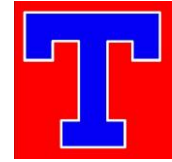




# Tiverton Swimming Club

## Guidance on the use of Social Networking



There is a lot of communication between adults, children, and their friends across a variety of social networking sites and there are risks associated with use of these. Swim England (SE) has experienced issues that have led to both disciplinary and safeguarding concerns from the improper or inappropriate use of social media sites by its members.

Swim England recognises that the use of social networking sites such as Facebook, X (Twitter) and Instagram, and instant messaging tools such as WhatsApp, TikTok and Snapchat, are used as the communication tools of choice by adults and children and have dangers and negative consequences if used inappropriately.

**Remember that misuse/abuse conducted on social media may result in a criminal investigation and members are encouraged to directly refer any criminal activity to police. In some circumstances members may also be breaching the club Codes of Conduct or Codes of Ethics which can result in disciplinary action.**

### Guidance for all adult coaches, teachers, and volunteers

As a coach, teacher, or volunteer of the club, you should not be in contact with young people through social networking sites if they are a member of the same club.

If a child at your club request to become 'friends' via your personal social networking site, you must decline if:

- You are in a position of responsibility in respect of that child.
- You hold a position of trust and/or responsibility at the club.
- Your contact with the child is through a Swim England club and the parent/guardian of the child does not give their consent to such contact.

Social networks should never be used as a medium by which to abuse or criticise members or Swim England organisations and to do so may be in breach of Swim England Regulations.

The publishing of a photograph or video footage on any social networking site is governed by the same requirements as those contained in the Swim England and TSC Photography Guidance which can be found in Swim Manager documents and on the club website.

### Coaches, teachers, and volunteers who are under 18.

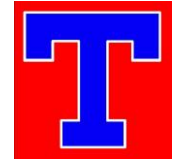
Swim England recognises that social networking sites can be useful for teachers, coaches, and other volunteers within the organisation to share information. **If the teacher, coach, or volunteer is under the age of 16, they must not have any direct contact or be added to a WhatsApp (or similar) club groups for any direct communication.**

If the young coach/teacher/volunteer is aged 16 or 17, it is the view of Swim England that to restrict the ability to share professional information with them from other coaches, teachers or staff may be detrimental in their professional development of their role in Swim England.



# Tiverton Swimming Club

## Guidance on the use of Social Networking



Therefore, if the parent/carer of a child in a position of responsibility aged 16 or 17 and the young person themselves requests to have contact with an adult member of staff for the purposes of sharing professional information relevant to their role, the organisation should:

- Gain written consent from the parent/carer and young person to have such contact, naming the individual adult and social networking site concerned.
- Ensure the named adult agrees to keep contact with the child to the discussion of matters relevant to the child's role in the club.
- Ensure such communications are shared with an identified third person (e.g., the young person's parent/carer or other club coach/officer).

### Coaches and volunteers aged between 18 and 21.

Swim England recognises that many young coaches aged between 18 and 21 will have been members themselves before becoming a coach and have been friends with their fellow members, some of whom will be between the ages of 16 and 17. It is therefore likely they will have contact details for those members and be friends with them on social networking sites.

In this circumstance, Swim England accepts it would be inappropriate to require friends to be removed from their social networking sites.

Therefore:

- If a coach aged between 18 and 21 has friends on their social networking site who are members aged 16 or 17, SE does not expect them to remove those members from their listed friends.
- The head coach should make every effort to ensure the young coach is not the primary coach for those specified young persons except on an occasional basis.

### Guidance to members of the organisation under the age of 18

***Do not ask your coach or teacher to be your friend on any social networking site – they will refuse as that would breach good practice.***

Consider who you are inviting to be your friend and follow the good advice of the social networking sites to ensure make sure you are talking to the person you believe you are talking to.

Always remember that any communication, comments, photos, and video clips posted on a social networking site may be shared with more people than you originally intended.

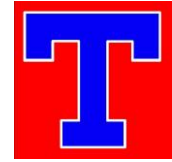
Never share pictures of yourself or your friends that you would not be happy for your family to see. Also never post or send any photographs, videos or make comments that:

- May be hurtful, untrue, or upsetting or that you may regret sharing later.
- May be used by other people in a way you did not intend or want.
- Other people may find inappropriate.



# Tiverton Swimming Club

## Guidance on the use of Social Networking



Do not upload images of other members taking part in TSC training activities without their permission.

Always be aware that social networking sites are a method of communication like letter writing and the spoken word. They are bound by the same laws and rules. The delivery of social networking content is instantaneous, and this can sometimes result in users reacting in the 'heat of the moment,' and your content or comments may spread far from that of your own social network of friends. Never place a comment on the internet that you would not put in writing or say aloud to someone. To do so may breach Swim England Policy and the Code of Conduct.

### Guidance to parents/carers

There have been occasions where parents/carers of members have used social networking sites to criticise or verbally abuse an organisation, its officers, officials, coaches, teachers, and/or members in an inappropriate and unacceptable manner.

Tiverton Swimming Club (TSC) has produced a parent's Code of Conduct which can be found In Swim Managers documents site or on the club website at [www.tiverton-swimming.co.uk](http://www.tiverton-swimming.co.uk). Please follow this code whilst your family is a member at TSC.

### Parents/carers who volunteer at the same organisation attended by their children.

Many parents/carers are becoming 'friends' with their children on social networking profiles for security reasons, to ensure the wellbeing of their own child by being able to view their child's profile. This may then give the parent access to the profiles of other children listed as 'friends' of their child. It would not be appropriate for SE to prevent a parent who is also a volunteer at the organisation where his/her child is a member from using this form of protection for their child's online activities.

Therefore, in such cases:

- The parent concerned should not have direct contact with members through the social networking website.
- Where the parent has access to their child's social networking site (i.e., knows the username and password) they must not contact any other children under the pretence of being their child.
- The parent should not accept their child's friends as friends on their own social networking site.