



# Online Safety and Social Media Policy

## Introduction

This policy provides guidance on how Mistley RFC uses the internet and social media, and the procedures for doing so. It also outlines how we expect the staff and supporting volunteers involved and the children or young people who are members of the club to conduct themselves online.

## Aims

The aims of our club online safety policy are:

- to protect all children and young people involved with our club and who make use of technology (such as mobile phones, tablets, games consoles, and the internet) while in our care
- to provide all staff and volunteers with policy and procedure information regarding online safety and inform them how to respond to incidents
- to ensure our club is operating in line with our values and within the law regarding how we conduct ourselves online

## Understanding the Online World

As part of using social media and the internet, our club will:

- understand the safety aspects-including what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour for all staff, volunteers, children and young people when using websites, social media, apps and other forms of digital communication
- be aware that it doesn't matter what device is being used for digital interaction, but the same safety aspects apply whether is a computer, mobile phone, tablet or game console
- when using any social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and instagram ensure that we adhere to relevant legislation and good practice guidelines
- regularly review existing safeguarding policies and procedures at the club
- record any concerns or disclosures of online abuse or inappropriate behaviours in line with the club safeguarding procedures and policy

## **Managing our Online Presence**

Our online presence through the club website and social media platforms will adhere to the following guidelines:

- all social media accounts will be password protected
- at least three members of staff or volunteers will have access to each account and password
- the club account(s) will be monitored by a designated person, who will have been appointed by the club committee
- the designated account holder(s) will seek advice from the designated safeguarding lead to advise on safeguarding requirements
- the designated account holder(s) will remove any inappropriate posts by staff, volunteers, children and young people, explaining why, and informing anyone who might be affected (as well as the parents of any child or young person involved)
- identifying details such as a child or young persons home address, school name or telephone number should not be posted on any social media platforms
- any posts or correspondence shall be consistent with the clubs aims
- all children and young persons affiliated with the club will be informed of who the club account holder(s) are and how to contact them if they have any concerns about the running of the account
- parents will be asked for their written approval for us to communicate with their children or young persons through social media or by any other means of communication
- parents will need to give written permission for photographs or videos of their child to be posted on social media
- all of our accounts and e mail addresses will be appropriate and fit for purpose

## **What we Expect of Staff and Volunteers**

The expectation of all staff and volunteers at the club are:

- staff and volunteers should be aware of this policy and conduct themselves in accordance with it
- staff and volunteers should seek advice and guidance of the designated safeguarding lead if they have any concerns about the use of the internet or social media
- staff and volunteers should communicate any messages they wish to send out via the designated account holder(s)
- staff and volunteers should not 'friend' and 'follow' children or young persons from personal accounts on social media
- staff and volunteers should make sure any content posted online is accurate and appropriate, as young people may 'follow' them on social media
- staff and volunteers should not communicate with young persons or children via personal accounts or private messages
- any emails sent to young people or children should have at least one other member of staff or volunteer copied into the communication

- any disclosure of abuse or inappropriate behaviour should be reported in line with club policy and procedures
- use's of smartphones should not take or distribute photographs of children or young people if it invades their privacy
- staff and young people must not engage in 'sexting' or send pictures to anyone that are obscene, indecent, or menacing

### **What we Expect of Children and Young People**

The expectation of children and young people at the club are:

- children and young people should be aware of this online and social media policy
- we expect children and young people's behaviour online to be consistent with the guidelines set out inner acceptable user statement
- the child or young person should follow the guidelines set out in our acceptable user statement on all digital devices, including smartphones, tablets and consoles

### **Using Mobile Phones or Digital Technology to Communicate**

When using mobile phones (or other devices) to communicate by voice, video or text (including texting, e mail and instant messaging), staff and volunteers at the club will take the following precautions to ensure children and young persons safety:

- staff and volunteers will avoid having children and young peoples personal mobile telephone numbers and will instead seek to contact the parent or the guardian
- staff and volunteers will seek parental permission on each occasion if they need to contact children or young people directly: the purpose for each contact will be clearly identified and agreed upon
- a method of accountability will be arranged, such as a copies of texts also being sent to the club welfare officer or parent/guardian
- text messages sent to children or young people will be for the purpose of delivery of club information and not conversation
- if a young person misinterprets communication and attempts to engage a member of staff or volunteer in conversation, the member of staff or volunteer will:
  1. end the conversation or stop replying
  2. suggest discussing the subject at the next practice
  3. if concerned about the child or young person, provide details for the club welfare officer or appropriate agencies

### **Using Mobile Phones at Sports Activities**

So that children and young people get the most out of the clubs activities, we discourage the use of mobile phones during such activities. As part of this policy we will:

- make children aware that we discourage the use of mobile phones during activity
- explain to children and young people how using mobile phones during activities has an impact on the safe awareness of their environment, and their level of participation and achievement

### **Use of Digital Devices and Programmes**

The principles in this policy apply no matter which current or future technology is used-including computers, laptops, tablets, web enabled games consoles and smart TVs-and whether an app, programme or website is used.

If any digital devices are used as part of activities within the club:

- we expect children and young people to adhere to the guidelines surrounding online use and behaviour set out in our acceptable use policy
- as a club we will establish appropriate restrictions, more commonly known as 'parental controls', on any device provided to prevent misuse or harm

**Mistley RFC LTD is committed to implementing this policy and addressing any concerns quickly and within these guidelines.**

**Further information for keeping children safe online can be found at:**

NSPCC / O2 Helpline 0808 800 5000 - [www.o2.co.uk/help/nspcc/child-protection](http://www.o2.co.uk/help/nspcc/child-protection)

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) - [www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk)

Childnet - [www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com)

The UK Safer Internet Centre - [www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk)

**Neil Hildred**

**Mistley RFC Club Safeguarding Officer**

Intentionally left blank