



Blaydon Harrier and Athletics Club

Online Safety and Social Media Policy

Note:

- the terms 'child' or 'children' apply to anyone under the age of 18
- the term 'parent' applies to anyone with guardianship or caring and parental responsibility for the child
- the term 'volunteers' applies to all members or parents who perform a role on behalf of the club, this includes Coaches, Officials and Committee members
- the term 'members' applies to all current members of the organisation over the age of 18

Online safety statement

This policy provides guidance on how Blaydon Harrier and Athletics Club (the organisation) uses the internet and social media, and the procedures for doing so. It also outlines how we expect volunteers, and the children who are members of our organisation, to behave online.

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

Aims

The aims of our online safety policy are:

- to provide volunteers with policy and procedure information regarding online safety and inform them how to respond to incidents
- to ensure our organisation 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, the organisation will:

- assess and manage the safety aspects – including what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour for volunteers, members and children when using websites, social media including Facebook and Instagram, apps and video conferencing platforms, including Zoom or Skype
- be aware of how volunteers in our organisation and the children they work with use social media both inside and outside of our setting
- ensure that we adhere to relevant legislation and good practice guidelines when using social media or video conferencing platforms

- provide training for the volunteers responsible for managing our organisation's online presence
- regularly review existing safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure that online safeguarding issues are fully integrated, including:
 - making sure concerns of abuse or disclosures that take place online are written into our reporting procedures
 - incorporating online bullying ('cyberbullying') in our anti-bullying policy

Managing our online presence

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

- all social media accounts will be password-protected, and at least two 'Media Coordinators' will have access to each account and password
- the accounts will be monitored by at least two designated Media Coordinators in order to provide transparency, who will have been appointed by the organisation's Committee
- the designated Media Coordinators managing our online presence will seek advice from our Welfare Officers to advise on safeguarding requirements
- designated Media Coordinators will remove inappropriate posts by children, members, or volunteers explaining why, and informing anyone who may be affected (as well as the parents of any children involved)
- we'll make sure children are aware of who manages our social media accounts and who to contact if they have any concerns about something that's happened online
- our Facebook group settings will be set to 'private' so that only invited members can see their content
- identifying details such as a child's home address, school name or telephone number shouldn't be posted on social media platforms
- any posts or correspondence will be consistent with our aims and tone as an organisation
- 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
- parents will need to give permission for photographs or videos of their child to be posted on social media
- video conferencing sessions will be password protected in order to maintain children's privacy and prevent exposure to inappropriate or harmful content by third parties

What we expect of our volunteers and members

- volunteers and members should be aware of this policy and behave in accordance with it
- volunteers and members should seek the advice of the designated Welfare Officers if they have any concerns about the use of the internet or social media

- volunteers and members should communicate any messages they wish to send out to children to the designated Media Coordinators responsible for the organisation's online presence
- volunteers and members should not communicate with children via personal accounts
- volunteers and members should not 'friend' or 'follow' children from personal accounts on social media and maintain the same professional boundaries online as they would in person when using organisation accounts
- volunteers and members should make sure any content posted on public personal accounts is accurate and appropriate, as children may 'follow' them on social media
- rather than communicating with parents through personal social media accounts, volunteers should choose a more formal means of communication, such as face-to-face, in an email or in writing, or use an organisational account or website
- emails or messages should maintain the organisation's tone and be written in a professional manner, e.g. in the same way you would communicate with fellow professionals, avoiding kisses (X's) or using slang or inappropriate language
- volunteers should not delete any messages or communications sent to or from organisation accounts
- volunteers should undertake all online safety training offered and gain a basic knowledge of the platforms children use and how to report or remove inappropriate content online
- 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
- at least one parent must be present during the delivery of any activities via video conferencing platforms at home
- any delivery of activities to children via video conferencing platforms will be supported by a minimum of two volunteers (even if they're not actively delivering) to ensure transparency
- volunteers/members and children must not engage in 'sexting' or send pictures to anyone that are obscene

What we expect of children

- children should be aware of this online safety policy and agree to its terms
- we expect children's behaviour online to be consistent with the guidelines set out in our acceptable use statement
- children should follow the guidelines set out in our acceptable use statement on all digital devices, including smart phones, tablets, and consoles

What we expect of parents

- parents should be aware of this online safety policy and agree to its terms
- parents should protect all children's privacy online and think carefully about what content they share about our sport online, where they share it and who they're sharing it with

- we expect parents' behaviour online to be consistent with the guidelines set out in our acceptable use statement and in our codes of conduct for parents

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:

- volunteers will avoid having children's personal mobile numbers and will instead seek contact through a parent
- we'll seek parental permission on each occasion we need to contact children directly; the purpose for each contact will be clearly identified and agreed upon
- 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
- smartphone users should respect the private lives of others and not take or distribute pictures of other people if it could invade their privacy
- 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
- if a child misinterprets such communication and tries to engage a volunteer in conversation, the volunteer will take the following steps:
 - end the conversation or stop replying
 - suggest discussing the subject further at the next practice or event
 - inform the organisation's Welfare Officers in the interest of transparency
 - if concerned about the child, provide contact details for the organisation's designated Welfare Officers or appropriate agencies, and report any concerns using the organisation's reporting procedures

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:

- make children aware of how and who to contact if there is an emergency or a change to previously agreed arrangements with the organisation
- advise parents that it may not be possible to contact children during activities and provide a contact within the club or organisation who will be reachable should there be an emergency
- 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

Further information for parents about keeping children safe online

NSPCC

The NSPCC's guidance for parents on online safety

nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP)

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Demand's website

ceop.police.uk

The UK Safer Internet Centre

Safer Internet Centre's advice for parents and children

saferinternet.org.uk

Important contacts

Media Coordinators

Name Nicola Perry

Tel 07739530712

Email bhacweb@gmail.com

Name Emma Lane

Tel 07753407190

Email members@blaydonharriers.onmicrosoft.com

Welfare Officers

Name Andrea Clarke

Tel 07855383732

Email andreaclarke@doctors.net.uk