

Social Media Guidance

This guidance is designed to support safe, responsible and positive online communication and should be read in conjunction with the following policies and guidance from British Orienteering;

- [Social Media Policy](#)
- [Code of Ethics and Behaviour](#)
- [Code of Conduct](#)
- [Safeguarding policies and procedures](#)
- [Photography, Videos & Live Streaming Guidance](#)
- [Group Chat & Messaging Guidance](#)

Breaches may result in removal from groups/accounts, suspension, or disciplinary action. Where online abuse or criminality is suspected, the Lead Safeguarding Officer will liaise with police/CEOP and preserve all evidence. Please refer any questions to the British Orienteering Lead Safeguarding Officer and/or Communications Officer.

Social Media Account Management

Authorisation

- National level accounts must be authorised and overseen by the British Orienteering Communications Officer.-level accounts must be authorised and overseen by the British Orienteering Communications Officer.
- Club and Association accounts must be approved by the relevant committee.

Administration and Access

- Each account must have at least two administrators.
- Administrators must use secure passwords and store login details safely.
- Access should be reviewed periodically to ensure only active, appropriate individuals have control.
- All adults with access to Club accounts or closed groups involving under-18s must be appropriately vetted and complete the British Orienteering eLearning Safeguarding module¹.
- Moderators must use official club/official accounts, not personal accounts.

Moderation Responsibilities

- Clubs should monitor their accounts regularly.
- Any inappropriate content must be removed promptly, and concerns referred to the Club/Association Welfare Officer or British Orienteering Lead Safeguarding Officer
- Official channels must verify the source of third-party content before reposting.
- Sponsored or commercial posts require approval by the Communications Officer to ensure they meet safeguarding and brand standards.
- British Orienteering Official accounts will be monitored centrally by the Communications Officer.
- Moderation decisions that affect individuals (removal, ban, public correction) should be recorded.

¹ See section below on Further Training

- Where individuals are given access to British Orienteering's national social media accounts, the Communications Officer will ensure they receive role-specific guidance and confirm the terms of use. Clubs may choose to use a local agreement, but this is not mandatory.

Use of British Orienteering Branding

- British Orienteering logos and national branding may only be used on accounts or posts authorised by British Orienteering.

Content Standards and Behaviour

- All posts must be respectful and must not include harassment, discrimination, shaming or abusive behaviour.
- Errors should be corrected promptly and transparently.
- Never disclose personal details, such as home addresses, school names, telephone numbers.
- Do not share or discuss confidential, sensitive or internal information - including personal or third party or third-party details such as home addresses, telephone numbers, selection matters, performance issues, internal investigations, disputes or disciplinary cases
- If in doubt, err on the side of caution and do not post.
- Do not post anonymously or use false/pseudonyms.
- Avoid posting photos that show children in distress, injured, alone, or in vulnerable situations.

Communicating with Young People on Social Media

- Adults should not "friend" or "follow" children on personal accounts.
- Adults must not communicate privately with under 18's via personal accounts.
- Parents/carers must be informed of all communication channels used by the club.
- Copy another adult (e.g., club welfare officer) into communications with young people.
- Keep messages formal and avoid using slang, emojis, or casual tone.
- Seek parental/carer consent prior to posting photographs or videos of their children online.
- Closed messaging groups involving under 18s must include at least two adults and must not permit private messaging between adults and children.
- Under 18's should not administer, moderate, or control access to club communication channels.

Using Social Media to Promote Orienteering

Social media is an essential promotional tool for clubs and events. Clubs are encouraged to:

- Use social media to reach prospective members and promote events.
- Choose platforms based on the audience being targeted (e.g., Facebook for local community engagement, Instagram for visual storytelling).
- Ensure posts are consistent with the club's website and key messages.
- Use British Orienteering's Digital Content Hub for quality images, templates and branding resources.

Promotional content must remain respectful, accurate, and aligned with British Orienteering's [Code of Conduct](#) and [Social Media Policy](#).

Mistakes, Incidents and Reporting

- Act quickly: As soon as you notice an error (e.g. wrong image posted, private data shared), take steps to correct it.
- Remove or edit the post: Delete or edit the content where possible. If edited, state that a correction has been made.
- Acknowledge openly: If the error affects others (e.g. naming someone incorrectly, posting without consent), issue a polite correction or apology.
- Log the incident: Record what happened, what action was taken, and any follow-up needed
- Inform key contacts: Notify the Club Welfare Officer or Communications Officer if the mistake involved safeguarding, personal data, or reputational risk.

Safe Use of Social Media – for members, parents and juniors

Social media carries risks such as inappropriate contact, harmful content and breaches of privacy. Users should follow British Orienteering safeguarding policies and seek advice if unsure.

