



## **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

A guide for parents, guardians, swimmers, coaches and teachers on using social media to promote the work of Linslade Crusaders Swimming Club (LCSC) and in a personal capacity.

LCSC will amend this policy, following consultation, where appropriate.

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# Introduction

## **What is social media?**

Social media is the term given to web-based tools and applications which enable users to create and share content (words, images and video content), and network with each other through the sharing of information, opinions, knowledge and common interests. Examples of social media include Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, Instagram and Spond.

## **Why do we use social media?**

Social media is essential to the success of communicating LCSC activities and to celebrate successes. It is important for some coaches, teachers and committee members to participate in social media to engage with our audience, participate in relevant conversations and raise the profile of LCSC's work.

## **Why do we need a social media policy?**

The difference between a personal and professional opinion can be blurred on social media, particularly if you're discussing issues relating to LCSC's work. While we encourage the use of social media, we have certain standards, outlined in this policy, which we require everyone to observe. Publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary in the public domain.

This policy is intended for all club members (parents, guardians, swimmers, coaches, teachers and committee members, and applies to content posted on both a LCSC device and a personal device. Before engaging in work-related social media activity, members must read this policy.

## **Setting out the social media policy**

This policy sets out guidelines on how social media should be used to support the delivery and promotion of LCSC, and the use of social media by members in both a professional and personal capacity. It sets out what you need to be aware of when interacting in these spaces and is designed to help members support and expand our official social media channels, while protecting the club and its reputation and preventing any legal issues.

## **Point of contact for social media**

As of 1/4/2023, our Welfare Officer ([welfare@linslade Crusaders Club](mailto:welfare@linslade Crusaders Club) or [welfareofficer1@linslade Crusaders Club](mailto:welfareofficer1@linslade Crusaders Club)) is responsible for the monitoring and management of our social media channels in addition to a number of moderators assigned by the committee. If you have specific question about any aspect of these channels, speak to the Welfare Officer or submit an email to [clubsecretary@linslade Crusaders Club](mailto:clubsecretary@linslade Crusaders Club).

Other members of the committee or designated co-opted members of the committee can post content on LCSC's official channels without the permission of the Welfare Officer, in addition to any members given specific access and passwords to complete club communications. The club account logins should not be shared with anyone without express permission of the Club Secretary and Welfare Officer.

Our social media accounts are to promote club supported activities and communications and no member should login and post unsupported material or communications, if unsure please contact the committee.

The committee and lead coaches may ask the members with access to post relevant communications on behalf of the club.

## **Which social media channels do we use?**

LCSC uses the following social media channels for the purposes of sharing details of forthcoming events and sharing successes of swimmers and the club:

Facebook

Twitter

Instagram

Spond

TikTok

# Guidelines

## Using LCSC's social media channels — appropriate conduct

1. The club secretary in conjunction with the Welfare Officer is responsible for setting up and managing LCSC's social media channels. Only those authorised to do so by the Welfare Officer will have access to these accounts.
2. Our Club Secretary, Welfare officer and Facebook Moderators (one of which remains independent of the club) will respond to comments within 48 hours, and comments and posts made by members on our social media channels will be reviewed and authorised in line with these guidelines.
3. Be an ambassador for our brand. Members should ensure they reflect LCSC values in what they post and use our tone of voice aligned with our expected behaviours. Our Code of Conduct set out our behaviours that all members should refer to when posting content on LCSC's social media channels.
4. Make sure that all social media content has a purpose and a benefit for LCSC, and accurately reflects LCSC's agreed position.
5. Bring value to our audience(s). Help and engage with members in a positive, supportive and encouraging manner.
6. Always pause and think before posting. Comments should be made with care in the knowledge that many members, including some young swimmers, have access to the things you post/comment on.
7. If members outside of LCSC wish to contribute content for social media, whether non-paid for or paid for advertising, they should speak to the Club Secretary about this.
8. Members shouldn't post content about supporters or service users without their express permission. If members are sharing information about supporters, service users or third party organisations, this content should be clearly labelled so our audiences know it has not come directly from LCSC. If using interviews, videos or photos that clearly identify a child or young person, members must ensure they have the consent of a parent or guardian before using them on social media.
9. Always check facts. Members should not automatically assume that material is accurate and should take reasonable steps where necessary to seek verification, for example, by checking data/statistics and being wary of photo manipulation.
10. Be honest. Say what you know to be true or have a good source for. If you've made a mistake, don't be afraid to admit it.
11. Members should refrain from offering personal opinions via LCSC's social media accounts, either directly by commenting or indirectly by 'liking', 'sharing' or 'retweeting'. If you are in doubt about LCSC's position on a particular issue, please contact the Club Secretary who will direct your query to the appropriate committee member.
12. Members should not encourage people to break the law to supply material for social media, such as using unauthorised video footage. All relevant rights for usage must be obtained before publishing material.
13. Members should not set up other Facebook groups or pages, Twitter accounts or any other social media channels on behalf of LCSC. This could confuse messaging and brand awareness. By having official social media accounts in place, LCSC can ensure consistency of the brand and focus on building a strong following.

14. If a complaint is made on LCSC's social media channels, members should seek advice from the Club Secretary before responding. If they are not available, then members should speak to the Welfare Officer.
15. Sometimes issues can arise on social media which can escalate because they are sensitive or risk serious damage to the club's reputation. The nature of social media means that complaints are visible and can escalate quickly unnecessarily. All issues should be provided in writing via the Club Secretary or the Welfare Officer.
16. In line with many closed group accounts Facebook may, at times, become approved posts only which will be added as soon as an admin sees them. Please be patient during working hours. If the post is a question that would be better answered by someone specifically you may be provided with their email address by return.

