



**Crusaders Rugby Union
Football Club
Social Media Policy**

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Introduction

Members of Crusaders Rugby Union Football Club enjoy opportunities and rewards of a community-based sports club combined with affiliation to county and national rugby union associations. Social networking sites are a useful way for keeping in touch with friends, family and club members, and are also a great way to exchange information. If used correctly they can also offer valuable opportunities for rugby to communicate and engage a growing audience, as well as existing members, supporters and players.

However, members must not forget that what they post on social networking sites may be seen across those networks and it is subsequently expected that members will uphold the ethos of the club in all social media interactions. Members will not act in such a way that the image of Crusaders Rugby Union Football Club or the RFU is brought into disrepute nor in a way that harms its immediate and wider rugby community.

This policy applies to all social media forums and accounts both existing at the time of its publication and that which may emerge over time.

Signed:

Mr Justin Williams
Club Chairperson

Miss Natalie Eccles
Club Secretary

Mrs Jenna Keyes
Safeguarding Officer

Dated:

Defining Social Media

We have a number of social media sources which we use: these are examples of what we currently use and does not constitute an exhaustive list:

- Facebook groups (different sections or teams in the Club)
- Facebook pages (different sections or teams in the Club)
- Twitter
- Instagram
- WhatsApp
- YouTube

There are others which are not names here, but these should be considered to be electronic communication where individuals can interact online, be it within applications or on web pages, where the banner includes the Club's name or branding, in part or in full.

Purpose

With social media a prominent method of communication for the Club, where we can express opinions and is a key way for us to engage with members of our club, along with the wider community, it is important for us to have a policy to demonstrate how we ensure we are represented in a suitable manner and can take action should the need arise. We are taking this opportunity to remind our members of the importance of ensuring that all our social networking streams should be used thoughtfully and responsibly.

While the Club encourages social media networking among members, we are mindful of the need to ensure that all content is suitable for publication and does not breach any laws or common decency. Participants should be aware that comments which bring the game into disrepute, or are threatening, abusive, indecent or insulting, may lead to disciplinary action. Comments can attract civil and criminal action. Nearly 5,000 offences involving Facebook and Twitter were reported to police in 2012 and 653 people were charged.

General Guidance

- This policy applies to all club members, parents of juniors and anybody wishing to establish an account bearing any identification.
- This policy aims to support Crusaders Rugby management and its members in safely and effectively using social media to communicate with club members and the wider community.
- This social media policy aims to protect the reputation of the club, committee and the members it serves.
- Crusaders Rugby Union Football Club recognises that some members will make use of social networking. Whilst there is no intention to restrict any proper and sensible exercise of the individual's rights and freedoms, it is expected that all members will conduct themselves in such a way as to avoid bringing Crusaders Rugby Union Football Club into disrepute or compromising its effectiveness.
- This policy has been prepared to protect the privacy, confidentiality and interests of Crusaders Rugby Union Football Club and is not meant to infringe upon an individual's personal interaction or commentary online.

- All members are asked to respect the privacy, confidentiality and propriety of Crusaders Rugby Union Football Club and those working on its behalf, and not post anything that might be considered to breach this.
- Members should take care when discussing information relating to Crusaders Rugby Union Football Club affairs as discussions can sometimes be misinterpreted and could potentially put other members or the public- at-large at risk.
- All members should be aware that any inappropriate posts made to social media sites could lead to disciplinary action and in extreme cases, civil and criminal liability.
- All members must take account of the following before posting to the internet, including engaging in blogging or the use of forums, video sharing or social networking sites.
- Members should be aware that the committee takes the posting at any time of offensive material, and the harassment, bullying or victimisation of members via the Internet and social media very seriously.
- A breach of any of the following may lead to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.
- Members must not divulge any confidential information or information belonging to Crusaders Rugby Union Football Club which is not in the public domain or expand upon such information already available in the public domain.
- If a member discloses that they are attached to Crusaders Rugby Union Football Club, then it must be made absolutely clear that any views expressed do not represent the official position of the Club but are the views of the individual.
- Members cannot write a blog in an official capacity unless sanctioned by the Chairman or Committee, i.e., representing the views of Crusaders Rugby Union Football Club. If however, they give a personal opinion as an experienced person in a particular field, they must state that this is solely their view and not the view of the Club.
- Any photographs of Crusaders Rugby Union Football Club staff in club garments must not be used to harass, intimidate or bring the club into disrepute.
- Members must not display offensive images, including racism, homophobia, hate-crime, sexually explicit materials or make offensive comments, or in any way harass, intimidate, bully, victimise or discriminate against other members or the public.
- Re-posting or re-tweeting inappropriate content represents an endorsement of that content and can be actionable.
- Deleting or apologising publicly for an improper posting does not prevent disciplinary action being taken.
- The content posted across official social media accounts must be relevant, age appropriate and uphold the Club's reputation at all times.

