



S13

APPROPRIATE COMMUNICATION & ONLINE CONDUCT GUIDANCE

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This guidance is aimed at all England Boxing (EB) members, clubs and regions and those individuals who have a responsibility for using digital media including email, messaging, managing websites and social networking sites.
- 1.2. It provides clear standards for communication within boxing to ensure all exchanges are appropriate.
- 1.3. This guidance can be read in conjunction with the Social Media Policy which sets expectations for all members when posting content online.

2. Best Practice for Online Communication

- 2.1. The following Persons with access to children, young people and adults at risk personal contact details should be kept to a practical minimum.
- 2.2. Contact details should never be passed on or used for other purposes without permission.
- 2.3. For under 18s, parent/carer consent must be obtained prior to sending them any digital communication.
- 2.4. Language should always be appropriate, respectful and professional.
- 2.5. Communication should be sent at appropriate times of the day (i.e. not late at night).
- 2.6. Communication should avoid language that is overly familiar or could be misinterpreted as so.
- 2.7. Communication should be about legitimate organisational information and not of a personal or social nature.
- 2.8. All people should be given the opportunity to request not to receive communication via any format.
- 2.9. Clubs and organisations should ensure that all volunteers know how to sensitively deal with concerns if they receive messages from a child, young person or adult at risk that could be considered concerning or inappropriate.
- 2.10. Permission to publish photos/videos of children, young people and adults at risk should be gained from them and their parents/carers, and the organisation should follow the Photography & Video Guidance.

- 2.11. Publishing excessive personal information of under 18s should be avoided (i.e. never include email address, home address, school attended, etc).
- 2.12. If problems such as cyber bullying or if a child, young person or adult at risk place themselves at risk with the information they share on the internet, the club or organisation should follow the relevant EB safeguarding guidance.
- 2.13. Any bullying and/or abuse online will be dealt with via the same EB procedures as offline bullying and/or abuse.
- 2.14. All participants should think carefully about their personal online profiles and should not link them to children, young people or adults at risk's pages or profiles.

3. Training & Checks

- 3.1. Best practice requires members whose role is to regularly communicate with children, young people and adults at risk, including their parents/carers, to have the following procedures in place:
 - a. Hold an active EB membership on the locker;
 - b. Have completed EB safeguarding education;
 - c. Hold a valid DBS and Barred List check; and
 - d. Understand the EB and club safeguarding Policies and Code.

4. Sharing or Posting Images

- 4.1. Before taking or sharing images:
 - a. Get consent first from parents/carers and where appropriate, the child, young person or adult at risk;
 - b. Use club-approved consent forms and respect any restrictions given;
 - c. Be clear about how and where images will be used (website, social media, newsletters); and
 - d. Only use club-managed accounts — never personal accounts.
- 4.2. When taking photos or videos:
 - a. Ensure children, young people and adults at risk are appropriately dressed for the sport;
 - b. Avoid close-up images that focus on one child unnecessarily;
 - c. Use group shots where possible; and
 - d. Do not use images taken in changing rooms, toilets, or private areas — these should never be taken.
- 4.3. Protect privacy:
 - a. Do not name children, young people or vulnerable adults in images unless consent has been given;

- b. Avoid tagging children or sharing personal details (e.g. full names, locations, schedules); and
 - c. Check background details carefully to ensure nothing sensitive is visible.
- 4.4. What not to share:
- a. Do not share images that could be misinterpreted or misused;
 - b. Never share images as a form of punishment, embarrassment or pressure; and
 - c. Do not share images outside the agreed purpose or platform.
- 4.5. Responsibility and reporting:
- a. Images should be uploaded and stored by nominated club officials only;
 - b. Any concerns about images being shared inappropriately should be reported immediately to the Club Welfare Officer (CWO); and
 - c. Remove images promptly if consent is withdrawn or concerns are raised.
- 4.6. Social media awareness:
- a. Be mindful that once an image is shared online, control is lost;
 - b. Check privacy settings regularly on club platforms; and
 - c. Disable public comments where possible on images of children.