Safe Use Tips

- **Think before you post** - is it respectful, appropriate, and something you'd be happy to be public?
- **Use privacy settings** - consider who you want to see your posts and adjust settings accordingly.
- **Only accept friend requests from people who you know.** Don't ask people in positions of authority, e.g. coaches, mentors, to be your friends.
- **Report and block** - if you receive abusive messages or see harmful content, report it to the platform and block the sender.
- **Keep evidence** - screenshots of harmful posts or messages can help if reporting is needed.
- **Talk to someone you trust** - parents, club welfare officer, coach, etc if something worries you.
- **Respect the age limits** - to protect users, many social media platforms have age limits which should be adhered to.
- **Disable live location tagging** when posting content featuring children, unless essential and with explicit parental consent.
- **Use first name and initial only** if posting results or event details involving under 18's (unless parental consent obtained).

Recording devices (including phones, cameras and wearable technology) must never be used in changing rooms, toilets or in any bedrooms used as accommodation during training camps, competitions, tours or events, regardless of age. This is a safeguarding and privacy requirement and is set out in full in British Orienteering's Photography, Videos & Live Streaming and Residential/Overnight Stay Guidance.

Personal vs Official Accounts

- Clearly distinguish between personal views and official communications.
- If using personal accounts to discuss Orienteering, include a disclaimer ("views are my own").

- Official accounts must be authorised through British Orienteering and may be subject to Acceptable Use Agreement.

Use of Videoconferencing

- Where possible, use official British Orienteering or club platforms, not personal accounts.
- Ensure platforms are password-protected and secure to prevent unauthorised access.
- Ensure all attendees are authorised and expected to join.
- Share session details and invitations with parents/carers and encourage attendance.
- Sessions should be recorded for safeguarding purposes (with prior consent)
- Sessions must be planned, purposeful, and age-appropriate, with content to support skill development
- Keep a session log (date, facilitator, attendees, recording stored) for a minimum of 12 months
- Session recordings must be stored securely and only accessible to authorised individuals.
- Two adults, with appropriate vetting checks, should be present in all online sessions with under-18s.
- Where possible, disable one-to-one private chat to ensure all communication is open and transparent.
- Restrict screen sharing to hosts or designated presenters.
- Enable hosts to mute participants if inappropriate language or behaviour occurs.
- Remove any inappropriate messages in the Group chats and report to Club/Association Welfare Officer and/or British Orienteering Safeguarding.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

AI tools (e.g., image generators, chatbots, editing software) offer benefits but also risks. All AI use must follow British orienteering Data Protection Policy. To ensure safe, ethical use:

Do:

- Clearly label all AI-generated images, videos, or text.
- Avoid generating or sharing AI content that depicts real juniors without explicit parental consent.
- Check accuracy before posting AI-generated text.
- Use official British Orienteering or club accounts only, not personal AI tools linked to personal data.

Do Not:

- Create AI-generated images of minors under any circumstances without written parental/carer consent.
- Use AI tools to produce disciplinary commentary, medical information, or anything involving personal/sensitive data.
- Allow AI chatbots to interact directly with children on club channels.
- Do not post images generated by AI that depict real members, juniors, or identifiable individuals unless full consent is provided and the content is clearly labelled as AI-generated.

Use of Drones

Drones can provide useful footage for publicity and analysis, but strict controls are needed.

- Drone use at events must be risk-assessed and authorised by the Event Organiser.
- Drone operators must comply with CAA regulations and hold relevant certification.

- Flying over children or crowds is prohibited.
- Live streaming from drones is not permitted unless approved in advance by British Orienteering.

Safeguarding Controls

- Publish clear notice in advance if drones will be used.
- Provide an opt-out mechanism for parents/carers.
- Do not use drones in changing areas, car parks after events, or anywhere children might be vulnerable.

What to Do if You Have a Concern

- If someone is in immediate danger: call 999
- Tell a Club Welfare Officer, or the British Orienteering Lead Safeguarding Officer
- Report abusive content directly to the social media platform.
 - Preserve evidence – take screenshots with time stamps, export chat logs if possible.
 - Do not delete content that may be relevant to an investigation.
- Report to Club/Association Welfare Officer or the British Orienteering Lead Safeguarding Officer (safeguarding@britishorienteering.org.uk or call 07891 091662)

Helpful Websites

- [NSPCC / Child Line](#) | 0800 1111
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#)
- [ThinkUKNow](#) - Online safety education and reporting
- [CEOP](#) (Child Exploitation and Online Protection Command) - Report online grooming or exploitation
- [Anti-Bullying Alliance](#) – Resources on preventing and responding to bullying
- [Internet Matters](#) – Guides for parents and carers
- [Report Remove | Childline](#) (Under 18's) - to help young people in the UK to confidentially report sexual images and videos of themselves and remove them from the internet

Recommended Further Training

The NSPCC offers an Online Safety training course which is recommended for all online moderators: [Online safety training | NSPCC Learning](#) and further guidance can be found on their website: [Online safety and social media in sport | CPSU](#)