Individuals need to understand that they are personally responsible and liable for their comments and postings. At all times you should exercise discretion and be respectful of other players, teams, officials, organisations and brands.

What you regard as “banter” could be regarded as embarrassing or hurtful by a wider audience and bring the game into disrepute.

Do's	Don't's
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do show your personality and be approachable • Do share your achievements • Do let people know what it is like to be a player/official 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't comment if you have any concerns about the consequences • Don't link to unsuitable content • Don't get into disputes with an audience

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do post regular comments to grown and engage with an audience • Do report ant content that you encounter that is in breach of this policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't share or elicit personal information
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Committee Members Responsibilities

All committee members have a duty to implement this policy and take action if they become aware of any breach of this policy and should explain the club's policy on the use of social media and networking siters and take steps to promote awareness of this policy.

All reports of cyber-bullying and other technology misuses including breaches of the Data Protection Act 1998 will be investigated fully and may result in notification to the police where Crusaders Rugby Union Football Club is obliged to do so. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to, suspension, or banning from membership of Crusaders Rugby Union Football Club.

Members must be aware that in certain circumstances where a crime has been committed, they may be subject to a criminal investigation by the police over which the Club will have no control.

Administrators of accounts

Accounts will have a minimum of 3 representatives acting as administrators (one of which must be either the chairman, secretary or safeguarding officer) to ensure that accounts can be accessed easily during times of holiday and absence.

Administrators of the Club's official social media accounts must agree to sign up to this social media policy and conduct themselves in a way that is appropriate in upholding and building a positive image of the club at all times.

Administrators of the Clubs' official social media accounts agree to use password protocols, and agree that responsibility for protecting this password and access to the accounts (e.g. logging out effectively of browsers) remains their responsibility at all times. Any breech of this protocol must be immediately communicated to the Club Committee and steps taken to limit impact.

Administrators of the Club's official social media accounts must not promote their own products or services across the official social media accounts of the Club unless expressly agreed in advance by the Chairman.

Where an administrator is associated with more than one club, e.g., rugby coach, the committee reserve the right to restrict the promotion of activities through the official club channels to those relevant specifically to the Club.

Administrators looking to endorse, promote or engage in a national campaign on behalf of official partners such as RFU or sponsors or unofficial partners such as community groups, must first seek written approval from the club committee to mobilise the social media channel to this effect.

For the purpose of effective management and measurement, administrators will agree when requested to do so, to use relevant social media management tools/protocols as requested club committee. The committee reserve the right to evolve these tools/approaches in keeping with new trends and approaches to managing and being effective in social media delivery.

Administrators agree not to spam or communicate with members of social media groups/forums in a way that could be determined as being of detriment to the reputation of the Club.

Administrators agree not to pursue public debates that could bring the Club and/or the game of rugby into disrepute more widely or proactively provoke members of the Club to do the same.

Administrators distributing content on behalf of the club will ensure that the appropriate agreements have been sought on any photographs or film footage uploaded and shared within social media environments across the official accounts.

Ownership of official social media accounts

All social media accounts established on behalf of the Club remain under the ownership of the Club at all times. Administration access to the accounts must be given up when requested by the Club committee.

Social media accounts established on behalf of the club will present a professional image/shop window at all times with a description of the Club and link to the official Club website where appropriate.

