Leicester Rowing Club – Online Safety and Social Media Policy

**Topic**: Review/re-write of draft LRC Social Media Policy using BR Online Safety and Social Media Policy of October 2020 as starting point and referring to unpublished LRC policy on Social Media and Interactive Technologies (draft version, April 2019)

**Status:** Draft - for review and agreement with the following groups: LRC policies review working party, club *members, LRC committee.*

**Communication:** Awareness of this new club policy needs to be highlighted to all members and be posted in the members’ area of the club website

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| **Document Control** | | | |
| **Document Title** | LRC Online Safety and Social Media Policy | | |
| **Version Number** | 0.1 | **Document Status** | Draft |
| **Date Approved** |  | **Approved By** |  |
| **Effective Date** |  | **Date of Next Review** |  |
| Recommended period between reviews is 5 years unless required sooner, e.g. if British Rowing publishes new guidance | | | |

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| **Version Control** | | | |
| **Version** | **Author** | **Date** | **Changes** |
| 0.1 | LRC CWO (nominated to manage version control of document) | 23 Nov 2020 | First draft (with reference to unpublished LRC Social Media and Interactive Technologies Policy of April 2019) |
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**Leicester Rowing Club**

Online Safety and Social Media Policy

**1**. **Scope**

This policy is adapted from the British Rowing Online Safety and Social Media Policy (October 2020) [add hyperlink to BR website page] and also includes sections from the unpublished Leicester Rowing Club (LRC) Social Media and Interactive Technologies Policy of April 2015. It aims to provide guidance to all LRC members, which include, but are not limited to, coaches and parents of Junior members, on the online conduct and behaviour expected of all associated with LRC.

**2**. **Purpose**

Leicester Rowing Club is committed to ensuring that members are free from harassment, bullying or victimisation in all forms, including through social media platforms utilising interactive technologies. This policy defines social media and its appropriate and safe use. It informs members how to respond to incidents and it also includes the potential action that could be taken following improper use of such technologies.

This policy has been prepared to protect the privacy, confidentiality and interests of LRC and its membership. This policy only applies to club related issues and is not meant to infringe upon an individual’s personal interaction / use of social media platforms.

**3.** **Guidance for all members**

All members are asked to respect the privacy, confidentiality and propriety of LRC and those working on its behalf. Members must carefully consider when discussing and sharing information relating to LRC affairs as discussions and information can sometimes be misinterpreted and could potentially put other members at risk.

All members should be aware that any inappropriate posts made to social media sites could lead to disciplinary action including expulsion from the club and in extreme cases, civil and criminal liability. All members must take account of the guidance in this policy before posting to the internet, including engaging in blogging, vlogging or the use of forums, video sharing and social networking sites.

Members should be aware that the committee takes the posting at any time of offensive material, and the harassment, bullying or victimisation of members via the internet, instant messaging platforms and social networking sites very seriously.

*Some further specific guidelines are below:*

1. Members must not divulge any confidential information or information belonging to LRC which is not in the public domain or expand upon such information already available in the public domain other than those officially approved to do so.
2. If any member discloses that they are attached to LRC then it must be made absolutely clear that any views expressed do not represent the official position of LRC but are the views of the individual.
3. Coaches and others in a position of trust / responsibility should not accept friend requests from or communicate with the juniors they manage or coach on their personal profiles. This applies to all forms of communication and apps, computer programmes and websites used, e.g. Instagram, SnapChat, Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, WhatsApp, e-mail, video gaming and mobiles. Text messages are to be limited to training times, reminders about upcoming events, which kit to bring, or perhaps congratulations when an achievement happens. Do not engage in conversation with junior members via these messages. If a junior member misinterprets such communication and tries to make conversation via these messages, take the following steps:

* End the conversation or stop replying
* Suggest discussing the subject further at the next training session or event
* Refer to the Club Welfare Officer (CWO)

1. Contact with juniors is normally through the parent’s e-mail or via the Junior Co-ordinator unless expressed permission is obtained from the parents of the junior in advance.
2. Parents/carers should be aware that their children will be using this media. Junior members are expected to understand the club’s Online Safety and Social Media Policy and in doing so should not make direct contact with any club coaches or adult members by phone, e-mail or social media sites (any contact must go through or be copied to their parent / ‘carer’ unless permission is obtained in advance). There may be situations where a junior needs to contact the coach directly for clarification of information etc. if their parents are unable to do it. If this is the case, they must be reminded that all day to day communication should go through parents and that coaches shouldn’t contact juniors directly unless approached first and they are comfortable with the content. Club members should also be aware of their interactions via social media with club members under the age of 18.
3. Members cannot write a blog or vlog in an official capacity unless sanctioned and minuted by the committee, i.e. representing the views of LRC. If, however, they give a personal opinion as an experienced person in a particular field, they must state that this is solely their view and not the view of LRC. When writing articles for media relating to juniors, care must be taken not to divulge information such as age or school that may be used to enable contacts to be made. Members must not use any LRC logo or other copyright material that infers official endorsement of the photograph, article, document or opinion.
4. Any photographs of LRC members in club attire must not be used to harass or intimidate its members.
5. Members must not display offensive images or make offensive comments, or in any way harass, intimidate, bully, victimise or discriminate against other members on any social media platform not limited to those listed within the policy document.

