



Good Practice Guidelines On The Use Of Social Networking Sites

(April 2013 version 2)

diogelu safeguarding
safonau standards



A red banner containing several logos and text. From left to right: 'sportswales chwaraeon cyfwrdd', 'Hwyl Gyflawni' with the Wales Rugby Football Union crest, 'Fun Fulfilment', 'POINTFORE Official Grip Suppliers', and 'DUNLOP Official Ball Supplier'. Below this banner is a black bar with the text 'connect to Wales Squash and Racketball' and three social media icons: Facebook (LIKE US on facebook search for Squash Wales), Twitter (TWEET US on twitter search for @sqwales), and YouTube (SUBSCRIBE on youtube search for Welsh Squash).

Background

Communication methods are forever evolving, and increasingly sports are using social networking sites and other developing media outlets of choice to connect and interact with a wide range of groups.

There are both positive and negative aspects to using social networking sites, but it is important to acknowledge that if used properly, it can be a very effective communication and promotion tool.

Together with the many positive uses and exciting opportunities emerges exposure to potential Safeguarding risks to children and young people, from bullying to the distribution of indecent images of children.

Introduction

Social media is a widely used term which refers to several forms of communication, which can be further divided into the following categories:

- Social networking sites, such as Facebook, Bebo and My Space
- Micro Blogging services, such as Twitter
- Video Sharing Services, such as You Tube
- Photo Sharing services, such as DropBox and Flickr
- Online games and Virtual Reality, such as Xbox 360 live

It is a rapidly growing phenomenon and is increasingly being used as a communication tool of choice by young people and adults.

These sites permit users to, for example, chat online, post pictures and write blogs. These can either be made publicly available to all or restricted to an approved circle of friends.

Social networking can be a great tool to promote yourself or your club if used in the correct way. For example, link to web stories, provide video and photos, promoting events and activities, promoting the sport through various channels and connections.

The purpose of this guidance is to provide a recommendation of best practise to ALL on the use of social networking sites.

If used correctly, social networking can be a fun, safe and productive activity.

Note: throughout this guidance a young person/children is anyone under the age of 18.

Guidance for Coaches and others in position of trust and responsibility in respect of children/young people under the age of 18.

1. Use of Social Media, Emailing or Texting.

The following is meant as useful guidance to support coaches and those in a position of trust and responsibility who wish to use communication tools such as text messages, emails and social media sites in good faith.

The following is intended to minimise the risk of individuals being exposed to improper behaviour or improper allegations.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remember to act responsibly and respectfully when communicating, whether via email, website or mobile phone. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be wary that if you become their friend you will be able to see details of their private life. It could place you in a vulnerable position.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be mindful. It is inappropriate for adult coaches to communicate on a 1-2-1 basis with players under the age of 18. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a child/young person in your club requests to become your friend, you should decline if any of the following apply:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are in a position of responsibility in respect of that child/young person You hold a position of trust and responsibility in the club Your contact with the child/young person is through the club and the parent/guardian of them do not give their consent to such contact.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If using the above communication methods, you should copy to a third party. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before you post anything online, consider what you are about to post and who will be able to view it.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is advisable to send group messages rather than single messages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The publishing of photographs or videos is subject to the Governing Body media guidelines (refer to Code of Conduct).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that messages only refer to specific club related matters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure you set the appropriate privacy settings on your social networking account.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As an individual in a position of trust, you should not have any players under the age of 18 as friends on social networking sites. Instead encourage them to follow the organisation page. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not post or discuss comments or opinions about other coaches, volunteers, staff, players, clubs, parents or officials. To do so would breach the Governing Body Code of Conduct.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remember your position as a role model. 	

2. Notes

If a player is under 16, parental consent is required for communication between adult and young person.

If a player is under 18, parents should be informed and be made aware of the communication between the adult and young person.

3. Reporting Concerns

If a player discloses a message, email or image that is inappropriate for a child to have, you must inform a designated Safeguarding Officer or Club Welfare Officer.

If a child or young person is concerned or feels uncomfortable with anything encountered online, they should be advised to speak to their parent/guardian or adult that they trust.

Reports about suspicious behaviour towards children and young people in an online environment should be made to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre at

www.ceop.uk.

Guidance for Children and Young People.

Social networking sites are great to keep in contact with family and friends and share information and photographs or videos. But just be aware of the dangers, like bullying, being contacted by inappropriate people and exposure to adult content.

Bear in mind these good behaviours to keep you safe online:-

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use the internet safely and wisely. Do not put yourself at risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remember to set your privacy settings and not accept requests from people you do not know.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider who you are asking to be your friend. Not everyone is who they claim to be.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do not ask your coach to be your friend on a social networking site. They will refuse as it would be a breach of good practice.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider that others may be able to view your information, when not intended.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Never post anything that may be hurtful or upsetting. Consider the feelings of others.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Never give out your personal details.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check with your parents/guardian before you put something on your profile.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check your settings. Think who you want to see your information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do not respond to anything received that is hurtful or makes you feel uncomfortable. Copy it and tell your parent/guardian for support and advice.

Concerns

If you come across anything that causes concern, report it immediately to your parent/guardian or adult you can trust.

Reporting Lines/Further Advice

If you cannot share your concern with your parent/guardian or adult you trust, consider making contact with the following organisations:-

- Talk to childline: 0800 1111 / www.childline.org.uk
- NSPCC helpline: 0800 800 500 / www.nspcc.org.uk
- NSPCC support service for young people / www.childnet.org.uk

Guidance for Parents/Guardians.

- Stay involved with your child's use of the internet and in particular social networking sites.
- Get to know your child's online habits.
- Openly talk to your child about what they are doing online.
- Warn them about the potential dangers.
- Teach them ways to stay safe.
- Stay alert to any sudden changes in mood or appearance, or to any major change in habits.
- Install internet filtering software showing a Child Safety Online Kitemark on your computer.

Below is a list of agencies that you can contact, should you have any concerns that you wish to raise.

www.thinkuknow.co.uk - website with advice for parents on how to keep children safe online.

www.iwf.org.uk - Internet Watch Foundation works to remove illegal material from the internet.

www.nspcc.org.uk, www.beatbullying.org, www.barnardos.org.uk - websites with general advice that may be helpful for parents.