Social media accounts registered and approved by the club committee will become subject to these social media guidelines and uphold this policy at all times.

Use of the Club badge and Club Name

It is not permitted for a social media account to carry the official name or badge of the Club or imply an association in any way with the Club without the official approval of the club committee.

Members must not use any Crusaders Rugby Union Football Club logo or other copyright material that infers official endorsement of the photography, article document or opinion without written request being made to the Crusaders Rugby Union Football Club committee and approval given, via the club secretary by emailing ecclesna.crusaders@gmail.com

Responsibility of Club Members

Any representative of the official social media accounts for the Club must not through their actions jeopardise the privacy of any member associated with the Club.

Data gathered through social medial channels should not be used or published without the consent of the member. This includes allowing members the option of opting out of any social media directory produced.

Confidentiality must be upheld across the club social media channels at all times, no direct messages should be made public without consent of the person responsible for the original post and content discussed within committee meetings may not be disclosed on social media unless agreed by those present.

Take Down Policy

Clubs are aware that they can be vicariously liable for material published by employees in the course of their employment, for example on an official website, Facebook site or Twitter Feed, or published by employees outside work via a work email address or a work Twitter handle.

Clubs can also be liable for third party comments and postings made on any of their social media platforms.

We insist that:

- Participants clearly identify themselves
- Participants follow standards mentioned throughout this policy and align to the RFU's Core Values and the guidelines
- Should an administrator deem an article, post or comment contradicts the guidelines it will be taken down at the earliest opportunity
- The club will hold members to account for any breaches

Safeguarding

In the same way that Crusaders Rugby Union Football Club has a responsibility for the physical safety of mini and youth members when on the Club's premises, the Club must also ensure that there is nothing on its website not social media, which could harm a child, directly or indirectly. Crusaders Rugby Union Football club is responsible for the content of its website. Social media content, which can be posted by all members, will be moderated to ensure inappropriate content is removed.

Children under the age of 13 are not permitted to establish a Facebook account. The nature of social media and cookie tracking in digital environments puts children under this age at considerable risk.

No official club social media channel or administrator of the club's official accounts will use social media to communicate or engage with children under 13. Please note that parental permission does **not** constitute permission to breach this element of the policy. For further information please see the CPSU guidelines for protecting children in digital environments.

The RFU's Safeguarding Policy advises coaches/managers from having direct personal communication with children unless in exceptional circumstances and coaches and club officials should not communicate through social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter, nor should they be "friends" with children or comment on their status.

When posting on social media there are two key risks to guard against:

1. **Disclosing personal information about a child on social media:** this could be the child's name, address, or any personal information about a child's life, interests or activities which could help a stranger target a child or engage that child in conversation.
2. **Abusive or inappropriate contact (photos video or text), on social media:** this includes material which criticises or humiliates a child. It could also be information which places undue pressure on a child to participate in some aspect of the Club's activities.

Online Photos and Video

Photos and video clips can make any child featured vulnerable to grooming if information about the child is also disclosed. Furthermore, posting an image on social media carries a risk that the image could be taken and adapted for an inappropriate use.

Crusaders Rugby Union Football Club will abide by all of the following RFU recommendations regarding photo and video images and will obtain consent from the appropriate responsible person(s) before using any images of children or vulnerable adults on its website. Consent request clauses are included in the registration form which is completed each season and are also held by the Club age group administrators.

RFU Recommendations:

- Use group images, rather than individual images
- For images of individual children (such as action shots) where possible use models or illustrations
- Only use images of children in suitable dress, to minimise the risk of inappropriate adaption of the image
- If a child is named on the site, do not include an image (individual or group). If a child features in an image on the site, do not use the child's first name or last name, either in text on the site or in the image file name.

Administrators must take all best efforts to ensure privacy of players etc. especially when injuries occur. Videos/photos of injuries should not appear on official sites without express consent of the individual.

Administrators of club official accounts must be aware that any content (photos or film) posted on social media passes on ownership of the material to the social media providers e.g., Facebook. Therefore, caution must be extended in passing on rights over club material (of value) to a third party.

