



Communications Policy

Website

1. Lichfield RUFC acknowledges its responsibility to ensure that there is nothing on its website that could harm a child, directly or indirectly and that Lichfield RUFC is responsible for the content of its website.
2. Lichfield RUFC will seek to guard against;
 - a. Disclosing personal information about a child to people accessing the website. This could be the child's name, address, or any information about a child's life, interests or activities that would help a stranger target a child, or engage that child in conversation.
 - b. Abusive or inappropriate content (photos, video or text), on the site itself or on linked sites.
3. Lichfield RUFC requires that all its members, whether they are coaches, parents, players or officials comply with the Website Abuse and Cyber bullying Guidance as issued by the RFU. In summary, the following are **NOT** acceptable and will be treated seriously by the club and may result in disciplinary action being taken by the club;
 - a. Inappropriate content being added to any website, social media forum, etc., (for example violent, sexual or hateful content).
 - b. Bullying. This could be material on the site, social media forum, etc., which criticises or humiliates a child. It could also be information that places undue pressure on the child to participate in some aspect of a club's activities.
 - c. Disclosure of personal information relating to children.
4. Members of Lichfield RUFC, regardless of whether they are coaches, parents, players or officials, are not permitted to set up or create Weblogs (also known as Blogs) purporting to represent Lichfield RUFC in any way.
5. Members of Lichfield RUFC, regardless of whether they are coaches, parents, players or officials, are not permitted to create links purporting to represent Lichfield RUFC in any way to another website. Only the Communications Director of Lichfield RUFC may create links once the content of the other website has been thoroughly checked, both to ensure it is appropriate to be seen by children and that it does not have the potential to bully, as well as ensuring the content poses no other risk to the club's reputation. Once a link is included on the site, the club will check its content at least 6 monthly and will require the immediate removal of any link immediately if concerns arise.
6. No comments from members of the public may be posted to Lichfield RUFC's website, social media forum, etc. without it having been checked by the Communications Director before appearing, to ensure the content is appropriate.



Photos and Press Releases

7. Lichfield RUFC recognises the posting of photos and video clips can make any child featured vulnerable to grooming if information about the child (name, address, activities or interests) is also disclosed. Furthermore, posting an image on the website carries a risk that the image could be taken and adapted for an inappropriate use.
8. Lichfield RUFC requires that all its members, whether they are coaches, parents, players or officials use group images, rather than individual images.
9. If a child features in an image on the site, Lichfield RUFC requires that all its members, whether they are coaches, parents, players or officials do not use the child's first name or last name, either in text on the site or in the image file name.
10. Where it is necessary to use an images of individual children (such as in action shots) Lichfield RUFC require the use models or illustrations.
11. Lichfield RUFC require that all its members, whether they are coaches, parents, players or officials only use images of children in suitable dress, to minimise the risk of inappropriate adaptation of the image.
12. If a child is named, for example in a match report, Lichfield RUFC require that all its members, whether they are coaches, parents, players or officials do not include an image (individual or group).
13. Lichfield RUFC recognises that Parents (in this guidance, the term "parents" covers whoever cares for the child), and the child if old enough to understand, should be notified of the intended use of an image. Lichfield RUFC will not use the image if the parents or the child object (a requirement of the Data Protection Act as well as good child protection practice), and Lichfield RUFC will require positive written consent relating to the use of any image.
14. Lichfield RUFC will provide information to the parents of children under the age of 18 and vulnerable adults upon joining the club regarding the use of images.
15. If consent was given initially, but is subsequently withdrawn by parent or child, Lichfield RUFC will remove the image from the site.

Video, Webcams and live image streams

16. Lichfield RUFC recognises that any image stream, by its nature, cannot be checked before transmission especially if it is live. In addition, depending on the siting of the camera, it may not be possible to limit the people whose image or speech is transmitted. Furthermore, there is a risk that images or speech could help identify children, or contain personal information about those children, and the image stream could attract unwelcome interest from potential abusers.

Lichfield Rugby Union Football Club

Cooke Fields, Tamworth Rd, Lichfield WS14 9JE

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17. Lichfield RUFC requires that all its members, whether they are coaches, parents, players or officials only record and / or transmit image streams that are pictures only, without sound. As far as possible, the images should be of groups of people, not individuals.
18. Lichfield RUFC will notify all visitors (both adults and children) whose image may be caught that a recording is in operation. This will be through the use of prominent notices placed around all entrances to the area covered by the camera.

Mobile and on-line communication

19. Lichfield RUFC recognises technology is moving very fast in this area. There are now many different ways for people to communicate. In addition to landlines, there are mobile phones for voice and text, and most new phones incorporate cameras that take still shots and video. Two-way video calling is growing. On-line communication can be by email, instant messaging, chat rooms, and social networking sites.
20. Lichfield RUFC recognises the risks posed by email, instant messaging, chat rooms, and social networking sites arising from:
 - a. Privacy. It is usually one-to-one (often chat rooms have the facility for individuals to communicate 1:1 within the chat room).
 - b. The wide range of content that can be transmitted, including content of a violent, sexual or hateful nature.
 - c. The ease with which images can be forwarded onto others.
 - d. The difficulty in knowing truly, who you are communicating with. Where grooming happens, it often involves this type of communication.
21. Lichfield RUFC also recognises the additional risks within sport of:
 - a. Inappropriate pressure can be exerted by adults, particularly coaches, on children (such as to play when injured).
 - b. There can be inappropriate criticism of a child's performance.
 - c. An official position or role within a club, such as Coach, can carry with it a level of authority, and engender a level of trust, that facilitates the control of a child.
22. Lichfield RUFC requires that Club Officials and Coaches do not communicate with individual children by text or on-line at any time, on any matter, unless there is an immediate risk to the welfare of that child which can be lessened by such contact.
23. Lichfield RUFC requires that when communication by phone is needed, where possible Club Officials and Coaches should speak to the parent of a child.
24. Lichfield RUFC requires that if Club Officials and Coaches speak to individual children on mobile phones they should have prior consent from the child's parents and have confirmed that the child is old enough to understand.

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25. Lichfield RUFC requires that when its Club Officials and Coaches need to communicate club-related information to children by email (such as training or match details), it should use email groups comprising email addresses given by and for parents. Emails should be sent via the RFU RugbyFirst website to provide an audit trail of the communication for the benefit of the Lichfield RUFC and its Club Officials and Coaches.
26. Lichfield RUFC requires that such emails only come from specific designated individuals, and children and their parents know who these designated individuals are.
27. Lichfield RUFC will publish lists of the individuals within these groups (names only) and make these easily available.

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