are working in. • It might be that you need to think about how you brief those who are leading the intercessions or prayers about what to include and how much detail to share. • Perhaps you could play a worship song or a recorded reflection for those watching the livestream whilst the prayers are going on within the church. 	
Communion	<p>Another part of the church service that it is worth giving some consideration to is what will be broadcast whilst communion is taking place. We need to remember that there may be quite a lot of moving around within the church at this time; either with people coming to the front to be served or with the bread and wine being passed along rows. This will be a time when it is difficult to ensure that people who should not be on screen are avoided.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The camera could remain focused on the stage / platform at the front rather than following the sharing of the bread and wine among the congregation. • If the congregation is invited to come to the front to receive bread and wine, then show a ‘holding’ image or blur the screen to avoid inadvertently showing someone whose identity and location should not be made known. • It might be another time where a visual image could be focussed in on in the livestream to avoid people being identified. 	
Preaching and Teaching	<p>For those who are leading, teaching or preaching within the service it is important to be prepared and to think about how things such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could an “in joke” heard or experienced beyond the church family cause offence, be misunderstood or cause distress? • If you are needing volunteers for an activity or illustration within the service prime them about the activity (and gain their written consent to be filmed, as appropriate). 	

UK GDPR: Gaining consent and providing privacy notices

There are data protection issues involved in filming services. As outlined above a church should seek consent from any individuals appearing on screen (where they can be identified) for their involvement in the filming and the processing of their personal data through video footage or podcasts. Records of these consents should be kept, in line with the church data retention policy. This should be straightforward when there are limited numbers of people involved who are clear on the purpose for which their data will be used in the service.

Where a church is planning to hold a service in the church with a congregation and broadcast it at the same time to a wider audience (either live or later) then this may involve processing images of the persons attending the service who might be filmed and identifiable from the footage. It would be disproportionate to obtain consent from everyone in the congregation for their personal data to be used in this way. The simplest way to achieve data protection compliance is to position cameras in such a way as to avoid capturing the images of those in the wider congregation. Where this is not possible, the church should make every effort to provide information about the filming to members and attendees in advance, which will enable those attending to decide to opt out if they wish or to sit in a designated area in the church where they will not be filmed. Notices should be placed in a prominent place at the entrances, and you may also consider the newsletter/notice sheet/church website to explain that the service will be filmed. A reminder can also be given from the front at the start of the service. Particular care should be taken in relation to children or adults at risk, unless prior consent from them or their parents/guardians has been obtained. The church leaders can take the following steps:

- Create a clear delineation between the areas covered by the camera and those which are not.
- Ensure that attendees at church know that they may be caught on camera when sitting in the designated area and that by sitting in those areas they are consenting to being filmed.
- This can be made clear through posters around the church, on the church notices, or in a PowerPoint slide playing before the service begins.
- When new people attend church those who are welcoming people at the door could take that opportunity to let them know about the livestreaming or filming of the service and which areas are or are not covered by the camera(s).
- ensure that those who do not consent to being filmed know where they should sit.

A privacy notice setting out exactly what information is being gathered, how this will be stored and how long for should also be readily available. This statement could be made available through a link on the church website or set out in the church notice sheet, if this is produced in paper form.

Please refer to the [BUGB Data Protection](#) pages on the website for further information about this section.

What if I need more advice on this?

If you have specific questions about safeguarding within the context of livestreamed or recorded services, or there are special circumstances that you would find it helpful to talk through with a safeguarding specialist then please do contact your association safeguarding lead. You can find their details on the Baptist Together website at www.baptist.org.uk/safeguarding .

Welcome to Church.

This service is being live streamed/ recorded* and you may appear on camera if you sit in this area. If you do not consent to being filmed, then please ensure that you are sitting outside of the filming zone.

Please speak to one of the welcome team if you are unsure of what to do or require further information.

Thank you

*Delete as applicable

No Filming Zone beyond this sign
(you will not be caught on camera if you sit
behind this sign)



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