



PENRYN RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

The Memorial Ground, Penryn, Cornwall, TR10 8NT

Telephone: 01326 372239 • www.penrynrugby.com

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

‘Better people, better Borough’

Penryn RFC encourages the responsible use of social media and this policy is designed to provide helpful, practical advice to members in respect of setting up social media and using it effectively, safely and positively. This policy also outlines mandatory actions and guidelines when using social media under the Penryn RFC umbrella.

Social networking, such as Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram and internet blogs, sport management apps such as Teamer and online sites such as www.penrynrugby.com and Pitchero, offers tremendous opportunities for rugby to communicate and engage with a growing audience as well as its existing members, supporters and players.

Penryn RFC is keen to promote the safe and responsible use of social networking technology but also to make its members aware of the potential risks and to share best practice.

Participants should be aware that comments which bring the game into disrepute, or are threatening, abusive, indecent or insulting, may lead to disciplinary action.

Comments that include a reference to a person’s ethnic origin, colour, race, nationality, faith, gender, sexual orientation or disability may attract a high disciplinary sanction.

Comments can also attract civil and criminal action. Nearly 5,000 offences involving Facebook and Twitter were reported to police in 2012 and 653 people charged.



clubmark



RFU

Accredited Club

Mandatory actions

- All social media users are expected to embody and foster Penryn's core values of Teamwork, Respect, Enjoyment, Discipline, Sportsmanship, Loyalty and Friendship.
- Be aware of, and abide by, the RFU Child Protection Guidance and the Penryn Safeguarding policies and procedures which protect the welfare of vulnerable adults and children.
- All age grade Facebook groups are to be private groups.
- All youth age grade social media pages or groups should not include accounts held by mini and junior players, with only coaches, parents and immediate family added as members.
- All youth Facebook groups must include, as admins, the following people:

Christopher Brush
Sarah Mount
TBC

Mini and Junior Manager
Club Safeguarding Officer
Communications Manager

General guidance

- An age grade social media page or group can be set up and administered by a person connected to a player in that team, such as a parent or coach.
- These are public forums, so treat them as such.
- Individuals and organisations are strictly responsible for any posting on his/their account/s.
- Re-posting or re-tweeting inappropriate content represents an endorsement of that content and can be actionable.
- Do not use abusive, derogatory, vulgar or sexual language.
- Do not criticise or imply bias in match officials.
- At all times, exercise discretion and respect for clubs, players, fans and the game's partners.
- We would request that you avoid gossip, slanderous comments, disruptive comments, threatening comments, and anything that could be construed as abusive, harassing, obscene, libellous, or an invasion of another's privacy (this includes text, audio, photographs and video).
- We would request that you refrain from any negative comments about, players, parents, coaches, managers, referees or other rugby or sports clubs.
- Deleting or apologising publicly for an improper posting does not prevent disciplinary action being taken.
- Coaches are advised not to communicate with children through landline or mobile phone conversations, text messages or via email.
- Any grievance, criticism or resentment should be directed in person to the individual or respective managers or coaches.
- Matters of a more serious or contentious nature should be discussed with the Club's Committee.



Clubs and Constituent Bodies

Clubs and Constituent Bodies (CBs) should be aware that they can be vicariously liable for material published by employees in the course of their employment, for example on an official website, Facebook site or Twitter feed, or published by employees outside work via a work email address or a work Twitter handle.

Clubs can also be liable for third party comments and postings made in their website forums or on their Facebook pages.

We recommend that clubs and CBs:

- Clearly identify who is responsible for posting and maintaining social networking and internet sites.
- Set standards for content generated in line with the RFU's Core Values and the guidelines above.
- Establish protocols for monitoring output, moderating content in online forums and removing offensive postings.
- Hold members to account for any breaches.

Safeguarding

The Penryn RFC Safeguarding policy fully complies with the RFU's Safeguarding Policy and advises against coaches having direct personal communication with children unless in exceptional circumstances and coaches and club officials should not communicate with children via mobile phone calls or texts, emails and through social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, nor should they be "friends" with children or comment on their status.

The RFU works closely with the NSPCC's Child Protection in Sport Unit, which provides comprehensive guidance and resources relating to this issue which are available from Penryn RFC upon request.

Players and officials

Individuals need to understand that they are personally responsible and liable for their comments and postings. At all times you should exercise discretion and be respectful of other players, teams, officials, organisations and brands. What you regard as "banter" could be regarded as embarrassing or hurtful by a wider audience and bring the game into disrepute.

In short, follow the general guidelines above and:

- Don't comment if you have any concerns about the consequences.
- Don't link to unsuitable content.



- Don't get into disputes with audience.
- Don't share or elicit personal detail.

But

- Do show your personality and be approachable.
- Do share your achievements.
- Do let people know what it is like to be a player/official.
- Do post regular comments to grow and engage with an audience.

Breaches of the above policy or any matters deemed of a serious nature will be referred to the Youth Section Disciplinary Committee.



Matthew Gray
Head of Youth Rugby

