



CHEERSPORT

I R E L A N D

SOCIAL MEDIA AND ONLINE SAFETY POLICY

1. Introduction

Cheer Sport Ireland (CSI) recognises that social media and online communication are essential tools for modern sport. However, they also present risks to children's safety, privacy, and wellbeing. This policy ensures online activity across CSI and its affiliated clubs is safe, appropriate, and compliant with safeguarding legislation.

2. Purpose

This policy outlines the standards for safe use of social media, digital platforms, and online communication involving children.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all CSI clubs, coaches, volunteers, athletes, parents, staff, contractors, and event personnel.

4. Guiding Principles

- Children's safety and wellbeing are the priority in all online communication.
- Online behaviour must reflect the same standards as in-person behaviour.
- Privacy, dignity, and data protection must always be respected.
- Parents/guardians must be informed and included where appropriate.
- All online interactions must be transparent, professional, and child-safe.

5. Approved Online Platforms

CSI approves the use of the following platforms for club communication:

5a: Official club email accounts.

5b: Club management apps with parental access.

5c: Team messaging apps approved by CSI.

5d: CSI and club official social media pages for public updates.

6. Prohibited Platforms or Practices

- Private messaging between a coach/volunteer and a child.

- Using personal social media accounts for official communication.
- Posting content from hidden or anonymous accounts.
- Any app or platform that does not allow parental oversight.
- Direct communication with children without a second adult included.

7. Communication with Children Online

- All communication must include at least two vetted adults.
- Messages must be group-based, not individual.
- Messages must be factual, relevant, and appropriate.
- Children must never be contacted late at night or excessively.
- Coaches must not 'friend', follow, or direct message children.

8. Social Media Conduct for Adults

- Adults must model appropriate behaviour online.
- Comments, posts, and shares must reflect CSI values.
- Adults must not post negative, inappropriate, or abusive content about any child, parent, coach, or club.
- Adults must not post images of children without explicit consent.

9. Social Media Conduct for Children

- Athletes must treat others with respect online.
- Cyberbullying, harassment, or inappropriate content is prohibited.
- Athletes must not post unsafe stunts or activities.
- Athletes must not share personal information publicly.

10. Posting Images & Videos of Children

- Consent must be obtained from parents/guardians before posting.
- Images must be age-appropriate and respectful.
- Children must be suitably dressed and never photographed in private areas.
- No tagging children in images without consent.
- Competition or event photos must follow CSI Photography & Images Policy.

11. Managing CSI Social Media Pages

- Pages must be monitored by at least two vetted adults.
- Inappropriate comments must be removed promptly.
- Pages must not share personal data or confidential information.
- All posts must reflect CSI's safeguarding responsibilities.

12. Online Training Sessions

- Two adults must be present in online sessions.
- Sessions must be recorded and stored securely where appropriate.
- Children must participate from suitable environments (no bedrooms visible).
- Parents must be informed of online session schedules and expectations.

13. Cyberbullying & Online Abuse

- Any instance of cyberbullying must be reported to the Club or National DLP.
- Reports will be addressed under CSI's Anti-Bullying and Disciplinary Policies.
- Children involved will be supported appropriately.
- Where necessary, incidents may be referred to Gardaí.

14. Data Protection & Privacy

- Personal information must not be shared online.
- Clubs must comply with GDPR and CSI Data Protection Policy.
- Photos and videos must be stored securely and deleted when no longer required.

15. Reporting Online Concerns

- Concerns about online behaviour must be reported to the DLP immediately.
- Serious incidents (grooming, exploitation, threats) must be reported to Gardaí and Tusla.
- Clubs must record and store all online safeguarding concerns securely.

16. Education & Awareness

- CSI will provide training and resources on online safety.
- Parents and athletes will be encouraged to understand digital risks.
- Clubs should host annual information sessions where possible.

17. Non-Compliance

- Breaches of this policy may result in disciplinary action.
- Serious breaches may result in suspension or removal from CSI roles.
- Clubs failing to enforce online safety may face affiliation consequences.

18. Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years or following significant technological or legislative changes.

19. Approval

This Social Media & Online Safety Policy was approved by the Board of Cheer Sport Ireland on:
11/07/2026

Signed:

FIONA COLLUMB, President/Chairperson

JOAN HEAPES, National Children's Officer