



## BUCKINGHAMSHIRE RFU

### **Media Policy (2020)**

This policy is designed to provide helpful, practical advice to all our CB and member clubs in respect of using social media (including video) effectively and positively. As a County we encourage the responsible use of all social media platforms.

The County realises that social media has become increasingly popular over recent years because it allows people to connect in the online world instantly. It can be hugely beneficial in disseminating information about rugby generally, team news and is open to use by many age groups. It is also a popular forum for developing personal and business relationships. It can take many different forms, including internet forums, internet blogs, social blogs, podcasts, pictures and mobile phone/camera video. There are a wide range of platforms that the term 'social media' relates to. However, Buckinghamshire Rugby recognises that the most popular channels currently used are Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Whats App etc, it will also include sensible and ethical use of conference call type platforms.

We recognise that we all live in a society that promotes free speech and freedom of expression, but we would caution that anything that you write, take pictures of or film etc. has the potential to enter the public domain instantly, either of your own volition or via a 3<sup>rd</sup> party. Consequently, we would request that all social media commentary/video/pictures etc, relating to rugby (club or otherwise) is of a positive nature - please think carefully before making/posting comments/ video etc, that may lead to unintended consequences.

Any grievance, criticism or resentment you have about any matter should be directed in person to the individual or respective managers or coaches (try to wait 24 hrs before directing these). Matters of a more serious or contentious nature should be discussed with your Club's Executive Committee and/or a safeguarding officer (Immediately).

We would request that you refrain from any negative comments about, players, parents, coaches, managers, referees, individual clubs, etc. We would request that you avoid gossip, slanderous comments, disruptive comments, threatening comments, and anything that could be construed as abusive, harassing, obscene, libellous, or an invasion of another's privacy (this includes text, audio, photographs and video).

Whilst we all realise that a certain amount of 'banter' may take place on some forums, we would request that any language used is moderated, please remember that these forums can be viewed by a range of age groups from both genders; if you wouldn't use the intended language in your own home then it should not be appearing in the public domain. It also should be borne in mind that from time to time disciplinary issues occur within our member clubs, both at youth and senior levels. These instances will sometimes necessitate formal disciplinary proceedings. To ensure fairness to all parties that might be involved in this process we would ask that under no circumstances should any comment/video etc surrounding this type of issue be made public or commented on, without PRIOR permission from the Bucks discipline secretary.

Should a negative comment in any form (word or video) be made, we would ask you not to comment on it either way, or to escalate an issue. We also have to be aware of using common sense when adults communicate with children (U18's) whether as a Coach or Team Manager, language must always be appropriate and any conversations should never, for any reason, be within any private settings and must always be available for scrutiny.

Serious instances of irresponsible use of social media platforms associated with Bucks County rugby may be referred to the CB Executive Committee, although any action taken by this committees will be judged on a case by case basis. It will always have the right to hold you as an individual responsible for your actions. Buckinghamshire Rugby requests that you use social media outlets positively, be responsible, share your achievements, celebrate success, be gracious in defeat, be honest, but above all, enjoy communicating and interacting.

**Neale Baker**

**Bucks RFU Chair, On behalf of The Executive Committee.**