The committee regularly monitors our social media spaces for mentions of LCSC so we can catch any issues or problems early. If there is an issue that could develop or has already developed into a serious situation, the committee will remove the post from social media and contact the member directly.

If any members outside of LCSC become aware of any comments online that they think have the potential to escalate into a serious issue, whether on LCSC's social media channels or elsewhere, they should speak to the club secretary or welfare officer immediately.

Please see our Social Media Guidelines in Appendix 1 which will be shared to our members.

### **Use of personal social media accounts — appropriate conduct**

This policy does not intend to inhibit personal use of social media but instead flags up those areas in which conflicts might arise. LCSC members are expected to behave appropriately, and in ways that are consistent with LCSC's values, behaviours and policies, both online and in real life.

1. Be aware that any information you make public could affect how people perceive LCSC. You must make it clear when you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of LCSC. If you are using your personal social media accounts to promote and talk about LCSC's work, you must use a disclaimer such as: "The views expressed on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent LCSC's positions, policies or opinions."
2. Members who have a personal blog or website which indicates in any way that they are part of LCSC should discuss any potential conflicts of interest with a member of the committee. Similarly, members who want to start blogging and wish to say that they are part of LCSC should discuss any potential conflicts of interest with the committee.
3. Use common sense and good judgement. Be aware of your association with LCSC and ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself to the general public, family, friends and the club.
4. LCSC is often supported by sponsors and outside charities; Please don't approach these organisations or people from your personal social media accounts to ask them to support LCSC, as this could hinder any potential relationships that are being managed by the club's Fundraiser. This includes asking for retweets about the club.
5. If you have any information about high profile people that have a connection to the club, or if there is someone who you would like to support the club, please speak to the Committee to share the details (you can do this by contacting the club secretary).
6. If a member is contacted by the press about their social media posts that relate to LCSC, they should talk to the club secretary or the press officer immediately and under no circumstances respond directly.

7. Never use LCSC's logos or trademarks unless approved to do so. Permission to use logos should be requested from the committee.
8. Always protect yourself and the club. Be careful with your privacy online and be cautious when sharing personal information. What you publish is widely accessible and will be around for a long time, so do consider the content carefully. When you are using social media sites, it is important that you do so safely.
9. Think about your reputation as well as the club's. Express your opinions and deal with differences of opinion respectfully either in person or via email (which you can send to the club secretary). Don't insult people or treat them badly. Passionate discussions and debates are fine, but should never be carried out over social media. You should always be respectful of others and their opinions. Be polite and the first to correct your own mistakes.
10. We encourage members to share tweets and posts that we have issued. When online in a personal capacity, you might also see opportunities to comment on or support LCSC and our swimmers. Where appropriate and using the guidelines within this policy, we encourage members to do this as it provides a human voice and raises our profile. However, if the content is controversial or misrepresented, please highlight this to the Welfare Officer who will respond as appropriate.

## Further guidelines

### **Libel**

Libel is when a false written statement that is damaging to a person's reputation is published online or in print. Whether members are posting content on social media as part of their job or in a personal capacity, they should not bring LCSC into disrepute by making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups.

### **Copyright law**

It is critical that all members abide by the laws governing copyright, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. Never use or adapt someone else's images or written content without permission. Failing to acknowledge the source/author/resource citation, where permission has been given to reproduce content, is also considered a breach of copyright.

### **Confidentiality**

Any communications that members make in a personal capacity must not breach confidentiality. For example, information meant for internal use only or information that LCSC is not ready to disclose yet.

### **Discrimination and harassment**

Members should not post content that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, on either an official LCSC social media channel or a personal account. For example:

- making offensive or derogatory comments relating to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, sex, religion or belief and sexual orientation
- using social media to bully another individual
- posting images that are discriminatory or offensive or links to such content

### **Protection and intervention**

The responsibility for measures of protection and intervention lies first with the social networking site itself. Different social networking sites offer different models of interventions in different areas. For more information, refer to the guidance available on the social networking site itself. For example, Facebook. However, if a member considers that a person/people is/are at risk of harm, they should report this to the Welfare Officer immediately.

**Under 18s and vulnerable people**

Young and vulnerable people face risks when using social networking sites. They may be at risk of being bullied, publishing sensitive and personal information on their profiles, or from becoming targets for online grooming.

Where known, when communicating with young people under 18-years-old via social media, members should ensure the online relationship with LCSC follows the same rules as the offline 'real-life' relationship. Members should ensure that young people have been made aware of the risks of communicating and sharing information online, and given guidance on security/privacy settings as necessary. Members should also ensure that the site itself is suitable for the young person and LCSC content and other content is appropriate for them. Please refer to our Code of Conducts for all members and our Wavepower and Child Protection policies.

**Responsibilities and breach of policy**

Everyone is responsible for their own compliance with this policy. Participation in social media on behalf of LCSC is not a right but an opportunity, so it must be treated seriously and with respect. For members, breaches of policy may result in removal from the club, depending on the severity of the issue. Please refer to our Social Media Guidance for support. Members who are unsure about whether something they propose to do on social media might breach this policy, should seek advice from the Welfare Officer.