



## **Ludlow Rugby Football Club**

### **Policy: Social Media, Photography and Filming Policy**

#### **Version 1.2 (March 2025, originally published August 2024)**

#### **Social and social media guidance**

The Club's website and social media platforms are a key part of the daily operation of the Club. Ludlow RFC has responsibility for the physical safety of Mini and Junior members when on the Club's premises and this also includes making sure that there is nothing on its website or social media platforms which could harm a child, directly or indirectly. Ludlow RFC is responsible for the content of its website and social media accounts. Given our Club website and social media pages are open to the public, there are two key risks to guard against when posting information:

**1. Disclosing personal information about a child to people accessing the website or viewing our social media platforms.** This could be the child's name, address, or any information about a child's life, interests or activities which would help a stranger target a child, or engage that child in conversation.

**2. Abusive or inappropriate content (photos, video or text), on the site or social media pages.** This includes material, which criticises or humiliates a child. It could also be information which places undue pressure on the child to participate in some aspect of a Clubs' activities. Many sites contain links to other sites - this could be for commercial reasons, such as sponsors or advertisers, or simply to communicate information to be found on other websites. Before creating a link, a club should check content of the other website or social media accounts, both for child protection reasons, and to ensure the content poses no other risk to the Club's reputation. Once a link is included on the site, the club should check its content periodically, and remove any link immediately if concerns arise. Photos and video clips can make any child featured vulnerable to grooming if information about the child (name, address, activities or interests) is also disclosed. Furthermore, posting an image on a website carries a risk that the image could be taken and adapted for an inappropriate use.

#### **RFU Recommendations:**

- Use group images, rather than individual images.
- For images of individual children (such as in action shots) where possible use models or illustrations.
- Only use images of children in suitable dress, to minimise the risk of inappropriate adaptation of the image.

- If a child is named on the site, do not include an image (individual or group). If a child features in an image on the site, do not use the child's first name or last name, either in text on the site or in the image file name.

**Ludlow RFC will abide by all RFU recommendations regarding photo and video images and will obtain consent from the appropriate responsible person(s) before using any images of children on its website.** Consent request clauses are included in the registration form, which is completed each season and are also held by the Club age group administrators.

### **Mobile and online communication with children**

Technology is moving very fast in this area. There are now many different ways for people to communicate. Online communication can be by email, instant messaging or social networking sites. The risks posed by such methods of communication arise from a variety of issues:

- The privacy. It is often one-to-one.
- The wide range of content that can be transmitted, including content of a violent, sexual or hateful nature.
- The ease with which images and video footage can be forwarded onto others.
- The difficulty in knowing truly who you are communicating with.

Where grooming happens, it often involves this type of communication. In sport, there are additional risks:

- Inappropriate pressure can be exerted by adults, particularly coaches, on children (such as to play when injured).
- There can be inappropriate criticism of a young player's performance.
- An official position or role within a Club, such as Coach, can carry with it a level of authority and engender a level of trust that facilitates the control of a child.

**Against this background, Ludlow RFC will abide by all RFU guidance with regard to mobile and online communication with children and will cascade any information for them to the parents (or carer) of that child. Ludlow RFC will not directly contact a child directly by mobile phone unless the parent or carer gives prior consent.**

Club Recommendations:

- All Age Group communications – for example fixture information, team selection – should be sent via the Team Admin Manager or designated coach. Emails should only be sent using email groups comprising email addresses given by parents. An email should not be sent to a child unless the parent is also copied. Such emails should only come from age group coaches or administrators as communicated to Parents.
- Other Online (Social Media) Services. **No Club Member may initiate a social media outlet that is directly linked and intended to be used by Ludlow RFC members without the express permission of the Club Committee or, for Mini or Junior matters, the respective Mini and Juniors Leader.** Administrators of social media outlets must ensure the content complies with this policy. Facebook pages where the content is public must comply with the above Club

Recommendations and Mobile and Online Communication with Children and below Photographic Images. **Private, closed groups and 1-1 messaging between Coaches and Young People is not permitted.** If Private closed groups are used by coaches and parents/carers, the group administrator must invite the Club Safeguarding Officer and Mini/Junior Youth Chair or Club Secretary to join the group.

