



British Dodgeball Social Media Policy 2018/19

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media (which includes personal and professional websites, blogs, chat rooms and bulletin boards; social networks, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Instagram; video-sharing sites such as YouTube) are a widely used tool for communication, advertising and self-expression. They can represent individuals, as well as communities, causes, groups, organisations and more.

Although Social Media is specifically viewed as public internet platforms, this policy also reflects on the use of private messaging and communication systems including (but not limited to) text, phone call, email, and messaging platforms (WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, and more).

The most likely applications of social media usage will be:

- A club representing themselves as an entity
- An individual (player, coach, volunteer, participant, fan, family member) representing themselves as an individual for personal use, but involving dodgeball within this.
- A group linking together people around dodgeball
- An event page representing a gathering for a dodgeball activity

PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

It is essential that any individual working with a social account involved with the sport, or utilising their own account(s) to interact with the sport make informed decisions about how they use the internet, mobile phone and email/ message communications to responsibly interact/communicate/broadcast viewpoints/information with consideration to the direct receiver or secondary receivers through the public realm (both physical and digital).

Whether a player, coach, volunteer, participant, fan, family member or other, everyone involved in British Dodgeball activities, whether directly or indirectly, has the responsibility to safeguard both on and off the court, including communications.

British Dodgeball recognises and celebrates the developments in technology and the extensive opportunities for amateur clubs with limited-to-no budgets to interactively share, create and discuss issues and content for the benefit of the sport. Social Media allows for innovative and fast paced information to be shared and can be essential for successful growth of any club/ activity/ initiative around dodgeball.

However, British Dodgeball will challenge anyone using social media either intentionally or by association to insult, slander, create a risk to personal safety or abuse any individual, organisation or the sport of dodgeball.





This Policy provides guidance to all members, including players, clubs and coaches, and all connected participants including volunteers, fans, and family members to understand and act in the best practice possible. It highlights risks to be aware of and how to manage these. Social Media and communication platforms are part of an ever changing landscape in digital technologies, so this Policy is intended to set out an overall responsible practice, but it cannot provide a finite list of all Social / Communication channels, so demands an open awareness, responsibility and general ethics to all whom it applies. This Policy sits alongside our Code of Conduct and reminds all members and participants around British Dodgeball that misuse of social media can result in Disciplinary Action being taken against a member, connected participant or other.

RISKS TO BE AWARE OF

While social media provides excellent tools for helping your club engage with members and the public, it can also present a number of risks such as:

- Cyber bullying - through posts which are upsetting to people, display false information, or target individuals or groups in negative ways
- Causing offence to individuals, or other clubs and organisations
- Exposure to inappropriate content, abusive language, comments, or imagery

USING SOCIAL MEDIA

British Dodgeball encourages clubs, players, coaches, to use social media to positively promote their clubs, themselves and their achievements and the sport of dodgeball, though this must always be done with responsibility and respect. As an amateur sport, particularly when involving an individual's account (player, coach etc), their account will be a mix of their own personal content, as well as that including dodgeball. The balance between the right to free speech, and an individual's personal use of platforms, and the responsibility not to insult, slander, abuse or create risks to anyone's personal safety must always be an awareness.

GOOD PRACTICE

Dodgeball clubs are recommended to have an online presence to represent their club in the public. This is an encouraged platform for communications and allows for the club to maintain an identity in communications and a clear representative of the sport. As best practice for the running of any representative/ communicative platform for your club we encourage clubs to develop their own social media policy (Sport England Offers support here - www.sportenglandclubmatters.com), as well as elect at least 2 social media account administrators to support the running of these platforms. The creation of a page allows for individuals to retain personal privacy and respects an individual's personal time and the ability to step away from the platform. This also allows for easy distinction between the voice of the club and the personal voice/ opinions of the individuals running the account.





A page is an opportunity to creatively communicate messages from your club, and there can be a lot of positivity in creating charismatic and vibrant accounts. This is in no way discouraged, however, always consider the content that is being shared and whether it could isolate, upset, or confuse receivers.

Many clubs additionally choose to create private pages/groups in order to communicate less public and more specific information to their members. British Dodgeball respects the need for this as a useful tool, but again, any group must be treated with respect and responsibility and should be administrated by more than one person alone.

Texting/e-mail/ messenger platforms

A big part of any day to day activity within the sport is communication, whether that is about meeting for an event, sharing opportunities, or to discuss development ideas. This can lead to many one-to-one communications across a series of platforms. This can have risks to both adults and young people.

