Social Media Policy
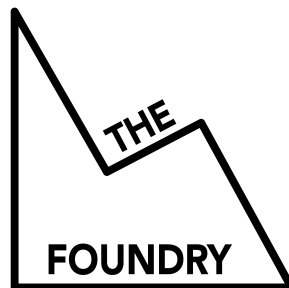
Foundry Mountaineering Club C.I.C Ltd

Foundry Instruction and Coaching Ltd

Updated 03.2022 (KB)

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Purpose and scope

Foundry Mountaineering Club (FMC) recognises the developing range of technologies used to interactively share, create and discuss issues and content as extremely positive. However, FMC will challenge employees and Club members using social media either intentionally or by association to insult, slander, create a risk to personal safety or abuse.

This Policy provides guidance for all members, connected participants and staff to help them understand the acceptable standards of use of social media. It sets out best practices designed to assist everyone in understanding what the potential risks are in using social media and how these can be managed.

The pace of change in technology means that it is not possible to identify a definitive list of all forms of social media which this Policy applies to, hence it is to be read as applying to all forms commonly understood to be social media and used as such. This Policy is to be read in conjunction with the Codes of Conduct and you are reminded that misuse of social media can result in Disciplinary Action being taken against a member or employee.

Definitions

Social media

is the collective of online communications and media channels dedicated to community-based input, interaction, content-sharing and collaboration via a range of technologies such as desktop, laptop, tablets, smartphones and other internet enabled devices. Websites and applications dedicated to [forums,](#) [micro blogging,](#) [social networking,](#) [social bookmarking,](#) [social curation,](#) and [wiki](#)s are among the different types of social media and examples of social media platforms include, but are not limited to, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and Twitter.

Young person

is used to refer to any person below the age of 18.

Usage

Whilst Club members and employees are encouraged to use social media the balance between the right to free speech and the responsibility not to insult, slander, abuse or create risks to anyone's personal safety must be borne in mind. This Policy seeks to assist each person in knowing how to achieve that balance.

Good Practice Guidance

As a general principle it is recommended that the employees have a web page/profile which is used for their club involvement and that they keep their personal identity, pages and profile separate. This will help in distinguishing between what is part of a person's private life, and what is part of professional life. Whilst there will always be grey lines between the two, having separate online identities should assist in focusing the mind on what is and what is not appropriate content and usage, before anything is posted.

The internet presents a unique set of challenges for protecting personal safety as all information posted is available to the whole world, indefinitely. Generational differences in understanding the implications of what is being posted means that there are very different perceptions of risk operating. Whilst young people get great benefits from the online communities they belong to and the instant access they have to friends from across the world, they may need guidance from the people with responsibility for their safety as to what is acceptable and safe use.

The use of social media to target individuals, whether for grooming or the increasing incidences of cyber bullying, has created a set of risks to vulnerable people which is a real

challenge to manage. Everyone is creating potential risk to themselves when they post personal information.

For example, if a person posts that they are going on holiday and has their address on their page, it is easy to see that there is an increased risk to their property whilst they are away. Thinking before you post will help reduce these sorts of unforeseen consequences. Texting/email/direct messaging.

Probably the most commonly used form of social media, texting is a great way to send fast, cheap communications. Generally speaking, texts are more personal and private than other forms of social media and for this reason there is more associated potential risk to young people and adults at risk.

One to one contact without a parent copied into texts between a coach and a young person is inappropriate. The club should seek parental consent for text communications, with anyone under the age of 16. If this is given, the club should use group messaging, with the Club Safeguarding Officer and any parent who requests it, copied in. Using this method, there should be no need for any adult to have individual contact with a young person in the club in the normal course of things. If there is an emergency which means that an individual young person needs to be contacted, the Club Safeguarding Officer or the parent should be copied in.Over the age of 16, parents should still be made aware of the club's practice and this Policy.

Social networks

1. Social networks are the communities which develop on media applications, such as Facebook.
2. Adults and young persons should not be "friending" or "following" each other. Communications for FMC purposes should be through sites/identities which are public and managed by the club.
3. For example, if a coach receives a friend request from a young person they should decline. If the club has a page or identity which allows communication via a public forum, this would be acceptable, provided the site is secure and there are no private messages being sent or received.
4. Expressing your opinion is fine, being rude in the way you express it or expressing discriminatory views is not and could lead to the individual who posted the comment, anyone who forwards or positively affirms the comment, and the person with administration rights for the site used, being subject to Disciplinary Action.
5. The speed and variety in the development of social media forums means that posts can be generated rapidly and spread to a wider audience in a very short space of time. All members, connected participants, staff and members of the public can and should report any misuse of social media so that appropriate action can be taken to maintain the high standards of behaviour expected.

Twitter

When using Twitter or similar tools, reposting other people's comments or posts can be taken as you adopting the views they have expressed and you would be accountable for the content.
Comments made should clearly be attributable to the individual and not to the club.

Webpages and social media profiles

The FMC webpages, including Facebook pages, are advised to ensure that they retain ownership and administration rights over that site. No one individual should have exclusive ownership or administration rights, The curators of the sites should be aware of the law and good practice for protecting children from the potential risks of social media.
The primary purpose of the site should be for promoting the club and for communicating between members of the club. Privacy settings should be set so that members of the public cannot contact individuals from the club by first establishing a link with the club, via their webpage.
Links from a young person's personal page to the club site may be made, but additional links between the pages of an adult and a young person, should not be made. Remember that privacy settings change frequently – keep them under review and update as necessary.
Photos and tagging should be used with consideration for the safety implications which these bring. A photo of the team in play, without any tagging of individuals is fine. Do not use tags as this allows people to be identified and then traced. Whenever a photo is going to be taken and used, make sure the individual knows and gets parental consent.

Reporting Concerns

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, as is creating and maintaining the high standards of behaviour expected of people associated with FMC. For these reasons, everyone is encouraged to report concerns of misuse or inappropriate usage of social media to the Appropriate Authority.
The first point of contact will usually be the Club Safeguarding Officer, or The Management Board Chair.
Threats of immediate harm or danger should be reported to the police and/or Children's Services or the Local Authority Designated Officer (where the concern relates to someone in a position of trust please see the Whistleblowing Policy).
Whilst the law does not move as fast as technology, there is legislation and government guidance which applies to social media usage, including:

- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Protection from Harassment Act 2003
- Defamation Act 1996
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights
- Working Together 2013.

Prosecutions may be taken for comments/content posted online.

Useful contacts

There are a number of organisations who can provide advice and guidance on internet safety and usage, which have been referred to in the development of this policy. They are great resources to reference for the most up to date guidance.

- [CPSU Online Safety](#)
- [CPSU](#)
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#)
- [CEOP Safety Centre](#)