5. Email

- 5.1. Email can provide an excellent opportunity to quickly disseminate information to a group of people. However, there are some risks and clubs and organisations should be aware of good practice, which includes:
- a. Emails should come from the same person or club email account, i.e. Secretary, Head Coach;
 - b. Emails should be sent to groups rather than individual children, young people or adults at risk;
 - c. Communication with a child, young person or adult at risk must also include the part/carer.
 - d. Communication should be about legitimate organisational information and not of a personal or social nature.
 - e. For group emails, consideration should be made as to if it is appropriate to allow others access to all the recipient's email addresses. Using the 'blind carbon copy' (Bcc) function hides recipient's email addresses from each other; and
 - f. Parents/carers should be able to provide their own email address instead of that of a child, young person or adult at risk.

6. Text & Instant Messaging

- 6.1. The use of text or instant messaging (such as Messages, WhatsApp) increases the vulnerability of the child, young person or adults at risk and (typically) the sender such as a coach. However, it is one of the most direct forms of communication so organisations may decide to use text or instant messaging.

- 6.2. Good practice for managing risks relating to text or instant messaging include:
- a. It should be an organisational decision to use text or instant messaging, rather than a decision taken in isolation by one person;
 - b. Communication with a child, young person or adult at risk must also include the part/carer.
 - c. Communication should be about legitimate organisational information and not of a personal or social nature.
 - d. Persons should not allow anyone to use their phone to message a young person; and
 - e. Snapchat in an inappropriate medium to communicate with participants.

7. Phone & Voice Calls

- 7.1. Whilst less used as a communication method, phone calls are a key way to communicate direct information to participants. Unlike Email text and instant messaging, the ability to communicate with multiple participants at the same time is a less used feature.
- 7.2. Good practice for managing risks relating to phone calls include:
- a. 1:1 phone calls with a child, young person or adult at risk are not required as part of EB activities;
 - b. In an emergency where a call to a child young person or adult at risk needs to be made, the focus of the call should be about legitimate organisational information and not of a personal or social nature;
 - c. Communication with a child, young person or adult at risk must also include the part/carer; and
 - d. Persons should not allow anyone to use their phone to call a young person.
- 7.3. The same principles should be applied to Facetime calls and calls to individuals through social media and applications such as, but not limited to Teams, Zoom and Skype.

8. Club Websites & Social Media Accounts

- 8.1. Regions and clubs should be mindful in how they present themselves online and the risks online activity can pose to young people if not used appropriately.
- 8.2. Good practice guidelines include:
- a. Your website/profile should always present a professional image;
 - b. Owners should plan how to manage their website/social networking profile and more than one person should have 'moderator' access so content can be edited/removed quickly if necessary;
 - c. The website/profile should be regularly monitored and links reviewed regularly to ensure they are appropriate and working;

- d. Procedures and contact details for reporting any problems/concerns should be easy to locate;
- e. Contact details for the CWO are available and links established to help organisations such as the NSPCC and Childline;
- f. If organisations decide to publish profiles of under 18s, permission should be sought first from them and their parents/carers.
- g. If there is a minimum age on a social networking site, owners and members will not target young people under this age to use it;
- h. Members should think carefully about their personal online profiles and should not link them to children, young people or adults at risk's profiles; and
- i. Members should think carefully about what they post online and must not post or share content that could be considered inappropriate, including insulting, explicit, offensive, or hateful language or imagery.

9. Additional Guidance

- 9.1. This guidance is intended to be read in conjunction with the following EB guidance and resources:
 - a. Social Media Policy
 - b. Photography & Video Guidance
 - c. Parent/Carer Consent Form – Photography & Filming
 - d. Recording Meetings Guidance
- 9.2. This guidance is supported by the following resources from the NSPCC and CPSU:
 - a. [CPSU – WhatsApp go-to guide for sports](#)
 - b. [NSPCC – Social media, online communities & safeguarding](#)
 - c. [NSPCC – Photographing & filming children](#)
- 9.3. EB accept that online technology and digital media is rapidly changing industry. The principles behind this and EB's wider suite of guidance documents apply to all communication and digital media, not just those specifically referenced, both now and as part of any future technology development.
- 9.4. Any member deliberately circumnavigating the principles of safe communication with children, young people and adults at risk through developments in technology, will be addressed under the Safeguarding Procedure and/or Disciplinary Procedure. The safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk is of paramount importance to EB both on and offline.

Version 2.0

Approved by Compliance Team

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Major additions to this Document are highlighted in yellow for reference.