



ATLANTIC RACQUET CENTRE (ARC) ONLINE SAFETY AND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Introduction

This policy provides guidance on how ARC uses the internet and social media, and the procedures for doing so. It also outlines how we expect the staff and volunteers who work for us, and the children, young people and adults at risk who are members of our organisation, to behave online.

Aims

The aims of our online safety policy are:

- to protect all children, young people and adults at risk involved with ARC and who make use of technology (such as mobile phones, games consoles and the internet) while in our care
- to provide staff and 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, ARC will:

- understand the safety aspects – including what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour for staff and children – when using websites, social media, apps and other forms of digital communication
- be aware that it doesn't matter what device is being used for digital interaction, but that the same safety aspects apply whether it is a computer, mobile phone or game console
- when using the social media platforms (including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram), ensure that we adhere to relevant legislation and good practice guidelines
- regularly review existing safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure that online safeguarding issues are fully integrated
- provide training for the person responsible for managing ARC's online presence

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 3 members of staff will have access to each account and password
- the account will be monitored by a designated person, who will have been appointed by the club Trustees
- the designated person managing our online presence will seek advice from our welfare officer to advise on safeguarding requirements

- a designated person 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)
- account, page and event settings will be set to “private” so that only invited club 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
- we’ll make sure that children and young people are aware of who manages our social media accounts and who to contact if they have any concerns about the running of the account
- parents will need to give permission for photographs or videos of their child to be posted on social media
- all of our accounts and email addresses will be fit for purpose

What we expect of staff and volunteers

- staff and volunteers should be aware of this policy and behave in accordance with it
- staff and volunteers should seek the advice of the welfare officer if they have any concerns about the use of the internet or social media
- staff and volunteers should communicate any messages they wish to send out to children and young people to the designated person responsible for ARC’s online presence
- staff and volunteers should not “friend” or “follow” children or young people from personal accounts on social media
- staff and volunteers should make sure any content posted is accurate and appropriate, as young people may “follow” them on social media
- staff and volunteers should not communicate with young people via personal accounts or private messages
- rather than communicating with parents through social media accounts, staff and volunteers should choose a more formal method of communication, such as face to face, in an email or in writing, or use an organisational account, profile or website
- at least one other member of staff should be copied in to any emails sent to children or young people
- staff should avoid communicating with children or young people via email outside of normal office hours
- emails should be signed off in a professional manner, avoiding the use of emojis or symbols such as “kisses” (“X “)
- any disclosures of abuse reported through social media should be dealt with in the same way as a face to face disclosure, according to our reporting disclosures
- smartphone users should respect the private lives of others and not take or distribute pictures of other people if it could invade their privacy

- staff, volunteers and young people must not engage in sexting or send pictures to anyone that are indecent, obscene or menacing

What we expect of children and young people

- children should be aware of this online safety policy and agree to its terms
- we expect children and young people'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

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), we'll take the following precautions to ensure young people's safety

- staff will avoid having children's or young people's personal mobile numbers and will instead seek contact through a parent or guardian
- we'll seek parental permission on each occasion we need to contact children or young people directly; the purpose for each contact will be clearly identified and agreed upon
- staff should have a separate phone from their personal one for any contact with parents or young people
- texts or emails will be used for communicating information and not to engage in conversation

if a young person misinterprets such communication and tries to engage a staff member in conversation, the member of staff will take the following steps: end the conversation or stop replying

suggest discussing the subject further at the next practice or event

if concerned about the child or young person, provide contact details for club welfare officer or appropriate agencies

Using mobile phones during sports activities

So that all children can enjoy and actively take part in all sports activities at ARC, we discourage the use of mobile phones during such activities

Use of other digital devices and programmes

The principles in this policy apply no matter which current or future technology is used – including computers, laptops, tablets, web-enabled games consoles and smart TVs – and whether an app, programme or website is used.

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

This Policy is recommended for approval by:

Signed: 

ARC Chair: Anoushka Lynd

Date: 12/04/2024

Signed: 

Club Welfare Officer: Tish Shere

Date: 12/04/2024