

Peep Online Video-conferencing and Groups Guidelines

Peep staff may wish to use online applications such as Zoom to work with families. In all cases, employees and practitioners must comply to the organisation's data protection and confidentiality policies. No recordings of group or individual meetings may be made. The following rules apply for using online video conferencing media for work with groups and individuals:

Online groups

1. Each group will have a suitably qualified Practitioner as leader and a second Practitioner or Assistant as a member of the group.
2. Access to the group shall be by invitation only.
3. Where families are not already known to Peep through engagement in groups, the Little Peep Nursery or other Peep activities, a member of staff will contact them to verify their identity and assess their suitability for joining the online group. This may include liaison with a professional or agency (e.g. social worker, Homestart) who has referred them. We reserve the right to exclude any family from Peep groups at our sole discretion.
4. The invitation to join the group will include a Group Agreement and draw attention to the following points: not to share the invitation; not to take screenshots; not to record sessions; to be aware of what is shown on the camera; and the right to have the video link turned off. It will also share a link to the Peep Privacy Policy on the Peep website.
5. Group membership details (e.g. full names, email addresses, phone numbers) will be confidential to the leader (and any support staff/practitioner working with the leader) and covered by our Privacy Notice for Peep Groups.
6. All sessions will require a password in order to be accessed. Passwords will be changed for each session. If there is reason to believe that the password has been obtained by anyone who is not a group member, the password will be changed immediately.
7. Full individual names will be required by the group leader who must be able to verify the identity of all participants but full names will not be shown to other participants – use of first names (or, if preferred an alias) is recommended for use on screen.
8. Participants will be advised (if using video) to choose a location for the camera that does not display anything in the background that they would not want strangers to see.
9. The leader will share the Group Agreement at the start of each session. The leader will explain to participants: how to turn off video so they cannot be seen whilst still joining in; how to use the mute button; how to leave the session; how to let the leader know if they are unhappy about anything; how to change the way their name appears; and remind them not to record or screenshot the session.
10. Participants will be advised that while we will do everything we can to protect their confidentiality and identity, they join online groups at their own risk and we cannot be held liable for any resulting distress or loss as a result of joining an online group.
11. Any individual who breaches the group agreement will be barred from the group.
12. The Peep complaints procedure will be used in the event of any complaints about the online group.

Individual meetings online

1. The same rules apply for one to one meetings using online conferencing media (where applicable).
2. End-to-end encrypted software should be used for any meetings where sensitive personal information may be disclosed, for example Whatsapp or Signal.

Larger on line groups

For larger group sessions with 30 or more participants, and where it may not always be feasible to fully verify the identity of participants, additional steps will be taken to safeguard participants including the presence of a third member of staff as 'moderator' whose role is to ensure participants are abiding by the group rules and support them to get the most out of the session.

Updated 20.09.2024