



# **SCOTTISH PARA-FOOTBALL**

**Social Media Policy**

**This policy is written to underpin both Scottish Para-Football as well Para-Football Game Leader Organisations who are members of Scottish Para-Football. Therefore this policy will be adopted by each individual Para-Football Game Leader Organisation. If your concern relate to Scottish Para-Football please contact the National Office. However if your concern relate to a Para-Football Game Leader Organisation please contact their Committee directly.**

## **Introduction**

Scottish Para-Football recognises that Social Networking sites and the use of Social Media has become a significant way of life for many people and that, when used appropriately, are a positive opportunity to communicate within Para-Football in Scotland.

There are instances, however where these sites can be used inappropriately in terms of content and the following policy is designed to provide a balance between supporting innovation and creativity and good practice procedures. When communicating online and working within the terms of this policy all players, parents/carers and individual Para-Football Game Leader Organisations officials must uphold Scottish Para-Football's values and ensure that all social media postings are acceptable.

As more clubs, leagues and Para-Football Game Leader Organisations are using social media to communicate information on events, promotion of activities, campaigns and schedule of games/training it is essential that coaches, officials, players and parents/carers agree to the follow this policy.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all players, parents / carers, officials, clubs, leagues and Para-Football Game Leader Organisations are aware of the general principles of acceptable use of social media sites and in doing so ensure that the reputation of Para-Football Game Leader Organisations is not adversely affected.

Players, parents/carers, officials, clubs and leagues must be aware of their responsibilities in order to protect all concerned and also be aware of the consequences of not doing so as inappropriate activity on Social Networking sites will be viewed as serious misconduct and will entitle Scottish Para-Football / Para-Football Game Leader Organisations to take disciplinary action against relevant player, official, club, league or Para-Football Game Leader Organisations in accordance with the disciplinary procedures.

## **Guidelines**

- Scottish Para-Football Official / Para-Football Game Leader Organisation Official should not refer to any confidential information relating to their role which includes any sensitive information or defamation of any other official, player or parent/carer
- Any misuse of a social networking site that may bring Scottish Para-Football /Para-Football Game Leader Organisations in disrepute, may result in disciplinary action against the player, official, club or league and could constitute gross misconduct.

- If a Scottish Para-Football Official, Para-Football Game Leader Organisation Official, player or parent/carer is concerned by information or content posted on social media sites (i.e. Twitter, Facebook, YouTube or Flickr) they should raise this concern with the clubs Safeguarding officer.
- Officials, players, parents/carers must refrain from using language which could cause offence to other or incite abuse or bullying
- Postings of photographs on social media sites must follow the Scottish Para-Football code of good conduct for the use of photographs and images
- Para-Football Game Leader Organisations should consider the propriety of sharing information with players or parents/carers via Social Networking sites. Officials who use social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter) personally must never “friend” or “follow” a player and should apply privacy settings to a level that prevent players having the ability to send friend requests.
- If you choose to include Individual Para-Football Game Leader Organisation Official in your professional capacity to the publicly available information on your Social Media profile, please include “All views expressed are my own and not of the Para-Football Game Leader Organisation”

Scottish Para-Football are clear what is unacceptable. These include

- Sending rude, offensive language (including swearing) or harassment, defamation of others.
- Embarrassing postings (e.g. some game results), breaching other privacy, friend requesting/following players who are children.
- Stalking other Para-Football officials, players or parents/carers.
- Revealing confidential information about a player, official, club, league or Para-Football Game Leader Organisation including financial information, club/league plans, policies, members and/or internal discussions.
- View, create or forward illegal material, defamatory material; pornographic or sexually explicit material, forward material that may cause offense to others including by not limited to discriminatory material or material that would violate the dignity of others, create an offensive or degrading environment (whether or not origin), religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability or age.
- Setting up or establishing virtual groups which may cause harm or discomfort to any other person
- View, create, send or forward illegal material.

This list is not definitive

### **Monitoring, Policies and Legal Issues**

- Email is also subject to national law, in particular the Computer Misuse Act, Copyright Act, Data Protection Act and the law of libel.

- The fact that emails can so easily and quickly be forwarded to other and that emails are not automatically and permanently deleted when wiped from a desktop means that defamation is a real danger. Care should be taken with the content of messages and derogatory remarks about another player, official, club, league or Para-Football Association
- The same rules applies to indecent, sexist, racist or obscene remarks.

## **Recommendations**

If you organisation decides that the most effective way of communicating to your players is via a social networking site then the club is strongly advised to set up an account in the name of the organisation and explicitly have for used named members, volunteers, parents and carers solely about football matters e.g. fixtures, cancellations and team selections.

At no time should there be any personal communication, banter or comments.

Organisations should appoint an appropriate adult(s) to monitor the content of their websites.

Children and young people should be advised by their coaches and parents/carers to always tell an adult they trust about communication that make them feel uncomfortable or where they have been asked not to tell their parents/carers about the communication.

Therefore we would suggest that as a general principle coaches, managers, ect should avoid using social networking sites as the primary way of communication with players.

## **DO**

- Ensure all privacy settings are locked so that the page(s) are used explicitly for organisation matters and are not used as a place to meet, share personal details or have private conversations.
- Nominate an official to monitor the social networking page regularly and remove access for anyone behaving inappropriately
- Make sure anyone within the club knows who is responsible for monitoring the content of the social networking areas and how to contact them
- Provide all users within the best practice guidelines using social networking sites.
- Gain written parent/carer permissions before access is given to U18's
- Inform Scottish Para-Football / Individual Para-Football Game Leader Organisations if you have received inappropriate, threatening or offensive material as this may be needed as evidence.

## **DON'T**

Unless a child/young person is a direct relation the officials, coaches, managers, referees and club officials should not;

- Accept as friend, players or referees U18 on social networking sites they are a member of of share their own personal social networking sites with children or young people involved in Para-Football
- Make contact with children or young people known through football outside of the football context on social media networking sites.

- Use internet or web based communications to send personal messages of a non-football nature to a child or young person.
- Engage in any personal communications, “Banter” or comments.

## Document Control

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