

E-SAFETY IN CRICKET

The internet, mobile phones, gaming, social networking and other interactive technologies offer new opportunities to reach, communicate and engage with those involved in cricket world wide. However, as with any environment there are also potential risks.

Most children and young people use the internet positively but can sometimes place themselves at risk by their responses and actions. These risks may not arise from the technology itself but come from offline behaviour that has extended into the online world and vice versa. The potential for anonymity on social networking sites can result in a child's details falling into the wrong hands.

Derbyshire Cricket Board and the ECB are keen to promote the safe and responsible use of communication and interactive communication technologies by all those involved in a cricket club's activities. A blocking and banning approach, which merely limits exposure to risk, has been considered as no longer sustainable in many schools. Instead the focus is on empowering children with the skills and knowledge they need to use interactive communication technologies safely and manage the risk, wherever and whenever they go online. Clubs need to share responsibility with other child facing organisations including schools and parents in encouraging children to use the internet safely.

Many internet, mobile, social networking and other interactive services provide safety warnings and advice including videos and links to online safety.

Social networking sites like Facebook can pose threats to all users when used inappropriately and these can include:

- Bullying by peers and people they consider 'friends'
- Posting personal information that can identify and locate a child offline
- Sexual grooming, luring, exploitation and abuse contact with strangers
- Exposure to inappropriate and/or illegal content
- Involvement in making or distributing illegal or inappropriate content
- Theft of personal information
- Leaving and running away from home as a result of contacts made online

All staff and volunteers at a club should be aware of online risks and the need to protect their own privacy online. They should understand the risks in posting, and sharing, content which may damage their reputation within the cricket environment.

Safe and responsible use includes:

- Adhering to terms of service and acceptable use policies
- The importance of children registering on social networking sites with the correct age. Depending upon the service this can ensure safety settings are appropriately applied, only age appropriate advertising is available and a child's profile is not subject to an online search. The minimum age for most social networking services is 13 years of age
- Use of privacy and safety settings – these enable users to manage 'who sees what' and who the user wishes to interact and share photos and other information with.

In order to safeguard all children within cricket and to avoid any misinterpretation of online activity by coaches/managers Derbyshire Cricket Board does not advocate individual social network contact between coaches/managers and children under 18.

If a coach/manager believes using interactive communication technologies is the best way to share information regarding the team – match times/venues etc they can set up a facebook page in the name of the team which the children can then become members. Any photographs of the coaches will be representative of them and their phone numbers will be included in the page (as they are in the fixture book).

The ECB has published guidelines to ensure that the message of safe and responsible use of communication and interactive technologies is understood and that guidelines are followed within cricket.

The full set of guidelines - ECB Safe Hands kit-bag #35 - can be found at:

<http://static.ecb.co.uk/files/035kb-11298.pdf>

Below is an example of a possible E-safety policy:

Sample E-Safety Policy

All members, guests and volunteers of “xxxxxxx cricket club” which is affiliated to Derbyshire Cricket Board are expected to:

- Take responsibility for their own use of communication and interactive technologies, making sure they use new technologies safely, responsibly and legally within the context of cricket
- No communication device or service, including interactive communication services such as social networking may be used to bring the club, its members or cricket into disrepute
- No communication device or service, including interactive services such as social networking may be used for inappropriate behaviour online within the context of cricket including the bullying or harassment of others in any form, defamation, obscene or abusive language, the uploading of material which is libelous, defamatory, obscene, illegal, shows nudity or is violent
- Report any known misuses of communication and interactive technologies within the context of cricket, including unacceptable behaviour, inappropriate contact with children online and illegal content including sexual abuse/indecent images of children, according to the club’s and ECB safeguarding policies and procedures
- Be aware that any report of the misuse of communication and interactive technologies within the context of cricket will be investigated according to the club’s policy and procedures and may result in the club’s sanctions being enforced. Depending upon the seriousness of the incident legal action may be taken and where suspected criminal activity has taken place a report will be made to the police

In addition to the above club officers and appointed volunteers will:

- Take responsibility for their professional reputation in the online environment, making sure they follow e-safety advice, adhere to privacy and safety settings and report any concerns in accordance with club and ECB policies and procedures
- Not ask for email addresses, mobile phone numbers or social networking profiles of junior members (less than 18 years of age) or search for junior members on social networking services/search engines without the prior consent of parents and in line with the club's policy on the use of information including emergency situations
- Not develop an online relationship with a young player with the intention of meeting them offline to engage in sexual activity. Sexual exploitation, including grooming a child under the age of 16 for the purpose of meeting to engage in sexual activity, is a serious criminal offence
- Not view, possess, make or distribute sexual abuse/indecent images of children. This is a serious criminal offence

The club will work with parents to encourage junior members by advising them of the following guidelines:

- Not to make their phone numbers, addresses, school details or any other personal information public on social networking sites - if they wish to show these details then they should choose 'friends only' under the visibility preferences.
- They should not make friends on social networking sites with people they do not know as pseudo profiles are common and can be predatory.
- They should not make friends on social networking sites with other children they know but do not get on with as this can create an avenue for arguments/bullying to take place without the knowledge of a teacher/parent/guardian or other adult.
- Remember that people who are grooming children are patient and can take years building the trust of a child and their family.
- NEVER arrange to meet a contact from a social networking site unless they are absolutely sure they are who they say they are (e.g. a school friend)

If a child has been approached/abused/bullied via social networking sites the club will try to help the child to take the correct course of action:

- In the case of cyber bullying make sure that the person does not retaliate or respond to the message. Ask the person responsible for the message to remove the content, block the contact if possible and/or contact the networking host to make a report and have the content removed.
 - If a child is approached by an unknown person on a networking site with a friend request press ignore
 - If a child is approached by an unknown person on a networking site with an apparently innocent message ignore but do not delete.
 - If a child is approached by an unknown person on a networking site with repeated or inappropriate messages then call the police. Do not delete or respond to the message(s)
 - If a child is approached by an unknown person via text message phone call or email repeated or inappropriate messages then call the police. Do not delete or respond to the message(s).
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