



## DORSET TABLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION GUIDELINES ON SAFE USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING

Table Tennis England takes its responsibility in terms of providing advice and guidelines in respect of safeguarding our young people and vulnerable adults very seriously.

In recent years the use of social media networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, YouTube, Tumblr, Instagram and Periscope have become immensely popular with both adults and young people alike. Used safely they provide an incredible tool to enable us all to promote our sport, publicise events and make contact with our members whether that be at club, league, county or national level. In addition sites like You Tube allow us to be able to upload clips and videos to share moments from our sport which can reach tens of thousands of people at the click of a button. Unfortunately whilst the use of these, and other types of social media, for example text messaging, offer exciting opportunities they bring with them dangers and the ability for abuse if not used safely. These guidelines are intended to be used by both young people and adults alike in order to use social media safely and in a manner that makes the most of the advantages. For the purposes of this policy young people are defined as under the age of 18.

### What is Social Media:

- **Facebook** A popular free social networking website that allows registered users to create profiles, upload photos and videos, send messages and keep in touch with friends, family and colleagues.
- **Twitter** An online social networking site that enables users to send and read short 140 character messages called 'tweets'. Registered users can read and post tweets but those who are unregistered can only read them.
- **YouTube** A video sharing website which provides a forum for people to connect, inform and inspire others across the globe and acts as a platform for original content creators.
- **Snapchat** A mobile messaging application used to share photos, videos, text, and drawings. It's free to download the app and free to send messages using it. It has become hugely popular in a very short space of time, especially with young people.
- **Instagram** A fun and quirky way to share your life with friends through a series of pictures. Snap a photo with your mobile phone, then choose a filter to transform the image into a memory to keep around forever.
- **Tumblr** Lets you share anything, post texts, photos, quotes, links, music and videos from your browser, phone, desktop, email or wherever you happen to be. It is a cross between a social networking site and a blog.

### Coaches, Responsible Adults, Umpires, Referees, Club and League Officers

Indeed this will apply to anyone who is in a position of responsibility and trust in respect of young people in table tennis.

- Do not accept any personal friend requests from any young person involved in table tennis.
- Do not send out any personal friend requests to any young people involved in table tennis.
- Your personal social networking sites should never be used to contact young people within the sport.
- Be aware of your own personal responsibility and do not use social media sites to

Table Tennis England does recognise, however, that the use of social media is a very effective way to communicate, promote or contact people and members if used in an appropriate manner. We would recommend that clubs and leagues etc set up their own social media sites controlled and monitored by the club or league to ensure that all posts are checked and that photos have parental consent to be posted as per the Table Tennis England's Photographic Policy.

There are some instances that parents are also coaches or hold a position of responsibility and trust in respect of young people in our sport. We acknowledge that in their role as parents/carers they may feel it necessary to monitor their child's activities in respect of social media which would give them access to their child's lists of friends and contacts. Under these circumstances we would encourage the parent/carer to:

- Never have direct contact on their home site with a young person involved in table tennis.
- Not accept friend requests from young people in table tennis on their home sites including those from young officials, sports leaders or officers.
- Ensure that the Club/League Welfare Officer is aware of the situation.

### **Members under the age of 18**

**A. Young Officials, Sports Leaders** Keep your personal sites separate and when contacting other coaches, officials or officers on table tennis matters always use the official social media sites and do not attempt to contact them through their personal sites. Similarly when making contact in your official capacity with other young people ensure that you always use the official social media sites. Also follow the guidelines below for all young people.

#### **B. Table Tennis England members under the age of 18:**

1. Do not send friend requests or invite coaches, umpires, officers or any adult who may be involved with you in table tennis to join your personal social media accounts.
2. Be careful with what you post on social media always remembering that it may be shared across the internet whether it be comments, photos or videos – this may not always be in the way that you wanted or intended it to be shared.
3. If you are talking to people in social media sites be sure that you know who they are and always follow the advice given by [www.ceop.gov.uk](http://www.ceop.gov.uk) to use the internet safely.
4. When posting on social media be aware that you are not being hurtful or making comments that could cause upset that you may regret sharing later.
5. Do not post photos of other members on your social media site without their and their parents/carers permission if they are under the age of 18.

#### **Some sites which may be of help:**

- [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk) the main government website with advice on how to keep children safe online.
- [www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk) the government agency dedicated to eradicating the online abuse of children, any concerns can be reported on through this site.
- [www.iwf.org.uk](http://www.iwf.org.uk) (Internet Watch Foundation) works to remove any illegal material from the internet again there is a reporting mechanism where you can report any explicit material.
- [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk) has lots of advice on keeping children safe online.

If you have any concerns or want some advice please contact the Table Tennis England Safeguarding and Ethics Manager via email on [judy.rogers@tabletennisengland.co.uk](mailto:judy.rogers@tabletennisengland.co.uk) or 07507860034