

All Golds Rugby League

Online Safety and Social Media Policy

Notes:

- (i) The term “child” or “children” apply to anyone under the age of 18.
- (ii) The term “parent” applies to anyone with guardianship or caring and parental responsibility for the child.
- (iii) The term “staff” applies to members of staff and volunteers.

Our online safety statement:

This policy provides guidance on how our club uses the internet and social media, and the procedures for doing so. It also outlines how we expect the staff that work for us, and the children who are members of our club, to behave online.

As a club, we commit to implementing this policy and addressing any concerns quickly and within these guidelines.

Aims:

The aims of our online safety policy are:

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

Understanding the online world:

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

- (i) Assess and manage the safety aspects – including what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour for staff and children when using websites, social media including but not limited to Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, Twitter or

Snapchat, apps and video conferencing platforms including but not limited to Zoom and Skype.

- (ii) Be aware of how staff in our club and the children they work with use social media both inside and outside of our setting.
- (iii) Ensure that we adhere to relevant legislation and good practice guidelines when using social media or video conferencing platforms.
- (iv) Regularly review existing safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure that online safeguarding issues are fully incorporated.

Managing our online presence:

Our online presence through our website or social media platforms will adhere to the following guidelines:

- (i) At least two members of staff will have access to each social media account and password.
- (ii) The account will be monitored by at least two senior members of staff in order to provide transparency.
- (iii) The senior members of staff will remove inappropriate posts by children or staff, explaining why, and informing anyone who may be affected (as well as the parents of any children involved).
- (iv) We will make sure that children know to contact the Club Welfare Officer if they have any concerns about something that has happened online.
- (v) Identifying details such as a child's home address, school name, or telephone number shouldn't be posted on social media platforms.
- (vi) Any posts or correspondence will be consistent with our aims and tone as a club.
- (vii) Parents will be asked to give their approval for us to communicate with their children through social media, via video conferencing platforms, or by any other means of communication.
- (viii) Parents will need to give permission for photographs or videos of their child to be posted on social media.

- (ix) Video conferencing sessions will be password protected in order to maintain children's privacy and prevent exposure to inappropriate or harmful contents by third parties.

What we expect of our staff:

- (i) Staff should be aware of this policy and behave in accordance with it.
- (ii) Staff should seek the advice of the Club Welfare Officer if they have any concerns about the use of the internet or social media.
- (iii) Staff should not communicate with children via personal accounts.
- (iv) Staff should not "follow" or "friend" children from personal accounts on social media and maintain the same professional boundaries online as they would in person when using organisation accounts.
- (v) Staff should make sure any content posted on public personal accounts is accurate and appropriate, as children may "follow" them on social media.
- (vi) Rather than communicating with parents through personal social media accounts, staff should choose a more formal means of communication, such as face to face, email, or in writing, or use a club account or the website.
- (vii) Staff should avoid communicating with children via email or club social media about anything non club or rugby league related.
- (viii) Emails or messages should maintain the tone of the club and be written in a professional manner, e.g., in the same way you would communicate with fellow professionals, avoiding slang and/or inappropriate language.
- (ix) Staff should not delete any messages or communications sent to or from the club's accounts.
- (x) Staff should undertake any online safety training offered and gain a basic knowledge of the platforms children use and how to report or remove inappropriate content online.
- (xi) Any concerns reported through social media should be dealt with in the same way as a face to face disclosure, according to our reporting procedures as detailed in the Club's Safeguarding Statement.

- (xii) At least one parent must be present during the delivery of any activities via video conferencing platforms at home.
- (xiii) Any delivery of activities to children via video conferencing platforms will be supported by an additional member of staff (even if they are not actively delivering) to ensure transparency.
- (xiv) Staff and children must not engage in “sexting” or send pictures to anyone that are obscene.

What we expect of children:

- (i) Children should be aware of this online safety policy and agree to its terms.

What we expect of parents:

- (i) Parents should be aware of this online safety policy and agree to its terms.
- (ii) Parents should protect all children’s privacy online and think carefully about what content they share about sport online, where they share it, and who they are sharing it with.

Using mobile phones or other digital technology to communicate:

When using mobile phones (or other devices) to communicate by voice, video, or text (including texting, email, and instant messaging such as WhatsApp or Facebook Messenger), we’ll take the following precautions to ensure children’s safety:

- (i) Staff will avoid having children’s personal mobile numbers and will instead seek contact through a parent.
- (ii) We will seek parental permission on each occasion we need to contact children directly; the purpose for each contact will be clearly identified and agreed upon.
- (iii) A method of accountability will be arranged, such as copies of texts, messages, or emails also being sent to another member of staff or to parents.
- (iv) Smartphone users should respect the private lives of others and not take or distribute pictures of other people if it could invade their privacy.
- (v) Texts, emails, or messages will be used for communicating information, such as reminding children or

young people about upcoming events, which kit to bring or practice timings, and not to engage in conversation.

- (vi) If a child misinterprets such communication and tries to engage a member of staff in conversation, the member of staff will take the following steps:
 - (a) End the conversation and stop replying.
 - (b) Suggest discussing the subject further at the next practice or event.
 - (c) Inform the Club Welfare Officer in the interest of transparency.
 - (d) If concerned about the child, provide contact details for the Club Welfare Officer or appropriate agencies.

Using mobile phones during sports activities:

So that all children can enjoy and actively take part in sports activities, we discourage the use of mobile phones during such activities. As part of this policy, we will:

- (i) Make children aware of how and who to contact if there is an emergency or a change to previously agreed arrangements with the club.
- (ii) Inform parents of appropriate times they can contact children who are away at camps or away trips, and discourage them from attempting contact outside of these times.
- (iii) Advise parents that it may not be possible to contact children during activities and provide a contact within the club who will be reachable should there be an emergency.
- (iv) Explain to children how using mobile phones during activities has an impact on their safe awareness of their environment, and their level of participation and achievement.