



Highland RFC

Online Safety – Photography, Videography and Social Media Guidance 2025/26

Sporting activities can play a big part in the lives of many young people and their families. Understandably achievements and special moments will be celebrated and documented by all of those involved. In some instances, it will also be helpful and appropriate to use photographs or videos as a tool to support skills and development.

However, we should always consider and be mindful of child protection and safeguarding risks attached to taking photographs and videos during an event and how this content will be shared and used. HRFC coaches, volunteers must ensure that the use of photography and videos comply with their duty of care towards protecting children and young people's personal data.

Potential risks can be minimised which will be outlined in this guidance document.

Videos and Photography

Use of social media and taking photographs is largely a positive tool for promotion of rugby and recording of children's participation and enjoyment of the sport. However, there are risks associated, and a few key principles should be followed.

Potential Risks

- There is a greater risk of children and young people being identified when a photograph/video is shared including personal information (full name, address, school etc). This information could be used by individuals looking to locate, contact or groom a child.
- Some children may be placed in local authority care, adoptive/foster family in which case it would be potentially dangerous to share information which would identify them.
- Inappropriate photos or videos being taken in private situations (e.g. changing rooms, toilet facilities).
- There is no guarantee that any images/videos shared privately online will not be re-shared on another public domain.
- It is hard to enforce best practice in a public place where you cannot control who will take and share videos or photographs.



Best Practice

- Subject to compliance with this policy, parents/guardians are deemed to consent to images/videos of their child being shared on the club social media channels and/or Spond app (or equivalent if replaced).
- Parents/guardians should email cpo@highlandrugbyclub.com if they do not consent for videos and photographs of their child to be shared on Spond, online on HRFC social media channels or elsewhere. The CPO will advise every coach and team manager of that child's age group. In addition, parents/guardians must also communicate their wishes with the head coach of that age group. If parental/guardian consent is not given, HRFC should manage sensitively so the child does not feel excluded.
- HRFC employees, coaches or volunteers will never share personal information alongside an image which would identify a child or young person (full name, age, school etc) except with parent/guardian consent.
- Children should always be pictured in suitable kit with the focus being on the sporting activity rather than the child or young person.
- HRFC employees, coaches or volunteers will ensure images are not inappropriate or of a sexual or exploitative nature.
- HRFC will share the relevant guidance with club members and lead by example. If photographs/videos are being taken in a public place by third parties (e.g. pitch side) this is not a matter we are able to police.

Social Media Guidance

HRFC will ensure there is nothing on its website or other social media platforms which could harm a child, directly or indirectly. HRFC is legally and morally responsible for its online content. As part of using the internet and social media, HRFC will:

- Understand the safety aspects – including what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.
- When using social media platforms (including Facebook, Twitter (now X) and Instagram), ensure we adhere to relevant legislation and good practice guidelines.

Managing online presence

HRFC will adhere to the following guidelines:



- All social media accounts will be password-protected, and at least 2 club members will have access to each account and password.
- Inappropriate posts by children, volunteers or staff will be removed.
- Identifying details such as a child's home address or telephone number will not be posted on social media platforms.
- If anyone has any concerns about the content of social media accounts, they should contact president@highlandrugbyclub.com.
- Parents/guardians must inform their young person's head coach if they do not consent to videos or photographs of their under 18-year-old being taken. The head coach will inform the CPO.

What we expect of coaches and volunteers

- Coaches and volunteers should seek advice from HRFC CPO if they have any concerns about the use of the internet or social media.
- Coaches and volunteers should not 'friend' or 'follow' children or young people from personal accounts on social media.
- Coaches and volunteers must ensure any content posted is accurate and appropriate.
- Coaches and volunteers must not communicate with young people via personal accounts or private messages. Spond is the current and only means for club communications between coaches/volunteers and young people.
- Any disclosures of abuse reported through social media will be dealt with in the same way as face-to-face disclosure, according to HRFC reporting procedures.
- Coaches, volunteers and young people must not engage in 'sexting' or send pictures to anyone that are obscene, indecent or menacing.
- HRFC will make children and young people, coaches and volunteers aware of our social media policy.

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), HRFC will take the following precautions to ensure young people's safety:

- Coaches and volunteers will communicate with young people via the SPOND app only. Communication by text, What's App or equivalent is not permitted. Spond enables parents to monitor any communications between club personnel and their child.
- Any group chats that are created to communicate regarding children and young people must be between HRFC and parent/guardians via the SPOND platform.



- SPOND 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 young person misinterprets such communication and tries to engage a staff member or volunteer in conversation, the member of staff or volunteer will take the following steps:
 - End the conversation or stop replying
 - Suggest discussing the subject further at the next practice or event
 - If concerned about the child or young person, provide details for the club's child protection officer or appropriate agencies

Use of other digital devices and programmes

These principles apply no matter which current or future technology is used. If any digital devices are used as part of activities within HRFC, establish appropriate restrictions, more commonly known as 'parental controls', on any device provided to prevent misuse or harm.

Further information for parents and carers on keeping children safe online

The following websites provide information for organisations and parents about online safety to help them protect their children from harm:–

- Internet Matters - <https://www.internetmatters.org/>
- Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) – www.ceop.police.uk
- Childnet – www.childnet.com
- The UK Safer Internet Centre – www.saferinternet.org.uk

Useful contacts

NSPCC Helpline

0808 800 5000

Faye Henderson
(Child Wellbeing & Protection Manager)

Faye.Henderson@sru.org.uk 0131 3465056

Key Contacts:

CPO/Safeguarding cpo@highlandrugbyclub.com

Director of Youth Rugby doyr@highlandrugbyclub.com



Director of Ladies & Girls Rugby ladiesandgirlsrugby@highlandrugbyclub.com

Director of Mini, Micro and WeEagles Rugby dommr@highlandrugbyclub.com

Director of Rugby DoR@highlandrugbyclub.com

Club Secretary secretary@highlandrugbyclub.com

Operations Manager operations@highlandrugbyclub.com

Club President president@highlandrugbyclub.com

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