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| Portlaoise Rugby Club  Social Media Policy | A yellow fleur-de-lis with text  Description automatically generated |

**Communication, Images and Social Networks**

With the increased use of technology (video, photographs, social media) in rugby, it is important that Portlaoise Rugby Club ensures that any images on websites and other publications are not contrary to the welfare of its minis and youth players.

Concerns about the risks posed directly and indirectly to children and young people due to misuse of social media are obvious to all. The issue is not to ban such technologies but to assess and limit the risk of harmful behaviour due to their use.

**Photographs**

Portlaoise Rugby Club will endeavour to:

Ensure that parental/ guardian agreement for using images/ photographs is sought. This can be done by using the “Parental Consent agreement” in Appendix One of the IRFU Safeguarding Policy at the time of registration.

Consent/approval/accreditation is given before a major event for professional photographers.

Establish what information will accompany photographs/ images.

Try to use group photographs without identifying Age-Grade Players by name.

Use group photographs, identifying the club rather than the individual.

Use only images/photographs that are suitable.

**Mobile Phones**

Portlaoise Rugby Club will endeavour to:

* Ensure that parental permission is sought for communications (calls, text, WhatsApp groups) by players and coaches/volunteers as a method of communication regarding club events.
* Encourage the use of group texting among players and parents to inform them of activities.
* Ensure that prolonged, non-rugby-related text conversations do not occur.
* Ensure that information is imparted to players, parents/guardians in sufficient time and that suitable times to send messages are agreed to not interfere with family life, work or school.
* Ensure the responsible use of phones (camera/video) by banning their use in certain club locations (e.g. changing rooms/toilets).

**CYBERBULLYING:**

Age Grade Players are advised to:

* Tell a parent, coach or the Club Welfare Officer within the club If they receive an offensive photo, email or message.
* They should not reply to offensive messages but should save them and make a note of times and dates.
* Be careful about whom they give their number, and do not respond to unfamiliar numbers.
* Consider changing their phone number if they are recipients of abuse, bullying or harassment, and discuss this option with their parents.
* Treat their phone as they would any other valuable item to guard against theft.

Consider the following before you post:

**THINK**

**T-** Is it TRUE? How do you know?

**H-** Is it Helpful? Does it help others, or is it just for likes and laughs?

**I** -Is it INSPIRING? Will it encourage or motivate others to do good?

**N-**Is it NECESSARY? Does it need to be said on social media?

**K**-Is it KIND? Would you feel good reading it, or is it meant to hurt someone?

**Portlaoise Rugby Club will not tolerate bullying of any kind.**