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## **Online / Social Media Policy**

This policy provides guidance on how Thornton Steward Sailing Club (TSSC) uses the internet and social media, and the procedures for doing so. It also outlines how we expect adult and child members of TSSC to behave online.

### **Aims**

The aims of our online safety policy are:

- to protect all children involved with TSSC and who make use of technology (such as mobiles phones and the internet)
- to provide members with policy and procedure information regarding online safety and inform them how to respond to incidents
- to ensure TSSC is operating in line with our values and within the law regarding how we behave online.

### **Understanding the online world**

As part of using the internet and social media, TSSC will:

- assess and manage the safety aspects – including what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour for adult members and children when using websites, social media including Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, Twitter or Snapchat, apps and video conferencing platforms including Zoom or Skype
- be aware of how adult and child members in TSSC and other children who engage in activities at TSSC will use social media
- ensure that we adhere to relevant legislation and good practice guidelines when using social media or video conferencing platforms.

### **Managing our online presence**

TSSC's online presence through our website or social media platforms will adhere to the following guidelines:

- all social media accounts will be password-protected, and at least 2 members of staff will have access to each account and password
- all social media accounts will be monitored by at least two designated members approved by the committee in order to provide transparency
- the designated members managing our online presence will seek advice from the Club Welfare Officer to advise on safeguarding requirements



- designated members will remove inappropriate posts by adult or child members, explaining why, and informing anyone who may be affected (as well as the parents of any children involved) and the Club's Welfare Officer
- identifying details such as a child's full name, home address, school name or telephone number will not be posted on any social media platform
- parents will be asked to give their approval for us to communicate with their children through social media, via video conferencing platforms or by any other means of communication
- parents will need to give permission for photographs or videos of their child to be posted on the Club website or social media as part of the membership application/renewal forms
- video conferencing sessions will be password protected in order to maintain children's privacy and prevent exposure to inappropriate or harmful content by third parties.

### **What we expect of our members**

- all members – adult & child - should be aware of this policy and behave in accordance with it
- members should seek the advice of the Club Welfare Officer if they have any concerns about the use of the internet or social media
- members should not communicate with children via personal accounts
- emails or messages should maintain the Club's tone and be written in a professional manner, e.g., in the same way you would communicate with fellow professionals, avoiding kisses (X's) or using slang or inappropriate language or inappropriate emojis
- any concerns reported through social media should be dealt with in the same way as a face-to-face disclosure, according to TSSC reporting procedures
- at least one parent/person acting in loco parentis must be present during the delivery of any activities via video conferencing platforms to children at home
- staff and children must not engage in 'sexting' or send pictures to anyone that are obscene.

### **Using mobile phones or other digital technology to communicate**

When using mobile phones (or other devices) to communicate by voice, video, or text (including texting, email, and instant messaging such as WhatsApp or Facebook Messenger), members will adhere to the following to ensure children's safety:

- adult members will avoid having children's personal mobile numbers and will instead seek contact through a parent



- texts, emails, or messages will be used for communicating information – such as reminding children or young people about upcoming events, which kit to bring or practice timings – and not to engage in conversation
- if a child misinterprets such communication and tries to engage an adult member in conversation, the adult will take the following steps:
  - end the conversation or stop replying.
  - suggest discussing the subject further at the next practice or event.
  - inform the Club's Welfare Officer in the interest of transparency.
  - if concerned about the child, provide contact details for the Club's Welfare Officer or appropriate agencies, and report any concerns using the Club's reporting procedures.

### **Guidance for use of Club WhatsApp Group**

- Behaviour in the group reflects the Club's reputation and it is everyone's responsibility to uphold this.
- The content of everything posted in the Group must be appropriate for all who may read or access it and must not be upsetting or offensive to anyone.
- The content should be limited to sailing and club business – e.g., saying if you will be at the club on a certain day, information about the weather, sailing events.
- For children (those under 18 years of age) to be members of the Group their parent/guardian must give written consent to the Club Welfare Officer.
- No adult member should communicate online outside the Group with any child member
- Any photographs posted in the Group should be general – e.g., showing activities on the water- and should not feature any child/ren in such a way that they can be identified unless the photographs are posted by the child's parent or other person who hold Parental Responsibility for the child.

### **Further information for parents about keeping children safe online.**

NSPCC - The NSPCC's guidance for parents on online safety [nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety](https://nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety)

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) Child Exploitation and Online Protection Demand's website [ceop.police.uk](https://ceop.police.uk)

The UK Safer Internet Centre

Safer Internet Centre's advice for parents and children [saferinternet.org.uk](https://saferinternet.org.uk)

May 2023

**Thornton Steward Sailing Club**



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Approved by Thornton Steward Sailing Club Committee 25/5/2023

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**Thornton Steward Sailing Club**

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