Administrators will not download/copy/redistribute photographs from social media that do not belong to them, permission must be agreed in writing before using photographs in this way. Any content shared from online environments will link and/or credit the original source of the content.

Webcams and Live Image Streams

Crusaders Rugby Union Football Club will not use webcams to stream live images of children or vulnerable adults and if use of a webcam to broadcast images of children or vulnerable adults is required, the Safeguarding Officer at the Club will contact the RFU for further guidance before permission is granted.

Mobile and Online Communication with Children

There are now many different ways for people to communicate. In addition to landlines, there are mobile phones for voice, text and video calls and most mobile phones incorporate cameras which take still shots and video. Online communication can be by email, instant messaging and social networking sites.

The risks posed by such methods of communication arise from:

- The privacy, it is often one to one
- The wide range of content that can be transmitted, including content of a violent, sexual or hateful nature
- The ease with which images can be forwarded onto others
- The difficulty in knowing truly who you are communicating with. Where grooming happens, it often involves this type of communication.

In sport, there are additional risk:

- Inappropriate pressure can be exerted by adults, particularly coaches, on children
- There can be inappropriate criticism of a young player's performance
- An official position or role within a club, such as a coach, can carry with it a level of authority and engender a level of trust that facilitates the control of a child.

Crusaders Rugby Union Football Club will abide by all RFU guidance with regard to mobile and online communication with children and vulnerable adults and will cascade any information for them to the parents/carers of that child or vulnerable adult. Crusaders Rugby Union Football Club will not directly contact a child or vulnerable adult directly by mobile phone unless prior consent is given by the parent/carer.

Club Communication Guidelines

- All age group communications- for example fixture information, team selection, should be sent via the Club newsletter. Emails should only be sent using email groups comprising of email addresses given by parents. An email should not be sent to a child unless the parent is also copied. Such emails should only come from age group coaches or administrators as communicated to parents.
- Other Online (social media) Services, No club member may initiate a social media outlet that is directly linked and intended to be used by Club members without the express permission of the Committee.

Twitter: can be used for broadcasting information but must not be used for 1-1 (direct) messaging between adults and young people.

Facebook: Communication via Facebook is permitted only via public Facebook pages where the content is public. Private, closed groups and 1-1 messaging between coached and young people must have the permission of the Safeguarding Officer.

Other online and social media services whether public or private are not permitted. Requests to add other services to the approved list should be directed to the Club Safeguarding Officer.

SMS Messaging (texting): club officials and coaches should only communicate directly with individual children by text at any time, on any matter, if the parent/carer is copied on such communication or there is an immediate risk to the welfare of that child which can be lessened by such contact.

Telephone: when communication by phone is needed, club officials and coaches can speak to individual young people on the phone provided they have prior consent from the child's parents/carer and from the young person if old enough to understand.

Reporting

If you are a member who believes that you are being harassed, bullied or victimised as a result of another member's post to any an internet site, it is open to you to take the necessary action. Members should contact the Chairman, Secretary or Safeguarding Officer for support and guidance on the informal and formal action that can be taken.

Useful Contacts

Crusaders RUFC

Role	Name	Contact
Club Chairperson	Justin Williams	justin.williams959@gmail.com
Club Safeguarding Officer	Jenna Keyes	jennaeyes@outlook.com
Club Secretary	Natalie Eccles	ecclesna.crusaders@gmail.com
Club Treasurer	Michaela Currums	m.currums@outlook.com
Club Discipline Secretary	David Williams	mcwill13@btinternet.com
All other enquiries		crusaders.rugby@outlook.com

Eastern Counties RFU

Role	Name	Contact
Eastern Counties Safeguarding Manager	Sally Lloyd	safeguarding@norfolkrfu.co.uk

RFU

Role	Name	Contact
Head of Safeguarding	Vivien Rimmer	vivienrimmer@rfu.com
Safeguarding Compliance Officer	Chris Rawlings	chrisrawlings@rfu.com

The club committee reserves the right to update/amend this policy at any time in line with RFU and Government legislation

Jenna Keyes- Crusaders Rugby Union Football Club, February 2021