



# PLAYFORD AQUATIC CLUB

## Use of Social Media.

### (written text)

## POLICY

This policy governs the publication of, and commentary, on social media by members of Playford Aquatic Club (PAC). For the purposes of this policy, social media means any facility for online publication and commentary, including but not limited to blogs, wiki's, social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, Instagram, Messenger, Snapchat, and YouTube. This policy is in addition to and complements any existing or future policies regarding the use of technology, computers, e-mail, and the internet.

As social media sites have become more fashionable and widely accepted as a forum of social interaction, it was perhaps inevitable that the comments they contain would cross over into club issues. After all, if this is now just another venue for “chat”, then why wouldn’t people want to mention what they like (and more often) dislike about their club?

### **Communicating on social media sites**

This form of communication is fundamentally different to communicating with someone on the telephone or in person. What the publishers of these comments don’t seem to grasp (or do they) is that posting damaging comments on-line is worse than publishing them in a newspaper because the range of possible readers is unlimited. It has the potential (and likelihood) of being accessed by many other club members, and many more internet users, it also allows people who are in no way connected to, or involved with, the club joining the conversation and putting their opinion and criticism into the mix. These words are then preserved in print, if only electronically. They can (and will) be copied, forwarded, and circulated at will. The really critical point is that an internet/social media “conversation” in no way remains private. It is easy to see that making negative on-line comments about a person, club or institution can cause potentially more damage than making the same comment in a face-to-face conversation, and it only serves to inflame a situation to a point where an amicable resolution cannot be found.

### **Confidential Information**

It's perfectly acceptable to talk about your membership of PAC and have a dialog with others in the community, but it is not okay to publish or pass on through social media sites including, but not limited to, Twitter, Snapchat, Messenger, and Facebook confidential information. Confidential information includes things such as unpublished details about our current projects, dates, financial information, and any email communications that have been sent to you as club members. If information is meant for the wider community, it will be passed on by a PAC committee representative.

### **Protect your own privacy**

Other privacy settings that might allow others to post information or see information that is personal should be set to limit access. Be mindful of posting information that you would not want the public to see. (Would you be happy to see it on the front page of the newspaper?)



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#### **Be Honest**

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Do not blog anonymously, using pseudonyms or false screen names. We believe in transparency and honesty. Use your real name, be clear who you are, nothing gains you notice in social media more than honesty - or dishonesty. Do not say anything that is dishonest, untrue, or misleading. If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, point it out. But also, be smart about protecting yourself and your privacy. What you publish will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully and also be cautious about disclosing personal details.

#### **Respect your audience**

The public in general, and PAC's members and employees, reflect a diverse set of customs, values and points of view. Don't say anything contradictory or in conflict with the PAC website. Don't be afraid to be yourself but do so respectfully. This includes not only the obvious (no ethnic slurs, offensive comments, defamatory comments, personal insults, obscenity, etc.) but also proper consideration of privacy and of topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory - such as politics and religion. Use your best judgment and be sure to make it clear that the views and opinions expressed are yours alone and do not represent the official views of PAC.

#### **Controversial Issues**

If you see misrepresentations made about PAC in the media, you may point that out. Always do so with respect and with the facts. If you speak about others, make sure what you say is factual and that it does not disparage that party. Avoid arguments. Brawls may earn traffic, but nobody wins in the end. Don't try to settle scores or goad others into inflammatory debates. Make sure what you are saying is factually correct.

#### **Be the first to respond to your own mistakes**

If you make an error, be up front about your mistake and correct it quickly. If you choose to modify an earlier post, make it clear that you have done so. If someone accuses you of posting something improper (such as their copyrighted material or a defamatory comment about them), deal with it quickly - better to remove it immediately to lessen the possibility of a legal action.

#### **Think About Consequences**

For example, consider what might happen if a PAC representative is in a meeting with a new member, prospective or existing sponsor or venue management, and someone on the other side pulls out a print-out of your blog and says "This person at PAC says that the club or committee is bias, unprofessional or dishonest." Making such a comment is risky, unsubtle, and amateurish. Once again, it's all about judgment: using your blog to trash or embarrass PAC, our members, or our sponsors, is dangerous and ill-advised.



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#### **Social Media Tips**

The following tips are not mandatory but will contribute to successful use of social media. The best way to be interesting, stay out of trouble, and have fun is to write about what you know. There is a good chance of being embarrassed by a real expert, or of being boring if you write about topics, you are not knowledgeable about. Quality matters. Use a spell-checker. If you're not design-oriented, ask someone who is whether your blog looks decent, and take their advice on how to improve it. The speed of being able to publish your thoughts is both a great feature and a great downfall of social media. The time to edit or reflect must be self-imposed. If in doubt over a post, or if something does not feel right, either let it sit and look at it again before publishing it or ask someone else to look at it first.

#### **Enforcement**

PAC does not condone the use of any form of Internet/Social Media, in this manner. If you have any concerns or comments relating to Club issues or members, we ask that you use the correct channels to deal with it, and not post them online.

Policy violations will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of membership.

**Playford Aquatic Club Committee**

**January 2024**