



ONLINE SAFETY AND COMMUNICATION POLICY

Woodland LTC (the club) strives to ensure that all children (anyone under 18) and adults at risk are safeguarded from abuse and have an enjoyable tennis experience.

This document sets out how the club uses the internet and social media, and the procedures for doing so. It also outlines expectations for online behaviour and communication with children.

The principles in this policy apply no matter which current or future technology is used.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Protect children involved with our organisation and who make use of technology (such as mobile phones, tablets, games consoles and the internet).
- Provide staff, coaches and volunteers with policy and procedure information regarding online safety and inform them how to respond to incidents
- Ensure our organisation operates within the law regarding how we behave online

This policy applies to all staff, coaches, volunteers, players, parents/carers and any other individuals associated with the club.

The club shall:

- Ensure any person managing the club's online presence is suitably trained or experienced
- provide staff with policy and procedure information regarding online safety and inform them of how to respond to incidents

General guidelines for the use of social media

Any person who makes use of online communication methods related to the club will adhere to the following guidelines:

- Refrain from publishing negative comments or pictures about other clubs, players, team mates, club members, or umpires and any controversial or potentially inflammatory subjects
- Avoid hostile, harassing or discriminatory communications based on a person's race, sex, gender identity, national origin, colour, disability, age sexual orientation, veteran status, marital status, religion or any other status protected by law
- Identify all copyrighted or borrowed material with citations and links. When publishing direct paraphrased quotes, thoughts, ideas, photos or videos , give credit to the original publisher or author



- Only use the facilities provided by Woodland LTC for topics related to tennis or the club
- Refrain from using social media platforms for inappropriate communications with children or vulnerable adults as defined by the club's Safeguarding and other policies

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 members of staff and/or volunteers will have access to each account and password
- social media accounts will be monitored by a designated person, who will have been appointed by the committee
- the designated person managing our online presence will seek advice from our Welfare Officer / County Safeguarding Officer and the LTA to advise on safeguarding requirements as required
- the designated person will remove any inappropriate posts, 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 those invited can see their content
- social media pages/groups (e.g. Facebook pages/groups) used to communicate with children must be an organization, community or sports group and not personal
- identifying details such as a child's home address, school details, telephone number or email will not be posted on social media platforms
- any posts or correspondence will be of a professional purpose
- we'll make sure children 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 be asked to give their consent for us to communicate with their children through social media, via video conference platforms or by any other means of communication
- parents will need to give consent for photographs or videos of their child to be posted on social media
- all of our accounts and email addresses will be appropriate, fit for purpose and only used for club specific activities
- video conferencing sessions will be password protected to maintain children's privacy and prevent exposure to inappropriate or harmful content by third parties

What we expect of staff, coaches and volunteers

- they should be aware of this policy and behave in accordance with it
- they should seek the advice from our Welfare Officer / County Safeguarding Officer and the LTA if they have any concerns about the use of the internet or social media
- any messages they wish to send out to children must be sent through the designated person responsible for the organisation's online presence
- they must not 'friend' or 'follow' children from personal accounts on social media
- they must make sure any content posted is accurate and appropriate

- they must not communicate with children via personal accounts or private messages
- they must communicate with parents through email or in writing, or use an organisational account, profile or website rather than via personal social media accounts
- they must copy in parents or at least one other member of staff, coach or volunteer to any communications sent to children
- they must avoid communication with children beyond dedicated event or activity timings , unless it is necessary for professional purposes (i.e. emergencies, whilst on a trip, etc.) and contacting the parents is not possible
- they must sign off any communication in a professional manner, avoiding the use of emojis or symbols such as kisses (“X’s”)
- they must respond to any disclosure of abuse in line with the safeguarding policy
- they must not engage in sexting, or send pictures or messages that are abusive, obscene, inappropriate, indecent or menacing to anyone
- they must ensure any 1-2-1 sessions with children involve the parents/carers being able to supervise their child, or alternatively, that another coach/member of staff is present. This supervision would not necessarily require the parents to be in the same room, as long as they are able to check in on the session

What we expect of children

- they should be aware of this policy
- they should follow the guidelines set out in our acceptable use statement on all devices
- they will behave responsibly online and refrain from any bullying or abusive behaviour

What we expect of parents/carers

- they should be aware of this policy and behave in accordance with it
- they should seek the advice from our Welfare Officer / County Safeguarding Officer and the LTA if they have any concerns about the use of the internet or social media
- they should communicate with staff, coaches and volunteers in a professional and appropriate manner
- they must not engage in sexting, or send pictures or messages that are abusive, obscene, inappropriate, indecent or menacing to anyone

Using mobile phones or other devices to communicate

When using mobile phone or other devices to communicate, we will take the following precautions to help keep children safe:

- staff, coaches and volunteers will communicate through parents directly or copy them into all messages to children
- where it is necessary to contact children directly, and it is not possible to copy the parents into the message, we will seek parental consent to do this or include a second practitioner
- messages will be used for professional communication, such as reminders about lesson times, meeting points etc.

- if a child tries to engage a member of staff, coach or volunteer in a conversation which is not of a professional manner (for example, their personal life), the member of staff, coach or volunteer will:
 - end the conversation or not reply
 - inform the Welfare Officer / County Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible and arrange to address the matter with the child and their parents appropriately
 - if the conversation raises safeguarding concerns, notify the LTA as soon as possible

This policy is reviewed every two years (or earlier if there is a change in national legislation).

Chairperson : Jane Tucker

Date: 24/07/2023

Welfare Officer : David Tucker

Date: 24/07/2023