



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Version 1.0

January 2021

Version Control

Version	Date Effective	Summary of changes	Approved by
1.0	January 2021	Creation of Social Media policy	Rachel Berney (Head Coach), Megan Clements (Head Coach)

POLICY OVERVIEW

Social media is changing the way we communicate. This policy has been developed to inform our community about using social media so people feel enabled to participate, while being mindful of their responsibilities and obligations.

It provides practical guidance allowing all parties to benefit from the use of social media, while minimising potential risks and protecting those involved. It assists to establish a culture of openness, trust and integrity in all online activities related to the welfare of all our coaches, volunteers, members and anyone who may represent Leaming Athletics Academy.

This policy contains some information provided by Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) which pertains to welfare issues when using social media for communication by LAA.

It also includes details of breaches of the policy. In circumstances where guidance about social media issues has not been given in this policy, we suggest you use common sense or seek out advice from those who have approved this policy.

For all Welfare issues and those regarding use of social media please email

welfare@leamingtonathletics.co.uk

1. Application of the Social Media policy

This policy applies to all persons who are involved with LAA, the activities of Safeguarding & Welfare, whether they are in a paid or unpaid/voluntary capacity, including but not restricted to:

- member athletes
- persons appointed or elected to the LAA board / committee
- Directors of the club
- coaches and assistant coaches, sports leaders, officials
- Parents, family members and spectators

Directors, Head Coach and Welfare Officers are responsible for all matters related to this policy.

This policy is applicable when using social media as:

1. an officially designated individual representing LAA on social media.
2. The posting of content on social media in relation to LAA that might affect LAA business, products, services, events, sponsors, other club members or reputation.

Any misuse of social media in a manner that does not directly refer to LAA may still be regulated by other policies, rules or regulations of LAA.

2. Guidelines / Principles

You must adhere to the following guidelines when using social media related to LAA.

(i) Use common sense

Think before you share and ask yourself whether sharing might have consequences for the LAA community. If in doubt in anyway, , *seek advice* from others before doing so, or refrain from sharing the content.

(ii) Protect your privacy

Be smart about protecting yourself and your privacy. When posting content online there is potential for that content to become publicly available through a variety of means, even if it was intended to be shared privately.

You should refrain from posting any content online that you would not be happy for anyone to see, even if you feel confident that a particular individual would never see it.

Where possible, privacy settings on social media platforms should be set to limit access. You should also be *cautious about disclosing your personal details*.

(iii) Act with integrity & respect

Respect confidentiality and sensitivity when using social media, you must maintain the privacy of LAA confidential information. This includes information that is not publicly accessible, widely known, not expected to be shared outside of LAA or information belonging or about other members.

When using social media and representing LAA, you should be considerate to others and should not post information when you have been asked not to, or where consent has not been

sought and given. You must also remove information immediately about another person, if that person asks you to do so.

(iv) Be honest

Your honesty—or dishonesty—may be quickly noticed in the social media environment. Do not say anything that is dishonest, untrue or misleading. *Check the source and the facts* before uploading or posting anything.

Do not post anonymously, using pseudonyms or false screen names. Be transparent and honest. Use your real name, be clear about who you are and identify any affiliations you have.

If you make an endorsement or recommendation about something you are affiliated with, or have a close relationship with, you must disclose that affiliation.

The web is not anonymous. You are accountable for your actions both on and offline, including the information you post via your personal social media accounts.

3. LAA – Our responsibilities online

As part of using the internet and social media, our organisation will:

- Understand the safety aspects of using websites, social media, apps and other forms of digital communication.
- Be aware that it doesn't matter what devices are being used for interaction but that the same safety aspects apply
- When using social media platforms (e.g.: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) ensure that we adhere to relevant legislation and good practice guidelines.
- Regularly review existing safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure the online safeguarding issues are fully integrated, including:
 - Making sure concerns about abuse on the club's online platforms is reported using the Reporting 'Incident Procedure form' reporting.
- Incorporating online bullying in the Athlete's Behaviour policy.
- Providing guidance and support for the person responsible for managing organisations online presence.
- Anyone investigated for abuse online and deemed to have done so, will be removed and blocked from all connections with any of the club's social platforms.

