



Developing a policy for the use of technology in pastoral communications

A resource for Dioceses

Why you need a policy

Today many people in our churches use technology to communicate including text and picture messaging; email; instant messenger services and chat rooms; video conferencing; blogs and internet forums; websites; and group social networking sites. This facilitates pastoral contact.

Clergy and church workers have a responsibility to ensure communication in the church is safe for everyone. You can do this by providing policies on how to safely communicate and navigate the online environment using new technologies and social media.

Faithfulness In Service outlines principles for communication and some of the risks of using technology in pastoral communications (4.35 and 5.46).

This document will assist your diocese to develop its own policy for communication and ministry using technology. Remember that developing a policy is only the first step in ensuring safe communication and ministry. As part of your risk management strategy, it will need to be effectively implemented and monitored.

How to develop a policy

We recommend using the Church's Child Protection Advisory Service [Safeguarding in a Digital World – eSafety for churches and faith organisations](#) as the primary resource for your policy*.

It has been developed for the United Kingdom and understands the challenges of communicating using technology in churches. The policy is aimed at safeguarding children but the same principles apply to all communications using technology.

The document is comprehensive and includes all points necessary for an effective policy and some international links relevant to Australia.

The policy should indicate clearly what happens when there is a breach of the policy, including those circumstances in which a report must be made to the appropriate authority.

Communicating your policy

The policy should be readily available electronically to all people in your diocese and actively promoted by parish councils and youth organisations.

Your Safe Ministry Training should include a specific component on using technology to communicate (See Course Content, [Safe Ministry Training Benchmarks](#)).

This training component should be required of anyone engaged in ministry to children and young people.

Australian Resources

[ThinkUKnow Australia](#)

[Australia Federal Police](#)

State Police websites

Anglican Schools network

[Stay Smart Online](#)

[Cyber\(smart:\)](#)

[ChildSafe](#)

*a cost applies for use of this resource