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**Basketball  
Ireland**

## Social Media Use Policy for Coaches and Backroom Staff working with Minors

### Purpose:

This policy is designed to establish clear guidelines for the use of social media by coaches and backroom staff who work with minors within Basketball Ireland. The primary objective is to protect the welfare and privacy of minors, while maintaining a professional and safe environment for online interactions.

### Scope:

This policy applies to all coaches, assistant coaches, and other personnel working directly with minors within Basketball Ireland. It covers all forms of social media including, but not limited to, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Facebook, X, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, and any other platforms used for communication and content sharing.

## 1. General Principles

### 1.1 Professionalism and Boundaries:

- Coaches/backroom staff must maintain the highest standards of professionalism in using social media and should not interact with minors on any platform.
- Personal and professional boundaries should be strictly upheld. Coaches and backroom staff are prohibited from accepting or initiating “friend” or “follow” requests from minors on personal social media accounts, or business accounts which are also used by coaches/backroom staff for personal use for direct communications.
- Coaches/backroom staff should not capture content which includes minors, unless requested to do so by BI for official BI use. Video capture for professional use by coaches/backroom staff in the preparation of the team is permitted, such as analysis of training/drills, having sought and received consent of minors’ parent/guardian.
- No content including minors should be used on coaches/backroom staff social media accounts bar squad photos, official squad engagements, or coaches/staff performing their duties with minors in background.
- No photos/videos should be captured or shared where a minor is partially clothed (eg. with top off after training).
- Coaches/backroom staff should never tag minors’ personal profiles in any photos or videos.
- Coaches/backroom staff should not add music to any professional post on social media that includes a minor, as the lyrics could be inappropriate or contain offensive lyrics or intentions.



# Basketball Ireland

## 1.2 Privacy and Confidentiality:

- Coaches/backroom staff must respect the privacy of minors and their families. Any sharing of personal information, images, or videos of minors on social media is strictly prohibited, unless explicit, written consent has been obtained from the minor's parent or legal guardian.
- Coaches/backroom staff must ensure that no personal or sensitive information regarding minors is disclosed on social media, even in private groups or private conversations.

## 1.3 Transparency and Accountability:

- All interactions between coaches/backroom staff and minors should be transparent and done through approved Basketball Ireland channels/platforms. Communications related to coaching and mentoring with minors should be conducted through XPS, which is also accessible to minors' parents/guardian and XPS administrators.

## 2. Social Media Content Guidelines

### 2.1 Appropriate Content:

- Coaches/backroom staff must ensure that all content shared, or commented on, is age-appropriate, respectful, and aligned with the values of Basketball Ireland.
- Offensive, derogatory, or discriminatory content, as well as any material that could be considered inappropriate for minors, is strictly prohibited.
- Coaches/backroom staff are reminded that sharing or 'liking' posts/comments is an endorsement of content and must meet BI standards/values outlined above.

### 2.2 Prohibition of Direct Messaging:

- Direct messaging between coaches/backroom staff and minors is prohibited on all social media platforms. All communications should be conducted through XPS where those responsible for minor (i.e. parent/guardian) is included - and has access to - the conversation.

### 2.3 Promoting Positive Behaviour:

- Coaches should use social media to promote positive behaviour, sportsmanship, and a safe environment for minors. Any content shared should be educational, motivational, or informative, reinforcing positive values.

## 3. Monitoring and Reporting

### 3.1 Regular Monitoring:

- Basketball Ireland will conduct regular audits of social media activity involving coaches/backroom staff to ensure compliance with this policy.
- Coaches/backroom staff are responsible for reporting any breaches of this policy to the Child Protection Officer, or relevant authorities immediately.



# Basketball Ireland

## 3.2 Incident Reporting:

- Any incidents of inappropriate behaviour, harassment, or other breaches involving minors on social media should be reported immediately to the Child Protection Officer, please email [safeguarding@ireland.basketball](mailto:safeguarding@ireland.basketball).
- Coaches are obliged to cooperate fully with any investigations into reported incidents.

## 4. Education and Training

### 4.1 Mandatory Training:

- All coaches are required to complete training on child protection on a three-year cycle, in line with our Garda Vetting and coach licencing, and the responsible use of social media. This training will cover the legal, ethical, and practical aspects of safeguarding minors online.
- Basketball Ireland will provide resources and support to ensure coaches understand the implications of their online behaviour and the importance of maintaining a safe environment for minors.

## 5. Enforcement and Consequences

### 5.1 Disciplinary Actions:

- Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action, which may include suspension, termination of employment, or referral to legal authorities, depending on the severity of the breach.
- Basketball Ireland reserves the right to take immediate action to protect the welfare of minors, including removing a coach from their position if necessary.

### 5.2 Appeals Process:

- Coaches have the right to appeal disciplinary actions in accordance with the procedures outlined by Basketball Ireland. However, the welfare of the minors will always remain the paramount consideration in any decisions made.

## 6. Policy Review

### 6.1 Regular Review:

- This policy will be reviewed annually, or more frequently, if necessary, to ensure it remains up to date with evolving best practices, legal requirements, and the digital landscape.
- Feedback from coaches, parents, and other stakeholders will be considered during the review process to ensure the policy continues to meet the needs of all parties involved.



## Conclusion:

Basketball Ireland is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all minors. Adherence to this Social Media Use Policy is crucial in upholding the highest standards of child protection and ensuring that social media is used responsibly by coaches.

**ENDS**