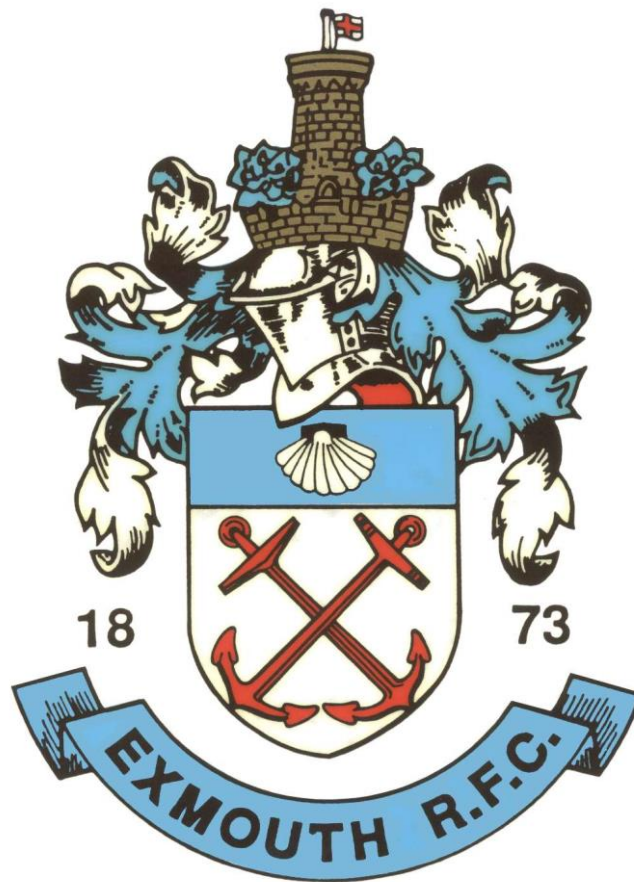


# **Exmouth Rugby Football Club**

Imperial Recreation Ground, The Royal Avenue, Exmouth, Devon. EX8 1DG  
Registered in England No. 07460939



## **Social Media Policy**

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## **Social Media Policy**

### **Introduction**

Social Media, such as Twitter, Facebook, internet blogs and other online sites, offers tremendous opportunities for rugby to communicate and engage with a growing audience as well as its existing members, supporters and players.

Social Media is a public forum and therefore any comments can attract civil and criminal action.

Exmouth RFC therefore is keen to promote the safe and responsible use of social media technology but also to make its members aware of the potential risks, including the negative effect on the Club's reputation and image and is committed to sharing best practice.

Exmouth RFC members and supporters should be aware that comments which bring the game into disrepute, or are threatening, abusive, indecent or insulting, may lead to disciplinary action by Exmouth RFC and/or the RFU and/or Devon RFU.

Comments that include a reference to a person's ethnic origin, colour, race, nationality, faith, gender, sexual orientation or disability may attract a top entry discipline sanction as set out in RFU Discipline Regulations.

### **Social Media and Safeguarding Children**

Exmouth Rugby Football Club has a firm commitment to safeguarding children in all aspects of its work.

In the same way that Exmouth RFC has responsibility for the physical safety of a junior member when visiting the club's premises, Exmouth RFC must also ensure that there is nothing on its website which could harm a child, directly or indirectly. Exmouth RFC is responsible for the content of its website, which is regularly checked by the Club Webmaster.

There are 2 key risks to guard against:

1. Disclosing personal information about a child to people accessing the website. This could be the child's name, address, or any information about a child's life, interests or activities which would help a stranger target a child, or engage that child in conversation.
2. Abusive or inappropriate content (photos, video or text), on the site itself or on linked sites. Bullying – criticising child or humiliating them.

### **Photos and video**

Photos and video clips can make any child featured vulnerable to grooming if information about the child (name, address, activities or interests) is also disclosed. Furthermore,

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posting an image on the website carries a risk that the image could be taken and adapted for an inappropriate use.

Recommendations:

- Use group images, rather than individual images. Do not use child's name
- Notification and a consent request should be included in the information given to junior members and their parents upon joining the club.
- If consent was given initially, but is subsequently withdrawn by parent or child, the image should be removed from the site.

## **Social Media Statement**

Social networking activities conducted online outside of Exmouth RFC involvement, such as involvement in social media sites like Facebook, MySpace and posting material, images or comments on sites such as You Tube, Instagram or Snapchat can have a negative effect on Exmouth RFC's reputation or image. In addition, Exmouth Rugby Football Club has a firm commitment to safeguarding children in all aspects of its work. This policy has been written to set out the key principles and code of conduct that we expect of all members of the club with respect to their responsibilities in connection with the use of social networking sites.

## **Key Principles**

Safeguarding children is a key responsibility of all members and it is essential that everyone at Exmouth RFC considers this and acts responsibly if they are using social networking sites that have any club involvement.

- All members of Exmouth RFC have a responsibility to ensure that they protect the reputation of the club, and to treat fellow members of the club with dignity and respect.
- It is important to protect Exmouth RFC from allegations and misinterpretations which can arise from the use of social media sites.

## **Aims**

- To set out the key principles and code of conduct expected of all members of Exmouth RFC with respect to social networking
- To further safeguard and protect children and volunteers.
- To protect the image and reputation of the club.

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## CODE of CONDUCT for Members of Exmouth RFC

The following are **not** considered acceptable at Exmouth RFC.

- The use of the club's name, logo, or any other published material without written prior permission from either the Board of Directors or the Management Committee. This applies to any published material including the internet or written documentation.
- The posting of any communication, or images, which link the club to any form of illegal conduct or which may damage the reputation of the club. This includes comments that are threatening, abusive and insulting.
- The disclosure of confidential, club-sensitive information, or the disclosure of information/images that could compromise the security of the club.

In addition to the above all players, parents, managers, coaches, members or anyone associated with Exmouth RFC are reminded that with regard to comments made on social media, they must ensure that they:

- Comply with the RFU Anti – Bullying Policy and must not make any derogatory, defamatory, rude, threatening or inappropriate comments about the club, or anyone at or connected with the club or those clubs that it plays. This includes referees, match officials and other club members.
- Use social networking sites responsibly ensuring that neither individuals or other clubs personal/professional reputation, or the club's reputation is compromised by inappropriate postings.
- Understand that they are personally responsible and liable for their comments and postings. At all times you should exercise discretion and be respectful of other players, teams, officials, organisations and brands. What you regard as “banter” could be regarded as embarrassing or hurtful by a wider audience and bring the Club and the game into disrepute.
- Don't comment if you have any concerns about the consequences
- Don't link to or share unsuitable content
- Don't get into disputes with an audience
- Don't share or elicit personal detail

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## **Potential and Actual Breaches of the Code of Conduct**

Exmouth RFC is aware that they can be vicariously liable for material published by employees and club officials. They can also be liable for third party comments and postings made on their website forums or on any social media sites.

In instances where there has been a breach of the Code of Conduct, the following will apply:

- Any breaches of this policy will be fully investigated. This investigation will initially be carried out by the Safeguarding Officers or Discipline Officer who will decide if the policy has been breached. A breach of this policy will be considered to be a serious disciplinary offence and will be investigated by the Club's Discipline Committee in accordance with the Club's Discipline Policy.
- Exmouth RFC will take appropriate action in order to protect the club's reputation and that of its members, volunteers, children and anyone else directly linked to the club. This action could involve an appropriate sanction including expulsion from the club.