*As a matter of good practice, members are asked to remember that:*

* 1. Any material published online may be accessible by any audience greater than anticipated (including the general public) and could remain accessible for a long time following first publication.
  2. Social media communications may be misconstrued and so care should be taken before anything is shared online. Considerations should be made as to the reaction of the recipient or subject of communication rather than to the intention of the communication.
  3. Uncertainties or concerns about the appropriateness of any material should be referred to committee prior to publication.

**4.** **Understanding the online world**

As part of using the internet and social media, everyone at Leicester Rowing Club must:

• Understand the safety aspects – including what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour particularly for club officers, committee members, the Junior Co-Ordinator, coaches and junior members – when using websites, social media, apps and other forms of digital communication.

• ` Be aware that it does not matter what device is being used for digital interaction, as the same safety aspects apply whether it is a computer, mobile phone, tablet or game console

• When using any social media platforms or sites used for socialising or communication, everyone should ensure that they follow relevant legislation and good practice guidelines. See the ‘Further Information’ section at the end of this policy for links to example guidance

* In limited circumstances, it may be necessary for coaches, squad captains/co-ordinators or chaperones to have mobile phone contact details of the junior members, for safeguarding/welfare reasons. In such circumstances, the individual holding the contact details must be Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checked, have undertaken appropriate safeguarding training and have the consent of each member’s parent/guardian to temporarily hold that information for the purpose of the event. The members’ phone numbers should then be deleted after the event.

• Ensure anyone who is responsible for LRC’s day-to-day online presence undertakes

any relevant training, e.g. Safeguarding and Protecting Children course

**5.** **Safe use of social media**

The internet is a great tool to help everyone to communicate and learn, but it also exposes them to the risk of harm.

**Some of the key risks to children and adults at risk include:**

• giving out confidential information, such as full name, address, school, details about their

personal lives and/or passwords. Once on the internet, this is no longer confidential and

can be widely shared

• posting inappropriate images of themselves or others, such as sexually suggestive images,

for example, being partially clothed; and/or sleeping

• being coerced into posting inappropriate images or information about themselves online;

• making ‘friends’ with people they do not know – and who may or may not be who they

say they are. Sometimes adults can pretend to be children online so that they build a

relationship with a child or adult at risk

• online bullying, including name calling, threats, teasing and/or discriminatory remarks

• responding to images or texts in an inappropriate manner, such as with threats. This can

trigger online and face-to-face violence

• (involuntary) access to age inappropriate content, such as pornography or violent videos.

**6. Webinars or Livestreaming**

With increasing use of webinars to deliver education and club activities, the following points are worth applying:

• always ensure delivery, both verbal and in presentation content, is suitable for a wide audience, which means take care to use language that is respectful and appropriate for audiences of any age group

• consent must be obtained from parents/carers and children if any images of or

identifying information about the child may be used. Ensure any consent obtained clearly set outs what the image will be used for, how long consent is valid for and how long the image will be kept for

• it is strongly recommended that you deliver a webinar or host a livestream with a

second adult who can act as a moderator should any attendee behave inappropriately, or any sudden changes or upsetting developments occur. If inappropriate behaviour occurs, please report this, in accordance with LRC’s reporting procedures, to the CWO ([cwo@leicester-rowing.co.uk](mailto:cwo@leicester-rowing.co.uk)) or to a committee member

• at the beginning of any webinar and before starting a livestream, remind all participants not to share private information, not to respond to contact requests from people they don’t know and who they should tell if they see or hear anything upsetting or inappropriate

• if you or your webinar participants will be visible, please consider the following and

provide as guidelines in advance for the webinar/livestream:

* + - location: always use a communal space such as a study or dining room and never a bedroom or other private space
    - personal appearance: be appropriately dressed
    - background: ensure you have a clear background free from distractions, unwanted or inappropriate imagery and personal items (such as family photographs). In addition, ensure nothing in the background can give away your location
    - mirrors: remember that mirrors (or even windows) can display items or family members you are not expecting to be seen.

• if you are recording the session, ensure that all attendees are aware of this;

• if you have participants who have accessibility needs, i.e. would benefit from using

subtitles, then consider all reasonable adjustments that can be taken to accommodate the needs of your participants.

**7. What to do if you believe social media is being misused**

If you are a member who believes that you are being harassed, bullied or victimised, as a result of another member’s post to an internet site, messaging service or app, you should be encouraged to take the necessary action.

Additionally, if you believe that defamatory or negative comments and postings have been made about the club, these should be raised too.

Members should contact the Club Welfare Officer in person or via e-mail ([cwo@leicester-rowing.co.uk](mailto:cwo@leicester-rowing.co.uk)) or if the CWO is not available, a committee member, as soon as possible for support and guidance on the informal and formal action that can be taken to mitigate the concern.

**8. Consequences of not following this policy**

Any member found to be in breach of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action.

If they are also found to be in breach of the Data Protection Act 1998 or other relevant legislation or copyright, it could lead to criminal proceedings and prosecution

**9. Further information**

Useful information can be found at:

ChildNet International: [www.childnet.com/young-people](http://www.childnet.com/young-people)

CEOP: [www.thinkyouknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkyouknow.co.uk)

ChildLine: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

CPSU: <https://thecpsu.org.uk/help-advice/topics/online-safety/>

ChildLine: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

NSPCC: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/news/2020/march/undertaking-remote-teaching-safely>

NSPCC:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/get-expert-training/child-protection-sport->online-course/