

ONLINE SAFETY AND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

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PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidance on how Catalyst Allstars CIC uses the internet and social media, and its procedures for doing so. It also outlines how we expect our staff and athletes to behave online.

We are committed to implementing this policy and addressing any concerns raised, quickly and within these guidelines.

This online safety policy aims to

- ★ provide our staff with information regarding online safety, and how we need them to respond to incidents
- ★ ensure that we operate in line with our core values, and within the law, in terms of how we behave online
- ★ provide our athletes and parents/carers with guidelines on suitable online behaviour

Understanding the online world

When we use the internet and social media, we will:

- ★ assess and manage any safety aspects, including understanding what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour for our staff and athletes when using websites, social media (e.g. Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat), apps and video conferencing platforms (e.g. Zoom)
- ★ be aware of how our staff and athletes use social media both inside and outside of our setting
- ★ ensure that we adhere to relevant legislation and good practice guidelines when using social media or video conferencing platforms, such as when running online classes on Zoom
- ★ organise training for staff responsible for managing our online presence

- ★ regularly review our safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure that they include provision for reporting concerns of abuse, or any other disclosures taking place online, and that cyberbullying is included in our anti-bullying policy. Given the ever-changing nature of digital technologies, it is important that our policies remain consistent with any new developments in the field

MANAGING OUR ONLINE PRESENCE

Our online presence, including our website and 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 at all times
- ★ accounts will be monitored daily by at least two members of staff in order to provide transparency
- ★ the staff managing our online presence will ensure they are familiar with our safeguarding policy and how it relates to our activities online
- ★ staff will immediately remove or request removal of any inappropriate posts or comments by our staff or athletes, explaining why, and informing anyone who may be adversely affected (including the adults responsible for any athletes involved)
- ★ we'll make sure our athletes, and the adults responsible for them, know who manages our social media accounts and who to contact if they have any concerns about something that's happened online - this is our Directors
- ★ we will never post any details relating to our athletes on social media platforms, including their full name, address, birthday, social media handles, or anything else that could lead to them being identified or found outside of our gym
- ★ all posts and other content posted online will be consistent with our aims, values and tone as an organisation
- ★ we will take photos and videos during training sessions and events for internal training and development purposes, but adults responsible for athletes must give permission for material including them to be shared on social media, or for the purposes of publicity
- ★ parents will be asked to give their approval for us to communicate with athletes via video conferencing, (i.e. Zoom) if required for events, and strict rules, shared in advance, will apply to safeguard athletes
- ★ at least one parent (or adult not employed by us) must be present during the delivery of any activities via video conferencing platforms at home
- ★ 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 staff

- ★ staff should be aware of this policy and behave in accordance with it
- ★ staff should seek the advice of the Directors if they have any concerns about the use of the internet or social media
- ★ staff should communicate any messages they wish to send out to athletes to the designated staff responsible for the organisation's online presence
- ★ staff should not communicate with child athletes via personal accounts

- ★ staff should not 'friend' or 'follow' child athletes from personal accounts on social media and maintain the same professional boundaries online as they would in person when using organisation accounts
- ★ staff should make sure any content posted on public personal accounts is accurate and appropriate, as athletes may 'follow' them on social media
- ★ rather than communicating with parents through personal social media accounts, staff should choose a more formal means of communication, such as face-to-face, in an email or in writing, or use an organisational account
- ★ staff should avoid communicating with child athletes via email or organisational social media accounts outside of normal office hours
- ★ emails or messages should maintain our tone and be written in a professional manner, e.g. in the same way you would communicate with fellow professionals, avoiding kisses ('x'), slang and inappropriate language
- ★ staff should not delete any messages or communications sent to or from organisational accounts, except with formal agreement from the Directors
- ★ staff should undertake all online safety training offered and gain a basic knowledge of the platforms athletes use and know how to report or remove inappropriate content online
- ★ any concerns reported through social media should be dealt with in the same way as a face-to-face disclosure, according to our reporting procedures
- ★ any delivery of activities to child athletes via video conferencing platforms will be attended by an additional member of staff (even if they're not actively delivering) to ensure transparency

