Belper Marlin Swimming Club Social Networking Policy

Belper Marlin Swimming Club (BMSC) and Swim England recognise the use of a variety of sites, apps or communication tools used by members as a way to communicate, for marketing purposes and /or to celebrate successes. The platforms provide opportunities to upload and view photos and videos as well as private message or public comment. Private messaging may include apps like WhatsApp.

The purpose of this policy is to inform all members (parents/carers and swimmers), volunteers and employees using social networking sites of best practice guidance and safeguarding in line with Swim England's Wavepower.

1. BMSC members in a position of trust and/or responsibility **should not** be in contact with young people through social networking sites if they hold such a position in respect of that individual young person. Should a young person in your club request to become a named friend on your social networking site, or request that you become a named friend on the young person's social networking site you should **decline if:**
   - You are in a position of responsibility in respect of that child.
   - You hold a position of trust and responsibility in the club.
   - Your contact with the child is through BMSC and the parent/guardian of the child does not give their consent to such contact.

2. The social networking site should never be used as medium by which to abuse or criticise Swim England members, Swim England Clubs, any member of the public, or any other organisation and to do so may be in breach of Swim England Rules and Regulations.

3. Any photos of videos that contain BMSC members should not be shared unless consent is given by all members within the photo or video.

At BMSC we recognise that there are some circumstances which require additional clarity, and these are laid out below

Guidance to coaches who have children that swim in the club where they coach.

The issue has been raised that parents are becoming members of social networking sites that their children sign up to for security reasons, to ensure the wellbeing of their own child by being able to view their child's site. This will give the parent access, *via* their child's site, to all children listed as friends of their child. It would not be appropriate for the BMSC to prevent a parent who is also a coach in his/her child's club from using this form of protection for their own child's online activities.

Therefore, in such cases:

- The coach can have swimmers in the club on the site they are accessing, providing the BMSC <18years members on the site are listed as friends of the coach's child.
- The coach concerned should not have direct contact with those swimmers through the social networking site.
- The coach should not accept such swimmers as friends on their own site.

Guidance for Coaches, teachers and lifeguards who are aged 16-21.

Coaches, teachers and lifeguards may already be connected to teammates and swimmers via social networking if they were swimmers at the club. BMSC and Swim England recognises it would be inappropriate to require young people to remove these friends from the respective platforms.

- These coaches, teachers or lifeguards must inform the Welfare Officer that they use social networking, and that they have contact details for other club members.
- Coaches, teachers and lifeguards who are 18+ should carefully consider connecting to members and mitigate the risks which may be detrimental to their position of trust at BMSC.

Further recommendations

- Should a coach be asked to make direct contact with a member who is under 18 by the parent/carer for purposes of communication around

specific training needs/ requirements, an email should be sent by the parent/carer to the Welfare Officer to show that agreement.

Social Media and Online Safety –

Guidance for Parents, Carers and Members

Belper Marlin Swimming Club (BMSC) is committed to ensuring that children and young people use social media safely and responsibly. Parents and carers are responsible for supervising their child's online activity and ensuring they meet the minimum age requirements set by individual social media and messaging platforms. Many platforms have a minimum age of 13, although some require users to be older. The UK's digital age of consent is generally 13, but this does not mean that all social media platforms are suitable for children of that age. The Online Safety Act 2023 also places responsibilities on online services to help protect children from harmful content.

All BMSC members, coaches, volunteers and staff must follow the club's safeguarding and social media policies. **BMSC will not allow anyone under the minimum age requirement of a social media platform to access, manage or use the club's social media accounts.** No one should encourage a child to bypass age restrictions or use social media to make inappropriate contact with young members.

Any concerns about online bullying, grooming, harassment or inappropriate communication must be reported to the Club Welfare Officer. This policy will be reviewed regularly to reflect changes in legislation, platform age requirements and Swim England's *Wavepower* safeguarding guidance.