



Mr.Child Use of Technology and Social Media Policy

Overview

Social media offers the opportunity for people to gather in online communities of shared interest, and create, share or consume content. As a public-facing organisation, **Mr.Child** recognises the benefits of social media as an important tool of engagement to communicate with members and supporters.

It is important that the reputation of **Mr.Child**, as well as any affiliated sponsors and partners, is not tarnished in any way by anyone using social-media tools inappropriately, particularly in relation to any content that directly references **Mr.Child**.

The purpose of this social-media policy is to provide **Mr.Child** club members some guiding principles to follow when using social media.

This policy does not apply to the use of personal accounts on social-media platforms where no reference or inference is made to **Mr.Child** or any associated partners, sponsors or projects.

Scope

This policy applies to all players, parents, coaches, directors, office bearers and volunteers (“club members”) of **Mr.Child** when they clearly identify their association with **Mr.Child** or can easily be associated with **Mr.Child**. The policy covers all forms of social media.

Social media includes, but is not limited to, activities such as:

- maintaining a profile page on social or business networking sites, such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, etc.;

- using messaging tools, such as WhatsApp, Teamer, etc.;
- content sharing, including using sites such as Flickr (photo sharing) and YouTube (video sharing);
- commenting on blogs for personal or business reasons;
- leaving product or service reviews on retailer sites or customer-review sites;
- taking part in online votes and polls;
- taking part in conversations on public and private web forums (message boards);
- editing a Wikipedia page.

The intent of this policy is to cover any material posted online where information is shared that affects directors, office bearers, sponsors, partners, customers or supporters of **Mr.Child** as an organisation and the reputation of the club, and the competitions in which it, or its members, competes.

Guiding Principles

The web is not anonymous. **Mr.Child** members should assume that everything they post online, especially in open forums, can be traced back to them. Individuals should be aware that they may be personally liable to prosecution and open to claims for damages, if their actions are found to be in breach of the law. In cases of harassment, a claim that you had not intended to harass or cause offence will not, in itself, constitute an acceptable defence.

Because of the nature of **Mr.Child**, the boundaries between personal and professional profiles, along with any associated opinions and comments, can become blurred. As such, it is essential that **Mr.Child** members clearly remember this ambiguity when posting anything online and at all times consider their connection to **Mr.Child** and, as such, their role as a representative of the club.

When using the internet for professional or personal pursuits, all **Mr.Child** members must respect the brands of **Mr.Child**, our partners, sponsors, and the associations to which we are members, including Fencing Ireland, and follow the guidelines in place to ensure that the intellectual property of both **Mr.Child** and our affiliated associations is not compromised and the organisation is not brought into disrepute.

Usage

All **Mr.Child** members using social media must operate within the **Mr.Child** Code of Conduct when engaging with electronic communications and social media.

- Club members must not post, forward or link to libellous, defamatory or harassing content – this also applies to the use of all artwork, including memes, and nicknames.
- Club members must not in any way comment on or publish information that is confidential.
- Club members must not use social-media tools to comment on club policies or directives.

- Club members must not bring (or be perceived to bring) **Mr.Child** or the sport and any affiliated governing bodies into disrepute.
- Club members must refrain from posts supporting discrimination whether about gender, sexual orientation, race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion or disability.
- Club members must refrain from posts of an overtly political nature – political impartiality should be maintained no matter what personal political beliefs are held.
- As a manager, coach, club official or club volunteer you should not:
 - accept any person under the age of eighteen as a friend on your personal social-media accounts;
 - communicate with any person under eighteen through social media, text message, phone or email – all communications to those under eighteen should be made through parents/guardians.
- Club members must not post named photographs of under eighteens without parental/guardian agreement.
- The use of open communication tools, such as WhatsApp, should be restricted to the organisation and scheduling of events, such as committee meetings, training session and match arrangements. Committees may use these tools to facilitate speedy decision making and consensus gathering but, in all cases, communication should be respectful, relevant, appropriate and courteous.
- When communicating with others online, keep content appropriate and polite. It is also important not to respond in the heat of the moment, in a way you may regret later. In particular, do not engage with irate players, parents or coaches on any forum.
- When communications relate to club matters, members should follow club values, use sound judgement and common sense. When in doubt, do not post.
- Club members must not otherwise be in breach of the **Mr.Child** Code of Conduct.

Mr.Child staff/volunteers using social media should not allow their use to interfere with work/club commitments.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

All activity on **Mr.Child** communications equipment (computers, mobile phones, etc.) may be monitored and retained. Use of this equipment should follow the following broad guidelines.

- Access to online content should be limited to **Mr.Child**-related business.
- Club equipment should not be used:
 - to search for inappropriate images or content;
 - to engage in cyber-bullying, harassment or disrespectful conduct toward others;

- to send spam or chain mail;
- to plagiarise content (copy, use as their own, without citing the original creator) found online;
- for illegal activities or to pursue information on such activities.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Club members should use their own good judgement when using club resources. Misuse of club resources may result in disciplinary action.

If a club member is in any way uncertain about posting online, s/he should contact **[insert relevant contact details here]**.

Branding & Intellectual Property

It is important that any trademarks belonging to **Mr.Child** or any affiliated competition or governing body are not used on personal social-media accounts, except where such use can be considered incidental – where incidents is taken to mean “happening in subordinate conjunction with something else”.

Official Club Blogs, Social Pages & Online Forums

When creating a new website, social-networking page or forum that is in any way or can in any way be judged to be associated with **Mr.Child** care should be taken to ensure the appropriate person is given permission to create the page or forum. Similarly, appropriate permissions must be obtained for the use of logos or images.

Images of anyone under eighteen must not be replicated on any site without the permission of parents and/or guardians.

For official **Mr.Child** blogs, social pages and online forums:

- posts must not contain, nor link to, pornographic or indecent content;
- hosted sites may sell the right to advertise on their sites through “pop up” content, which may be of a questionable nature. This type of hosted site should not be used for online forum or social pages as the nature of “pop up” content cannot be controlled;
- **Mr.Child** members must not use official **Mr.Child** pages to promote personal projects;
- all materials published or used must respect the copyright of third parties.

Consideration towards Others When Using Social-Networking Sites

Social-networking sites allow photographs, videos and comments to be shared with thousands of other users. **Mr.Child** club members must recognise that it may not be appropriate to share photographs, videos and comments in this way.

For example, there may be an expectation that photographs taken at private **Mr.Child** functions will not appear publicly or on the internet. In certain situations, **Mr.Child** club members could potentially breach the Data Protection Act or inadvertently make **Mr.Child** liable for breach of copyright.

Mr.Child club members should be considerate to others in such circumstances and should not post material when they have been asked not to or consent has

not been sought and given. They must also remove content related to another person if they are asked to do so.

Under no circumstances should offensive comments be made about **Mr.Child** club staff/volunteers or any affiliated partners or sponsors online.

Breach of Policy

Mr.Child will continually monitor online activity in relation to the club and the sport. Detected breaches of this policy should be reported to **Mr.Child**.

If detected, a breach of this policy may, following investigation, result in formal disciplinary action from **Mr.Child** under the **Mr.Child** disciplinary procedures detailed in the club's Code of Conduct. A breach of this policy may also amount to breaches of other **Mr.Child** documents and policies. Disciplinary action may involve a verbal or written warning or, in serious cases, termination of engagement or employment with **Mr.Child**.

Consultation or Advice

This policy has been developed to provide guidance for **Mr.Child** club members in a new area of social interaction.

If you are unsure about your rights, liabilities or actions online, you can seek clarification by contacting a member of **Mr.Child**'s communications committee at: **[club email address]**