What we expect of athletes

- ★ athletes should be aware of this online safety policy and agree to its terms
- ★ we expect athletes' behaviour online to be consistent with the guidelines set out below:
 - display positive behaviour when using their phone at the cheer gym and be responsible for their behaviour online
 - not create or access illegal or harmful content. If they accidentally come across any such content, they will report this to a member of staff
 - not send anyone images, videos or messages that are illegal, threatening, offensive, or upsetting
 - should only use Catalyst Allstars official social media pages or website to contact them and should not contact individual staff directly
 - understand that their behaviour online may be addressed by their coach or other staff members at the Catalyst Allstars
 - not give out any of their personal information (such as name, age, address or telephone number) online, or that of anyone else
 - not share their passwords with anyone else
 - not arrange to meet someone that they have met online unless accompanied by a member of staff or parent
 - understand that these rules are designed to keep them safe, and if they are not followed a parent may be contacted
 - avoid using their mobile phone during activities as it will have an impact on their safety and their opportunity to learn and achieve
 - be aware that if they are experiencing bullying behaviour or abuse online, they can contact our designated safeguarding lead - Danni Cook.

- know that they can contact Childline on 0800 11 11 or at childline.org.uk if they have any worries about something they've seen or experienced online
- ★ children should follow these guidelines on all digital devices, including smart phones, tablets, computers and gaming consoles

What we expect of parents and carers

- ★ parents and carers should be aware of this online safety policy and agree to its terms
- ★ parents and carers are not permitted to take photographs or videos in our gym without approval of the Directors, and consent of the parents or carers of those included
- ★ parents and carers should protect the privacy of all athletes online and think carefully about what content they share about our sport, where they share it and with who
- ★ parents and carers should avoid sending staff private messages on social media platforms when it relates to Catalyst Allstars, this ensures no messages are missed if staff are absent and also respects our staff's personal boundaries
- ★ parents' and carers' behaviour online should be consistent with the guidelines set out in our Parent/Carer code of conduct

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, Instagram or Facebook Messenger), we'll take the following precautions to ensure children's safety:

- ★ staff will avoid having child athletes' personal mobile numbers and will instead seek contact through a parent
- ★ we'll seek parental permission on each occasion we need to contact child athletes directly; the purpose for each contact will be clearly identified and agreed upon
- ★ a method of accountability will be arranged, such as copies of texts, messages or emails also being sent to another member of staff or to parents
- ★ smartphone users should respect the private lives of others and not take or distribute pictures of other people if it could invade their privacy
- ★ staff should use a separate phone (cheer phone) from their personal one for any contact with parents or adult athletes, or otherwise 'withhold' their number
- ★ texts, emails or messages will be used for communicating important information (e.g. reminding parents or adult athletes about upcoming events, which kit to bring or class times), and will not be used simply to engage in conversation
- ★ any queries about classes, competitions, events etc. should be sent via a parent
- ★ from time to time a child athlete may ask questions via email or social media, in this instance, these will be dealt with in a brief and professional manner, keeping to the topic of their query, and in line with this policy
- ★ if a child athlete misinterprets such communication and tries to engage a staff member in further conversation, the member of staff will take the following steps:
 - end the conversation or stop replying
 - suggest discussing the subject further at the next class or event
 - inform one of our safeguarding officers, to ensure transparency

- if concerned about the child, provide contact details for our designated safeguarding lead or appropriate agencies and report any concerns using our reporting procedures

Using mobile phones during sports activities

So that all athletes can enjoy and actively take part in sports activities, we discourage the use of mobile phones during such activities. As part of this policy we will:

- ★ make parents, carers and athletes aware of who to contact, and how, if there is an emergency or a change to previously agreed arrangements with us
- ★ inform parents and carers of appropriate times they can contact athletes who are away at camps or away trips and discourage them from attempting contact outside of these times (if applicable)
- ★ advise parents and carers that it may not be possible to contact athletes during activities and provide a contact within the organisation who will be reachable should there be an emergency
- ★ explain to athletes how using mobile phones during activities has an impact on their safe awareness of their environment, and their level of participation and achievement

RESOURCES

NSPCC (0800 028 0285, [nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety))

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) ([ceop.police.uk/](https://www.ceop.police.uk/))

The UK Safer Internet Centre ([saferinternet.org.uk/](https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/))