

# Spelthorne Gymnastics Club's Online Policy [5] for Club Officials/Volunteers/Staff/Coaches with child(ren) that are Club Members

## Policy Overview

Social media has adapted the way we communicate. It provides people with the power to share and make the world more open and connected.

This policy has been developed to inform Spelthorne Gymnastics Club officials, volunteers and members of staff about using social media and online networking platforms respectfully, so people feel enabled to participate, while being aware of their responsibilities.

Within this policy, you will find guidance for Spelthorne Gymnastics Club officials, volunteers and members of staff, which will enable them to engage in social media safely and allowing them to benefit from the use of social media, whilst minimising the potential risks and protecting those involved.

If circumstances regarding issues with social media arise that have not been covered in this policy, we recommend contacting our Wellbeing Officer/Welfare Officer.

Welfare Officer: [welfare@spelthornegymnastics.com](mailto:welfare@spelthornegymnastics.com)

## Scope

This policy applies to Spelthorne Gymnastics Club officials, volunteers and members of staff.

The term 'social media' refers to any website and/or application that allows the user to create and share content, or to participate in social networking.

This policy applies to platforms including, but not limited to:

- Social networking (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, etc.)
- Video and photo sharing (e.g. YouTube, Instagram, Vimeo, TikTok, etc.)
- Blogs (e.g. Tumblr, WordPress, etc.)
- Review sites (e.g. Yelp, Trustpilot, etc.)
- Live broadcasting (e.g. Facebook Mentions, Instagram live, etc.)
- Podcasting (e.g. Spotify, iTunes, Sound Cloud, etc.)
- Instant messaging (e.g. SMS, Skype, Snapchat, WhatsApp, etc.)
- Online multiplayer gaming platforms (e.g. Xbox Live, World of Warcraft, etc.)
- Public and private online forums and discussion boards
- Any other online technologies that allow individual users to upload and share content

Please note, this policy does not apply to the personal use of social media where it is not related to or there is no reference to Spelthorne Gymnastics Club or its business, competitions, events, participants, staff members, volunteers, officials, groups, products, services or reputation.

**Guidelines**

When using social media in relation to Spelthorne Gymnastics Club or its business, competitions, events, participants, staff members, volunteers, officials, groups, products, services or reputation; you must adhere to the following guidelines and the Online Safety Act 2024, Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

**1. Use sound judgement –**

If you are unsure as to whether or not the content you wish to share is appropriate, seek advice from others before doing so, or avoid sharing the content to be on the safe side.

**2. Protect your privacy –**

- Where possible, privacy settings on social media platforms should be set to limited access.
- You should be cautious about disclosing your personal details.
- Always remember that anything you post on your social networking site including photos, pictures, video clips, statuses may be shared with other people other than those for whom it was intended, even if it was intended to be shared privately. As a result, you should avoid posting any content online that that you would not be happy for everyone to see, even if you feel confident that particular individuals would never see it.

**3. Be mindful of who you contact directly via social media –**

- Social networking sites should never be used as a medium by which to abuse or criticise others, including other Club members, parents, members of staff, officials or the Club.
- Those in positions of trust should not be in contact through any social networking platforms with any young people (under the age of 18 years) who attend Spelthorne Gymnastics Club. The exception to this would be via a Club organised WhatsApp group with initial parental permission for distribution of information which would include the coach(es) and the Club Welfare officer to follow best practice safeguarding procedures – this is generally used for trips abroad where parents may not be present but the gymnasts are required to know specific information. The only other exception would be when contacting a 16/17-year-old who is in an official position at the Club, however you must follow the following:
  - Gain written consent of the parent/guardian and young person to have such contact naming the individual adult and social networking site concerned
  - The named adult must sign an agreement to keep the contact with the young person to the discussion of matters relevant to the young person’s professional role in the club
  - All such communications should be shared with an identified 3rd person (e.g. the young person’s parent/guardian and/or Club Welfare Officer)
- If you are to contact another Club Member under the age of 18 via social media as they are a friend of your child, you must also copy in the child (under 18 year old’s) parent/guardian to all communication as safe practice. This is to protect both yourself and the young person.