3.1 Using digital technology to communicate

When using video, text, voice, instant messaging our organisation needs to take the following precautions to ensure the safety of young people:

Staff/Coaches will

- avoid having children's mobile numbers
- seek parental permission to contact a child or young person and the purpose must be clearly defined
- A method of accountability will be in place so copies of text/emails are available to another adult, such as Welfare Officer, Head coach
- Texts/messages will to young people only for the purpose of communicating club information
- If a young person is interprets this communication and engages in a conversational basis staff/coaches must
 - End the conversation/stop replying
 - Suggest further discussions take place at training
 - If concerned about the young person's need to engage , share with the club welfare officer or local support agencies.

3.2 Managing online presence

Our online presence on the LAA website and social media platforms will it here to the following guidelines:

- All social media accounts will be password protected, with at least 2 members having access to each account and password.
- The account will be monitored by a designated person.
- A designated person managing online presents will seek advice from our governing body England Athletics (EA) and UKA. With regards to safeguarding requirements.
- A designated person will remove inappropriate posts explaining why and informing anyone who may be affected.
- Details of children's home address, phone number or school name must not be identified.
- All posts and correspondence will consistent with our club aims
- Make sure that members and parents know who manages our social media, in case they wish to confidentially raise any concerns. All will be documented by the club welfare Officer.
- Any children younger than the age restrictions for the social media platform require parental permission to have footage, photos or comments uploaded to that platform.
- Abide by copyright laws when using material.
- Club coaches, officers and ambassadors should not communicate with young people via personal accounts or private messages.

- Emails should not be sent to children or young people without another member of staff copied in on the correspondence. This correspondence should be within normal office hours where possible.
- Emails should be signed off professionally and without 'kisses' (x) or emoji's.
- Any disclosures of abuse on social media must follow the club procedures for reporting and include the club Welfare Officer.
- Coaches and Sports Leaders and Ambassadors must not engage in 'sexting' or sending pictures to anyone that are obscene, indecent, or menacing.
- Coaches/staff and members must not post any material that is offensive, harassing, discriminatory, embarrassing, intimidating, sexually explicit, bullying, hateful, racist, sexist or otherwise inappropriate.

4. What we expect of children & young people

We need children and parents to be aware of this safety policy.

We expect young peoples' behaviour online to be in line with our Statement of Acceptable Use (SAU) and should follow these guidelines when using digital devices to access online.

4.1 Using mobile during sports activities

If there is shared use of a digital device as part of the training activity within the organisation and/or at competition venues:

- We expect children and young people to adhere to the guidelines in our Statement of Acceptable Use
- Appropriate restrictions will be used with 'parental controls' switched on.

The club will commit to implementing and sharing this policy and raising any concerns quickly using the club welfare procedures.

5. Using social media in an official capacity

You must be authorised by our Club Secretary before engaging in social media as a representative of LAA. To become authorised to represent LAA in an official capacity, you must have completed a signed a Statement of Acceptable Use and returned to the Welfare Officer.

By virtue of being part of the LAA community, any social media representative is considered an extension of the LAA brand. As such, the boundaries between when an individual is

representing themselves and when they are representing LAA can blur, particularly as profile or position within LAA increases.

It is important that individual represent both themselves and LAA appropriately online at all times.

6. Dealing with mistakes

If any party from LAA makes an error while posting on social media, we expect the individual to be up front about the mistake and address it quickly. If an early post is modified, it must be clear that this has taken place. If someone accuses LAA of posting something improper, the club will address it promptly and appropriately and if necessary, seek legal advice.

For a complaint about the misuse of social media by LAA that is general in nature refer to the club's document 'Incident Reporting Form', which must be submitted to the Welfare officer.

Where it is considered necessary, LAA may report a breach of this social media policy to police.