



**HILLSBOROUGH**  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## **Social Media Usage Policy**

In all their contacts and communications with the members of their organisation/group, leaders must be seen to be open and transparent. This is the case whether communications are by traditional means or by electronic means.

**Leaders must not communicate with children or young people via leader's personal Social Networking Profiles, email accounts or chat rooms.**

**For an organisation using a Social Networking Site:**

1. The page/profile must be password-protected, and the password must be held by at least 3 leaders of that organisation.
2. The site should be monitored by a designated supervisor. This person should have access to the login details of the site. This supervisor will be appointed by the Designated Person in charge of Child Protection of HPC.
3. Any inappropriate posts by young people or leaders should be removed by the designated supervisor. Reasons should then be explained to the person who posted the content.
4. The site should be kept 'Private'. i.e. only permitted members or 'friends' can see what is posted on the site.
5. Content of any postings should be consistent with the aims of the organisation, HPC, and PCI. In cases of doubt leaders should seek advice from Kirk Session, Organisation Leaders, Youth Development Worker, or Minister.

**For leaders using a Social Networking Site:**

6. Leaders should not 'Friend' or 'Follow' young people on social media. (Young people may 'Follow' leaders on social media so leaders should make sure any content they post is appropriate.)
7. Messages left to or from young people on Social Network Sites should be written on an open page e.g. A Facebook "wall", and not in a private message, or by using "chat" [one-on-one].

8. Leaders should not network with members of their organisation/group via closed [one-on-one] chat rooms eg Facebook messenger, Whatsapp etc. This should be done through 'Group Chats'
9. Any church based events or activities that are organised or publicised on the site should be a closed event so as non-members cannot access the event without suitable permission by the site administrators.
10. Any emails sent to children or young people via the site must be sent to at least one other leader. (This can be done by 'bcc' if necessary.)
11. Leaders should avoid communicating with children or young people in their organisation/group via email late at night.
12. In signing off a post or an email leaders should not do so in a way that could be misconstrued or misinterpreted by the recipient eg: "luv X"; "xoxoxo". Simply sign your name.
13. Parents/guardians should be asked to give their approval for leaders to communicate with their child/ren via Social Networking Sites, or by any other means of internet communications (eg email). Leaders in charge of organisations/groups must seek this approval in writing when they are communicating with parents at the commencement of each year. Once known, leaders must adhere to the wishes of the parents/guardians. (Parents/guardians should also be encouraged to become members of any groups.)
14. Parental permission is required before pictures or videos of children or young people are posted online.
15. Any disclosures of abuse reported through a Social Networking Site must be dealt with according to our reporting procedures detailed in the church's Child Protection Policy.
16. Copies of this policy should be signed and held by the Leader in Charge, the designated supervisor, and the Child Protection Officer.

Name of Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Site(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Signed:

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(Leader in Charge)

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(Designated Supervisor)

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(Child Protection Officer)

*Internet safety is extremely important to us at HPC. These measures are for everyone's protection. Any queries should be directed towards the Designated Person in charge of Child Protection.*