One-to-one contact to anyone under 16 without a parent/carer copied in is inappropriate and cannot happen. Clubs should seek parental consent at the start of the season if anyone under 16 is in any way going to be engaged on communication platforms, social media (public or private) and will be included in any content created for the purposes of promotion or otherwise. Clubs need to keep copies of permission forms, and any participants/members to the club must be respectful of this and including necessary parents and the Club Safeguarding Officer if there is a need to contact a member who is Under 16.

Adults and young persons should not be “friending” or “following” each other, outside of dodgeball networks and the establishments of pages is key in creating a clear distinction.

Under no circumstances should members be sending private messages to participants under the age of 16.

Over the age of 16, parents should still be made aware of the club’s practice and this Policy.

One-to-one contact with members over 16 still need to show respect in tone, content and the times of contact. All clubs should have a Safeguarding Officer appointed for any member to be able to independently speak to with any concerns.

The sport is very pleased to positively engage a diverse age range of players. We support the celebration of this and the encouragement of participation into the sport for all players, and the correct practices allow for all participants, as well as clubs, to feel confident in their experience of dodgeball.





PROTECTING PERSONAL INFORMATION

Names, phone numbers, addresses, financial details, contact details and personal social accounts should in no case be shared in public (unless stated as otherwise by the member) and all information should be kept securely. There is a number of methods to secure data in accordance to GDPR and a club should outline a policy and at least 2 administrators who will be responsible for this.

Please refer to our resources for guidance: <https://britishdodgeball.org/club-support/>

RESPECT - CONTENT

Individuals

As mentioned, as with any amateur sport, members will unlikely have social accounts simply for their person as a player alone, so it is understandable that people will (and are entitled to) express their own views and share/post any content they wish. However, they remain an ambassador to the sport and must be conscious of how they share, and speak about the sport on any of their own platforms, and they will also be held accountable if any personal action they take shines a negative view on the sport of dodgeball, or British Dodgeball as an organisation, and any of its members including clubs, individuals or initiatives.

Clubs

As a club you're are a direct ambassador for the sport and must be ever vigilant in any content you create/ broadcast, and this includes any content you share, as controversial content shared by a page can be interpreted as a reflection of that club's views.

For everyone

The expression of your own views is absolutely fine, but the way in which you do so must always be a consideration. Being rude or discriminatory is not acceptable:

Social Media must never be used to insult, bully, belittle, criticise, or negatively affect any other team, player, referees, coaches, participants, members, staff or British Dodgeball:

1. Avoid publishing negative comments about other clubs, players, referees etc and any controversial or potentially inflammatory subjects.

2. Avoid hostile or harassing communications in any posts or other online communications. Harassment is any offensive conduct based on a person's race, sex, gender identity, national origin, colour, disability, age, sexual orientation, veteran status, marital status, religion or any other status protected by law.





3. Respect all content used and give credit/ acknowledgement where necessary.
4. Take consideration with all responses to any posts made around your club and British Dodgeball

Any actions that ignore this will be subject to potential disciplinary action.

In no way does British Dodgeball look to silence complaints where a member feels necessary, but this must go through the correct channel. For any complaints in or around the sport for the attention of British Dodgeball, contact: hello@britishdodgeball.com

RESPECT - TIME

Dodgeball is the passion of many people involved in the sport, however, enthusiasm and energy can sometimes be negative if not best placed. People are not 24/7 in their communications around the sport. In all communications evaluate if it is necessary and what time the message is being sent, and when you are expecting responses. Social media can have severe implications to the health and wellbeing of people if they are not allowed to switch off from this. Always be mindful of this. As with any community, individuals will form friendships and this can blur the lines of communication, but if it is for the purpose of 'work' / a request of someone, be aware of their personal space and time.

REPORTING OF CONCERNS

Safeguarding truly is the responsibility of everyone. The community of British Dodgeball is a friendly and supportive one and that is to be maintained by us at British Dodgeball, as well as anyone involved in the sport.

If you have any concerns around your club or the sport, either speak to your club Safeguarding Officer, or necessary representative, or if it is need of a removed authority, contact British Dodgeball on hello@britishdodgeball.com.

If you see any threat of immediate danger this should be reported to the police and/or Children's Services or NSPCC on 0808 800 5000

If you have any enquires or questions around this policy, contact us on hello@britishdodgeball.com

As referred to a number of times in this policy, our Club Support section offers assistance in all elements of running a club to the highest of standards: <https://britishdodgeball.org/club-support/>

