



## **Appendix 7: GLTC Social Media Policy**

### **1. Introduction**

Social media provides unique opportunities for GLTC to engage, connect and build relationships with members, families, and the wider community. While these platforms offer creative and dynamic ways to share information and celebrate achievements, they also present risks, especially regarding the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. This policy outlines the standards and procedures for the responsible use of social media by all GLTC members, staff, volunteers, coaches, parents and players.

### **2. Scope**

This policy applies to:

- All GLTC official social media accounts (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, etc.)
- All club members, staff, volunteers, coaches, parents, and players when representing GLTC online or discussing club matters
- Any communication, posting or sharing of content related to GLTC activities, events, or members

### **3. Principles**

- GLTC is committed to safeguarding children and young people in all club activities, including online.
- All social media use must comply with the club's Child Protection Policy, Data Protection Act and Tennis Ireland's Safeguarding Guidance.
- All communication with children and young people must be open, transparent, and appropriate.
- The reputation and values of GLTC must be upheld in all online interactions.
- If you are representing the club in an official capacity, your posts must convey the same positive spirit as all club communications. Be respectful of all individuals, races, religions and cultures. How you conduct yourself online reflects directly on the club.

### **4. Club Social Media Accounts**

- All official GLTC social media accounts must be password-protected, with access held by at least three committee members.
- A designated supervisor (appointed by the Safeguarding Panel/Designated Liaison Person) will monitor all club social media activity.
- Inappropriate posts by children, young people, or leaders must be removed by the supervisor, with reasons explained to the poster.
- Club social media pages must be set to 'Private' where possible, restricting access to approved members only.

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- No personal contact details (addresses, phone numbers) of children or young people will be posted.
- Content must be consistent with the club's aims and safeguarding principles.

## **5. Personal Social Media Recommendations**

- If you have your own personal profile on a social media website, ensure that others cannot access any content, media, or information from that profile which:
  - you are not happy for others to have access to; and
  - would undermine your position as a coach/volunteer representing the club.
- As a basic rule, if you are not happy with others seeing particular comments, media, or information, do not post these onto a public forum.
- Change your privacy settings so that only people you have accepted as friends can see your comments. Lock down your page to non-friends.
- Regularly review who is on your 'friends list' on your personal profile. In most situations, do not accept 'friend requests' if you do not actually know the person(s) concerned.
- Personal blogs should have clear disclaimers that the views expressed are personal and not representative of the club.
- Ensure that information published on social media sites complies with the club's Child Protection Policy.
- When disagreeing with others online, keep it appropriate and polite. If a situation becomes antagonistic, do not get defensive or disengage abruptly. Seek advice or disengage politely.
- Respond to online bullying—what is said online must be treated as if said in real time.

## **6. Coaches and Volunteers – Special Rules**

- Coaches must not have any under-18s whom they coach as their friends on personal social media accounts and must not comment on individual players whom they are coaching through their personal page.
- Coaches and volunteers must not communicate privately with children or young people via personal social networking profiles, email accounts, or chat rooms.
- All communication with children should be managed through their parent or guardian.

## **7. Posting Images and Videos**

- Parental consent is required before posting any images or videos of children.
- Only appropriate images will be used, focusing on participation and achievement, not individuals.
- Children will not be individually tagged in images on social media.
- Images must be stored securely and deleted when no longer required.
- Images should not be taken or shared in changing rooms, toilets, or other private areas.

## **8. Reporting and Accountability**

- Any safeguarding concerns arising from social media use must be reported immediately to the club's Designated Liaison Person, following the club's safeguarding procedures.
- All disclosures of abuse made via social media will be handled according to the club's reporting policy.
- Any inappropriate or illegal online activity will be reported to the relevant authorities.