

Alton Gymnastics Club

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Social Media Policy

Coaches, Officials and Volunteers

PLEASE ALSO READ THE PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEO POLICY

The use of social media is now a normal part of life for many people and it is used for entertainment, communication and self-expression.

In addition to protecting children in the club, members of any club or organization have a responsibility to the organization, its staff and officials, and other members to maintain a positive image of the organization and this extends to the use of social media publication.

The purpose of this policy is:

- To minimize the risk of the young people in our club from being exposed to material inappropriate for their age via social media connected to the Club or its coaches.
- To ensure that relationships between coaches and gymnasts remain professional.
- To protect gymnasts, coaches and parents from allegations of inappropriate conduct.
- To ensure that there are clear guidelines for parents, coaches and gymnasts with regard to the use of social media.

If you experience any contravention to this policy please let your head coach know as soon as possible, even if you don't think it is a problem. Most contraventions will be innocent and non-harmful but nonetheless we would like to know.

Guidelines for appropriate use of social media:

- Coaches and officials should generally only use the Clubs official pages / profiles to display photos/videos taken at the club.
- Coaches and officials should check the permission status of all members who appear in a photo/video before posting it on any social media profile or Club website.
- Coaches and officials should avoid posting any photos/videos from the club on their personal profiles unless express permission has been granted by both the member and the members parents.
- Coaches and officials who also have children at the club should refer also to the Social media policy for parents and gymnasts.
- Coaches and officials should avoid posting any remarks, photographs or video that could be disparaging or embarrassing to the club, its staff or volunteers or members in any social media facility. Please also avoid remarks that disparage or embarrass other clubs.
- Coaches and officials should not friend request gymnasts on Facebook or undertake a similar action on other social media. The Clubs social media profiles may follow or be linked with its members.
- Coaches and officials should not engage in online chat with gymnasts in any form and should not engage in social chat via text message.
- Coaches and officials may accept a friend request from a gymnast on facebook or other similar network provided the any gymnasts are prevented from viewing the following:
 - Your status updates, unless the particular update refers specifically and positively to gymnastics or to the club.
 - Photos of you partying, consuming alcohol, smoking or doing anything that would not be appropriate for them to copy. You should set your photo album privacy so that your 'gymnast' groups cannot view.
 - Posts that your friends put on your wall.
 - Photos or Posts that you are tagged in, unless the post refers specifically and positively to gymnastics or to the club.

It is recommended, though not statutory, that in order to avoid potential embarrassment, you apply the same restrictions to parents of the gymnasts in your care.

- Coaches and officials should avoid chatting to gymnasts on the instant messenger facility on Facebook or any other instant messaging service. If you receive a message about a training or competition arrangement please reply to the gymnasts parent, not the gymnast.
- **Please note that if it comes to light, by whatever means that a gymnast has seen adult content through a coaches or officials Facebook page, twitter or other social media account this will have to be investigated and could lead to serious repercussions.**
- Please ensure that your relationships with gymnasts in your care and their parents remain professional. It is of course possible and acceptable to be friends with both gymnasts and parents, especially those who train regularly or volunteer, but both parties should take care that this remains beneficial to the gymnasts and the club. The overriding relationship must be a professional one.

Alton Gymnastics Club take the protection of young people from the unintentional exposure to inappropriate materials online seriously. However, it is acknowledged that above all, it is the responsibility of parents to monitor their childrens use of the internet and social media.