**4. Avoid anonymous posting –**

Do not post anonymously. You should assume that all posts can be tracked back to you. You are accountable for your actions both on and offline, including the information you post via your personal social media accounts.

**5. Respect sensitivity –**

When using social media platforms, you should be considerate of others and should refrain from posting information when you have been asked not to, or where consent has not been requested

and agreed (if a post is relating to someone under the age of 18 years of age, parental/guardian consent is required).

If you would like to post news relating to the Club or its activities on your social media, you must only do so by sharing posts that have come from Spelthorne Gymnastics Club's official social media site.

**6. Comply with applicable laws –**

You must not post or link to content that contains illegal or indecent content, including defamatory, vilifying, malicious or misleading and deceptive content.

**7. Discrimination, harassment and bullying –**

- Never post, share or send any photos, videos or make comments that may be offensive, hurtful, discriminatory, embarrassing, intimidating, hateful, racist, untrue, upsetting or otherwise inappropriate and that you may regret sharing later on, or that can be used by other people in a way you did not intend or want.
- Remember, it can be difficult to delete information that has been shared or copied as soon as it had been uploaded.
- Avoid making comments that will harm the reputation of the Club.
- You should not use social media platforms to criticise or verbally abuse Spelthorne Gymnastics Club, its members, staff or officials in an inappropriate and unacceptable manner, and understand that this will result in the club following British Gymnastics guidance and may be subject to disciplinary actions.

**8. Responsible behaviour and awareness of the consequences –**

Understand that what you post on social media is your responsibility, and failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in Spelthorne Gymnastics Club following guidance from Club officials and/or British Gymnastics to put in motion the most appropriate course of action. This may put your position at the club at risk.

**9. Using the Club's social media platforms in an official capacity –**

- You must be authorised by the Club Operations Manager before engaging in social media as a representative of Spelthorne Gymnastics Club.
- As a part of Spelthorne Gymnastics Club, you are an extension of Spelthorne Gymnastics Club. As a result, the boundaries between when you are representing yourself and when you are representing Spelthorne Gymnastics Club can sometimes become blurred. Therefore, it is important that you represent both yourself and the Club appropriately online.

**Disciplinary Action**

In the event these guidelines are not adhered to, Spelthorne Gymnastics Club will follow guidance from Club officials and/or British Gymnastics to understand the most appropriate course of action.

**Reporting a Breach**

If you come across any inappropriate or unlawful content online in relation to Spelthorne Gymnastics Club, its service, members, staff, etc. or any content that may otherwise been posted in breach of this policy, you should report the circumstances immediately to [welfare@spelthornegymnastics.com](mailto:welfare@spelthornegymnastics.com)

**APPENDIX 1.****Acceptable use of internet and social media platforms agreement****Agreement of Club Officials/Volunteers/Staff/Coaches with child(ren) that are Club Members:**

1. I will not deliberately create, browse or access material that could be considered offensive or illegal. If I accidentally come across any such material, I will report this to a member of staff.
2. I will not use social media or the internet to send anyone, especially Club members, Coaches, Officials, the Club, etc. material that could be considered threatening, offensive, upsetting, bullying or that is illegal.
3. I will not use social networking sites to criticise or verbally abuse Southampton Gymnastics Club, its members, staff or officials in an inappropriate and unacceptable manner, and understand that this will result in the club following British Gymnastics guidance and may be subject to disciplinary actions.
4. I understand that all my use of the internet and social media is potentially visible to everyone and that any issues involving my behaviour online may be addressed by a Club official.
5. I will avoid using my mobile phone during activities as I understand that it will have an impact on my safety and ability to deliver my role.