- Other online and social media services whether public or private are not permitted. Requests to add other services should be directed to the Club Safeguarding Officer.
- SMS Messaging (Texting): Club Officials and Coaches should only communicate directly with individual children by text at any time, on any matter, if the parent or carer is copied on such communication or there is an immediate risk to the welfare of that child which can be lessened by such contact.
- Telephone: When communication by phone is needed, Club Officials and Coaches can speak to individual young people on phones provided they have prior consent from the child's parents or carer and from the young person if old enough to understand. It is impossible to address every issue or cover every scenario a club or coach might encounter when communicating with children and it is appreciated that different ages will need to be treated differently. However, in all the cases above, guidelines should be considered when determining the most appropriate method of communication in any given circumstances.
- **We strongly discourage any one-to-one contact with age grade players other than face-to-face contact.**

### **Photographic Images and Video Recordings (including those taken by mobile telephone)**

The RFU and Ludlow RFC recognise that publicity and pictures of young people enjoying rugby are essential to promote the sport and a healthy lifestyle. To facilitate this, it is therefore essential that the following principles and rules should be observed. The RFU and Ludlow RFC is committed to providing a safe and enjoyable environment for young people and vulnerable adults. Implicit in this is the commitment to ensure that all publications, resources and media represent participants appropriately and with due respect. By adapting the points outlined in these guidelines we are putting in place the best possible practice to protect young people and vulnerable adults wherever photographs or recorded images are taken and stored. Ludlow RFC recognises the need to ensure the welfare and safety of all young people and vulnerable adults in Rugby Union. As part of our commitment to ensure the safety of young people we will not permit photographs, video or other images including those taken via mobile phone of young people to be taken or used without the consent of the parents/carers and the young person. **Ludlow RFC will follow the RFU guidelines for the use of images of young people.** Ludlow RFC will take all steps to ensure these images are used solely for the purposes they are intended which is the promotion and celebration of Rugby Union Football.

**If anyone becomes aware that these images are being used inappropriately you should inform the club's Safeguarding Officer, James Bridge, on 07814 569579.**

However, if at any time the parent/carers or the young person wishes the data to be removed from the website, the Club Safeguarding Officer should be informed.

The following rules will ensure compliance with the RFU policy on photographic images and video recording:

**1. Ensure parents/carers/young persons have granted their consent for the Ludlow RFC taking and publication of photographic images and have completed registration via GMS which indicates this permission.**

2. All young people must be appropriately dressed for the activity taking place.

3. Photography or recording should focus on the activity rather than a particular young person and personal details which might make a young person vulnerable, such as their exact address etc, must never be revealed.

**4. Where an individual has achieved success in the game (e.g. when selected for a representative side or showing triumph over adversity) permission must be gained from parent/carer and young person to use photographs/recordings and relevant details.**

5. Where possible, to reflect the RFU Policy, photographs/recordings should represent the diverse range of young people involved in rugby.

**6. Anyone taking photographs or recording at any rugby event must have a valid reason for doing so and seek the permission of the organisers or person in charge.**

7. Anyone taking photographs or recording should make themselves known to the event organiser/person in charge and be able to identify themselves if requested during the course of the event.

8. All concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography should be reported in confidence to the Club Safeguarding Officer, Safeguarding Manager for North Mids RFU or the RFU Safeguarding Executive.

**9. As GMS only captures permission for photographs, separate written authorisation will be captured for each age grade player at the start of the season in regard to video recording for the purposes of supporting player development.**

10. Parents/carers are able to withhold prior given consent for photography and filming at any time.

**11. Ensure any opposition teams know ahead of any fixture if there is an objection to any filming/ photography taking place.** Consent for the use of a VEO camera must be sought (in writing) from the opposition well in advance of all fixtures. If explicit consent is not in place, the camera must not be set-up.

**12. Matches can only be filmed if all participants from both sides have the appropriate photo consents in place.** Opposition coaches can provide proxy consent but this can be withdrawn at any time. If this happens the footage must be immediately withdrawn.

13. Inform parents and participants that a photographer will be in attendance/VEO camera will be in use and detail where the content will be published.

14. Clarify issues about ownerships of the images/footage and access. How will the images/footage be stored, retained and used. Access to any VEO footage must be provided by way of a controlled link (this enables access to the content to be withdrawn at any time). Footage should be shared with both teams.

15. When using a VEO camera system adequate care must be taken to ensure that the camera is not a tripping hazard/obstacle and must always be placed at least 2m away from the touchline.

15. Where the club is alerted to an image in the public domain (posted by a third party or another parent) we will take reasonable steps to request the image is removed / deleted.

16. Ensure that all parents and carers are aware of their responsibilities when taking photographs. Parents/carers are welcome to photograph their own children and use the images how they please. If posting to social media (or making public in any other way) parents/carers must ensure that other people's children are not identified in any text describing the image. It is preferable (if possible) to crop the image and remove other children.

17. Videos are to be taken purely for the purpose intended, and deleted when no longer required or when requested by a parent or carer.

18. Training videos must be viewed only by the DBS cleared coaches.

19. Training Images/videos must NOT be shared on any social media / public platform.

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#### Policy Updating Tracker

1.1 – original version created by Kelly Nicklin (August 2024)

1.2 - revised content to reflect use of video/filming with age grade players (March 2025),  
updated by Kelly Nicklin