



THE POTTING SHED CHURCH WHATSAPP POLICY

JANUARY 2023

WhatsApp is a very useful tool that both our congregation and The Potting Shed Church team like to use both personally and officially. This social app is a fantastic tool to pass on information, share thoughts, prayers, comments and organise events.

However, with all the great things WhatsApp offers, if a group is not properly managed it could have the potential to breach people's privacy. As a result, the team at The Potting Shed Church have put into place the following WhatsApp policy to ensure every official WhatsApp group or broadcast adheres to and continues to meet GDPR requirements.

Data protection is something The Potting Shed Church takes very seriously. For information about your personal data and privacy rights, please see our privacy notice.

What is the difference between 'personal' WhatsApp groups and 'official' Potting Shed Church WhatsApp groups?

Sometimes members of the congregation and / or members of the church leadership may set up a personal WhatsApp group that could include other people from our church family. In these situations, The Potting Shed Church is not responsible for the running, privacy or management of these groups, even if the group discusses Potting Shed Church-related content. If a personal group has been set up and you would not like to be in it, you have the right to leave that group at any time.

Official Potting Shed Church WhatsApp groups are defined as a group that has been created by the church leaders specifically to communicate church-related information (including events or prayer). The group will be managed by a church leader and will adhere to the below policy.

Note that church leaders include staff team, Life Group leaders or volunteer Team leaders.

The Potting Shed Church Official WhatsApp Groups

The Potting Shed Church will only create a group in order to communicate church-related information. You have the right to leave the group at any time and can contact the administrator directly to request to not be added to any future groups.

On WhatsApp there are 2 types of groups:

- Interactive groups
- Broadcast groups

Both types of group have their own guidelines, in order to ensure your privacy is protected. These specifics are outlined below:

Guidelines specifics for an interactive group:

An [interactive WhatsApp group](#) is the standard type of group, where members can comment and ask questions.

CURRENT EXAMPLES INCLUDE THE POTTING SHED PRAYER GROUP, LIFE GROUPS AND SATURDAY BREAKFAST

- Once a group of this nature has been set up, or when you have been added to an existing group, the administrator(s) will inform you of the purpose of the group. (An example of this would be a prayer group where members can share prayer requests so that the other group members can pray.)
- The administrator(s) have the right to remove people from the group immediately if they are sending messages or material which could cause offence or distress.
- Members of the group must not share other members' contact details outside the group. If this happens, the administrator(s) have the right to immediately exclude anyone who does this.
- Only the administrator(s) can add people to an interactive group. If you think another member of the congregation should be part of this group, please let the administrator(s) know.
- You have the right to leave that group at any time. If you're unsure how to do so, contact the administrator(s) and they will help you.
- An interactive group will be shut down when it is no longer needed, which will be determined by the administrator(s) or another member of the church leadership team. The administrator(s) will provide members a 2-day notice period before closing the group.

Guidelines specifics for a broadcast group:

- When a group is used solely for Potting Shed Church communications purposes, we will use a [WhatsApp broadcast group](#), so that only the administrator(s) can pass on information. This is to avoid members receiving excessive notifications.
- No group member can comment or participate in this type of group.
- Once the group has been set up, or once you have been added to such a group, the administrator(s) will inform you of the purpose of the group.
- The administrator(s) can remove members should the person no longer be part of the congregation, project or group.
- Only the administrator(s) can add people to the broadcast. If you think another member of the congregation should be part of this group, please let the administrator know.
- You have the right to leave that group at any time. If you're unsure how to do so, contact the administrator(s) and they will help you.
- A broadcast group will be shut down when it is no longer needed, which will be determined by the administrator(s) or another member of the church leadership team. The administrator(s) will provide members a 2-day notice period before closing the group.