



Gymnastics In Ipswich Policies



Pipers Vale Gymnastics Club Social Media Policy

Purpose of this Policy

Pipers Vale Gymnastics Club (PV) is committed to making the best use of all available technology and innovation to improve the way the Charity operates. This includes using all reasonable and cost-effective means to improve the way we communicate, reach out and interact with the different communities we serve.

'Social media' is the term commonly given to web-based tools which allow users to interact with each other in some way – by sharing information, opinions, knowledge, and interests online. As the name implies, social media involves building online communities or networks to encourage participation and engagement. These platforms open up many new and exciting opportunities. However, the practical application of such technology by PV is continually developing and there are many potential issues to consider. To avoid major mistakes which could result in reputational, legal, and ethical issues, and misuse/ abuse of a well-functioning social media relationship, it is important that we manage any potential risks through a common-sense approach, as well as proactively monitoring the development of such applications.

Aims

These guidelines aim to provide our members with information concerning the use/ development of any social media application and help them get the best out of the tools available whilst maintaining a safe environment and protecting themselves, as well as PV.

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies including

- PV's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- PV's Anti Bullying Policy
- British Gymnastics Relevant Policies

Definition of Social Media

For the purposes of these guidelines, social media is a type of interactive online media that allows parties to communicate instantly with each other or to share data in a public forum. This includes, but is not limited to email, online social forums, blogs, video, and image sharing websites/ apps and similar facilities.

Parent/ Guardian/ Carer Consent for Gymnasts

- PV actively uses the media, social media, and the internet to publicise its work, celebrate the success of its gymnasts and engage with the wider public. This often requires the use of videos, images and written comments, which name and identify gymnasts;
- All media consent is carried out in line with the PV Privacy Statement and GDPR policy;
- As members of PV, parents/ guardians/ carers are required to either give/ not give consent for their child to be involved in photography/ filming for PV - to be used in advertising, social media or for training purposes. A copy of this consent form can be requested via dataprotection@pipersvale.co.uk

PV's Expectations regarding Social Media Use

- PV uses a closed Facebook page and Instagram page to appropriately share information and videos of gymnasts in training/ competition, as well as Club updates. Parents/ guardians/ carers or gymnasts should not make any negative or derogatory comments regarding PV or any of the coaches on any of these platforms;
- Parents/ guardians/ carers, gymnasts and staff are required to maintain a positive image of the Club and should strive to be a positive influence and representative for PV online;
- Parents/ guardians/ carers should contact the Welfare Team if they have any concerns regarding the social media and/ or online content that PV uses in relation to their child by emailing welfare@pipersvale.co.uk

How do we Maintain a Positive Image of PV Online?

In addition to protecting children in our Club, those connected to PV have a responsibility to maintain a positive image of PV and the sport of gymnastics. It is important to understand, that if used correctly, social networking can be a fun, safe and productive activity.

The following guidelines refer to any posts, photographs, video, status updates and any other item that can be published on social media, which mentions or directs attention towards PV:

- Staff, coaches, gymnasts, and parents/ guardians/ carers alike should avoid posting comments, remarks, photographs, and videos that could be perceived as disparaging about the Club, coaches, officials, or other gymnasts. This applies to private text messaging as well as all social media and instant messaging services;
- Staff, coaches, gymnasts and parents/ guardians/ carers should avoid posting any remarks, photographs or video that could be disparaging or embarrassing to another Gymnastics Club or any organisation, it's members, coaches or officials;
- Staff, coaches and gymnasts must respect other people's views, even if they are not consistent with their own
- Gymnasts should avoid social chat with Club coaches or officials via any instant messaging or text service;
- Parents/ guardians/ carers should avoid interacting with gymnasts other than their own children via social media/ text message;
- Coaches, staff, gymnasts and parents/ guardians/ carers must not upload photographs/ videos to any social media sites if they contain gymnasts other than their own child without prior consent from their parent/ guardian/ carer;

- Coaches, staff, gymnasts and parents/ guardians/ carers must not upload photographs/ videos to any social media sites if they contain Club coaches/ officials/ volunteers without their prior consent;
- Coaches, staff, gymnasts and parents/ guardians/ carers must not copy and upload professional photographs/ videos without the consent of the photographer;
- Parents/ guardians/ carers are encouraged to monitor their children's use of social media in order to protect them and guide them in its appropriate use.

Additionally, PV members and their parents/ guardians/ carers should remember that using social media channels to specifically communicate with coaches, especially in visible communications (e.g., via Facebook pages) is not generally appropriate. Any direct communications for coaches should utilise private channels such as emails or face to face conversations. This is particularly relevant when members and parents/ guardians/ carers have concerns or complaints. Coaches, gymnasts and parents/ guardians/ carers should inform PV if at any point they notice a contravention to these guidelines.

Any breach of these guidelines could result in disciplinary action in line with our Disciplinary and Grievance policy, or the gymnast/ parent/ guardian/ carer being restricted access to our facilities or membership of the Club.

Additional Guidelines for PV Staff, Coaches and Officials

- PV staff, coaches and officials should avoid chatting to gymnasts via any instant messaging service;
- If you receive any messages/ requests from gymnasts by way of social networking/ chat/ text please do not respond to the child directly, please respond via their parents/ guardians/ carers;
- Coaches and officials should not text gymnasts in their care for any reason, except for cases where the express permission has been sought and given by the parent/ guardian/ carer. Please always communicate through the parent/ guardian/ carer;
- Coaches and officials could face serious consequences if it is found that young people in their care have been exposed to inappropriate material/ content via their social media pages.

By following the above, we will ensure relationships between coaches and gymnasts remain professional whilst protecting gymnasts, coaches and parents/ guardians/ carers from allegations of inappropriate conduct. By setting clear guidelines for parents/ guardians/ carers, coaches and gymnasts concerning the use of social media/ text messaging, we will preserve the reputation and positive image of the Club, coaches, volunteers, and trustee members.

PV reserves the right to take appropriate action against any member of PV who is in breach of these guidelines and our Social Media Policy, in order to protect the safety, well-being, welfare and reputation of PV members and the Club.

Staying Safe Online

Helping to make the internet a great and safe place for our community is a challenge. Below are some of PV's top tips for helping our members to stay safe online:

- Don't post any personal information online – like your address, email address or mobile number;
- Think carefully before posting pictures or videos of yourself. Once you've put a picture of yourself online most people can see it and may be able to download it, it's not just yours anymore;
- Keep your privacy settings as high as possible - ideally completely private;
- Never give out your passwords;
- Don't befriend people you don't know;
- Don't meet up with people you've met online. Speak to your parent/ guardian/ carer if people suggest you do;
- Remember that not everyone online is who they say they are;
- Think carefully about what you say before you post something online;
- If you see something online that makes you feel uncomfortable, unsafe, or worried: leave the website, turn off your computer if you want to and tell a trusted adult immediately

	Date of Review	Action
Date Established	June 2018	Established
Date of Revision	June 2021	Reviewed
Date of Revision	March 2023	Reviewed
Date of Revision	September 2024	Reviewed