



## **GENERAL PRACTICE GUIDELINES – SOCIAL MEDIA for CLUBS**

Communication technology and social media continues grow in popularity and provides our club with a wide range of benefits. As a club it is our responsibility to use social media responsibly, as if misused it has the potential to put children and young people at considerable risk.

The following guidelines will be applied to safeguard all parties when communicating through social media:

- All communications from the club with children will be open, transparent and appropriate. There will be no direct communication with U18's via text, email, social media whats app etc.
- Messages will only be sent to communicate details of meeting points, training, match details, competition results etc. The same message will be sent to every member of the group/team.
- It will always be clear that it is the club who is communicating information – one-to-one messaging arrangements between sports volunteers/staff is not permitted and safeguards should be in place and settings adjusted to prevent this happening.
- Messages will never contain any offensive, abusive, or inappropriate language. They should not be open to misinterpretation.
- Written permission will be sought from parents/carers to communicate with children under 18 years via technology/social media. This request for permission will form part of the club membership details given when joining the club or during annual membership renewal.
- Parents will be offered the option to be copied into any messages their child will be sent.
- Children and young people will be informed about the means of communication at the club. They will also be given information on how to keep themselves safe and to report any concerns to the Club's Welfare Officers.
- All concerns about the inappropriate use of technology and social media will be dealt with in line with the Procedure for *Responding to Concerns about a Child*. This may include the concerns being reported to police.
- All phone numbers/email addresses of children and young people will be recorded and kept securely in a locked cabinet or password-protected electronic file or database.
- The number of people with access to children and young people's details will be kept to a practical minimum. A record will be kept of their numbers/addresses by the Club Welfare Officer.

### **Club Websites/Social Media Sites**

Websites/Social Media sites provide an opportunity for the club to extend their community profile, advertise and communicate easily with their members. Thought



will be given to consent, tone and how sites and pages will be monitored. In terms of publishing information and pictures the following good practice will be noted:

## Permission

- Written parent/carer consent will be obtained for all children aged under 18 before publishing any information or pictures of a child. If the material is changed from the time of consent, the parents/carers will be informed and consent provided for the changes.
- Special care will be taken in relation to vulnerable children e.g. child fleeing domestic violence or a child with a disability, and consideration given to whether publication would place the child at risk.
- Young athletes who have a public profile as a result of their achievements are entitled to the same protection as all other children. In these cases, common sense will be followed when implementing these guidelines. All decisions will reflect the best interests of the child.

## Use of Images and Information

- Information published on the websites/social networking sites will never include personal information that could identify a child e.g. home address, email address, telephone number of a child. All contact must be directed to Cumbernauld AAC. Credit for achievements by a child will be restricted to first names e.g. Tracey was Player of the Year 2002.
- Children will never be portrayed in a demeaning, tasteless or a provocative manner. Children will never be portrayed in a state of partial undress, other than when depicting an action shot within the context of the sport. Attire such as tracksuits or t-shirts may be more appropriate.
- Information about specific events or meetings e.g. coaching sessions will not be distributed to any individuals other than to those directly concerned.

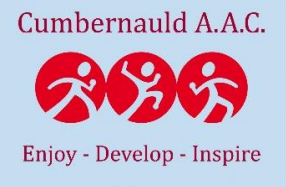
## Forums

Where a site allows for two-way communication between the club and its members heightened monitoring is required. From time to time forums can be used to target individuals or to engage contributors in debates that can cause upset and embarrassment to children and young people.

Coaches, member of staff or volunteer will refrain from being drawn into debates concerning selection, performance or personalities – even where the subject of discussion is anonymous.

Any offending comments will be removed by the club and appropriate procedures will be used to address poor practice or Code of Conduct breaches.

## Concerns



Any concerns or enquiries should be reported to the Club Welfare Officer.

### **Further guidance**

For more specific information on the use of social media for Sport Coaches, Volunteers and Athletes' see additional guidance on social media on the Scottish Athletics website.