

# Badminton England Safeguarding Guidance



2.0

**SOCIAL MEDIA - HOW TO POSITIVELY COMMUNICATE  
WITH YOUNG PEOPLE IN BADMINTON**

**BADMINTON ENGLAND** 



# SOCIAL MEDIA - HOW TO POSITIVELY COMMUNICATE WITH YOUNG PEOPLE IN BADMINTON.

We understand that it is much easier for a team or club to let its players know the times of training sessions and league fixtures using social media. However, we also have to recognise that all digital platforms can be misused, with increased risks to children and young people.

While the internet has many positive uses, electronic communications can be open to misinterpretation and unfortunately, the internet provides the key method for the distribution of indecent images of children. Social networking sites, chat rooms and instant messaging systems are increasingly being used by online predators to 'sexually groom' children and young people and electronic communication is being used more and more by young people as a means of bullying their peers.

It is essential therefore that everyone involved in badminton makes informed decisions about how they communicate positively with young people in our sport and if you have any doubts at all then seek further advice.

## General rules

You must always:

- Obtain signed consent from parents/carers before having any direct communication with young people aged under 18 in badminton.
- Ensure all communication is for badminton related matters only
- Be clear about who is running any contact 'group', its purpose, who may join and who people can contact if they have a concern about the content
- Consider what you post - always behave responsibly and respectfully
- Understand that the publishing of a photograph or video footage on a website or social networking site is governed by the same requirements as any other media. Always ensure you have parental permission before you post any photo of a young person. For further guidance see the Badminton England Photography Policy.
- Report to the club welfare officer if you receive any inappropriate communication from a young person.

Make sure you do not:

- Use social media for personal conversations, gaming, jokes or 'banter' – keep to badminton related purposes only
- Post or discuss unfavourable comments about coaches, players, any helper or volunteer, parents or club/s. Negative comments may contravene the Badminton England Codes of Conduct and therefore may be subject to disciplinary action



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## Instant Messaging services including WhatsApp, Facebook messenger, Snapchat

We do not endorse individual messages on these platforms

- If you are using for a group, ensure there is an administrator who is known to the club / group and parents and there is a clear process whereby people can make their concerns heard
- Gain written parent/carer permission before any access is given to under 18s and note the minimum age for WhatsApp users is now 16 years old.

## Text Messages

- Text messages are not the preferred method of communication between adults and young people
- Where they are used, they should be group messages and should always be copied into the relevant Welfare Officer.
- In the event of an emergency, individual texts may be used but should be copied into the Welfare Officer and/or parent.

## Club Facebook or other social networking site page

- Clubs using Facebook must only accept members of the club as their online 'contacts' on the Club page. This must be stated on the page and the page must be set up for that reason.
- Where clubs operate a social networking page links may be made from the young person's page to the club page but additional personal links between the pages of adults and young people must not be created.
- Ensure the site's privacy settings are high, ensuring that an outside person may not be able to make contact with a young person by first gaining access via the club's page.
- All are reminded that most social networking websites are restricted to people aged 13 years and over. This restriction must be adhered to.
- A coach may wish to consider setting up separate professional Facebook pages which link into club sites and allow a method of open communication for players and parents.

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## Personal sites

- Adults/volunteers must not have players under the age of 18 as their 'friends' on personal social networking sites when the primary reason for the relationship is badminton and they have a position of trust in relation to that young person.
- If you hold an official role at your badminton club or association and a young person within the badminton network requests to become a named friend on your personal social networking page or request that you become a named friend on their page you must decline.

## Make sure it is clear in your club how you can report concerns and to whom

- In the event of a player showing you a text or instant message, image or email that is considered to be inappropriate for a child to have, you must inform the appropriate Welfare Officer, either at club or Badminton England national level.
- If a young person is concerned with anything they have seen on the internet they must speak to their Welfare Officer.

## Further Reading and guidance:

For Child Protection in Sport Unit guidance on online safety:

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/help-advice/topics/online-safety/>

For specific information in relation to the safe use of different social media please see:

<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/>

Online & mobile safety for young people:

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/>



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## The use of Social Media to communicate with Young People (U18) at an Event

We recognise that in a tournament or event situation where young people are on a large site, there needs to be a direct route for contact between a young person and their coach or team manager and going through a third party (i.e. a parent) is not always possible.

However, we also have to recognise that all digital platforms can be misused, with increased risks to children and young people, therefore please read the following information in conjunction with the document - **Badminton England Safeguarding Guidance 2.0: Social Media: How to positively communicate with young people.**

### If you are at an event with a group of young people ensure you do the following:

- Obtain signed consent from parents/carers before using any of these methods of communication with children or young people under the age of 18. Complete this paperwork as part of the pre event consent/event information.
- Be clear in your dialogue with parents and young people about how you will communicate, how you will hold the contact details of the young people and that you will delete the information from your device after the event.
- Under no circumstances put young people under pressure to join a social group for the event if they don't wish to; appreciate that all young people are different and instead devise other ways of communication, for example, agreed meet times, or encouraging them to have contact details of other young people in the team
- Keep the communication to badminton related purposes only: do not use social media for personal conversations, gaming, jokes or 'banter'

### Group communications are safer

- Where possible use group communication with young people
- Group emails are preferred, although in the case of an email to one person, a copy should be sent to the relevant Welfare Officer or parent.
- Where text or media messages are used, they should be messages sent to the whole group or squad
- You may wish to use an App to set up a badminton group for the event but make sure you understand the minimum age for using these



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## For all communication

- Be respectful to the recipient/s, the message must be badminton related only
- Do not use emojis or casual speak
- Do not send any images
- Do not send any messages that could be misinterpreted, keep to the facts in your communication
- Do not message late at night, i.e. after agreed lights out, or before agreed breakfast time meet, young people need their down time even at an event.

## Further Reading and guidance:

For CPSU online guidance: <https://thecpsu.org.uk/help-advice/topics/online-safety/>

For specific information in relation to the safe use of different social media please see:

<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/>

Online & mobile safety for young people:

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/>