



## TEXT AND EMAIL MESSAGING

### Text messaging

#### Benefits

Archery GB is keen to utilise text messaging systems to help to improve the success of programmes. This may be by helping to remind children and young people about the sport and activity sessions that they have signed up to, and by promoting additional activities. The significant benefit of text messaging is that it is not only cheap, but it is one of the most direct forms of communication as most children and young people have mobile phones with them at all times.

It is therefore hoped that text messages will help to:

- attract more children and young people to the sessions, activities and clubs;
- improve retention rates;
- signpost children and young people to other high quality, accredited activities and sports clubs at the end of particular programmes.

#### Risks

For children and young people the safeguarding risks associated with texting include:

- inappropriate access to, use or sharing of personal details (e.g. names, mobile phone numbers);
- unwanted contact with children/young people by adults with poor intent; text bullying by peers;
- being sent offensive or otherwise inappropriate materials;
- grooming for sexual abuse;
- direct contact and actual abuse.

For adults involved risks include:

- misinterpretation of their communication with children and young people;
- potential investigation (internal or by statutory agencies);
- potential disciplinary action

Due to these risks, Archery GB Organisations should follow these guidelines when using text messages to communicate with children and young people. The guidelines will help to ensure that effective safeguarding measures are put in place to protect children and young people and to minimise risk.

#### Bulk or Bundled Text Messages

These guidelines primarily relate to the use of bulk (or bundled) texts i.e. the same text message being sent to several children and young people involved with a particular activity or programme. Bulk (or bundled) texting presents fewer opportunities for misuse and abuse than personal, one-to-one texting arrangements between coaches/volunteers and children/young people which should be strongly discouraged. Although clubs and other sports organisations may develop and operate their own texting systems, there are also commercial organisations that offer bulk/bundle texting services, so practical arrangements will vary.

## Guidelines for using Bulk (or Bundled) Text Messaging

1. Only staff that have been through relevant safeguarding checks (e.g. enhanced level DBS checks (formally the Criminal Records Bureau) and references) should use and have access to the text messaging system. Ideally these staff should also have undertaken a recognised safeguarding training (e.g. sports coach UK 'Safeguarding & Protecting Children' workshop or an equivalent).
2. The numbers of staff with access to the system, particularly data relating to children and young people, should be kept to a practical minimum, and their details recorded and maintained by the Club Official/Child Protection Officer. A record should be made of the mobile phone number/s which will be used to send the texts – ideally this should be a single number used consistently. Some systems involve a commercial bulk/bundle texts provider actually issuing the text messages, but in other cases this may be undertaken by a member of staff.
3. Consent must be obtained prior to sending the children and young people text messages. Specific consent must be obtained from parents before texting children aged 15 or under. This can be done using a registration form. Parents of younger children should be offered the option to be copied into any texts their child will be sent. Although parental consent is not required for young people aged 16 and over, written consent must be obtained from these individuals themselves. Please note that for the over 16's (who are children as defined by the Children Act 1989) it is still recommended that their parents are also informed of the intention to send their children text messages, the reason for this, and that the organisation has taken steps to ensure their child's safety in this respect.
4. Young people's mobile phone numbers should be stored either in a locked secure cabinet, or on an electronic system which is password protected, with access only available to the staff identified in point 1 above. The mobile phone numbers should not be shared with anyone else, and should only be used for the purposes of the text messaging system as part of a specific sport programme.
5. All text messages must be sent via a bundle to a group of young people i.e. the same standard text message being sent to every member of the group. The text messaging system should never be used to send text messages on an individual basis (i.e. to just one person), or to less than 5 people.
6. All text messages sent must make it clear to the young people receiving it which organisation has sent the message, rather than simply giving the mobile phone number that the system uses to send the message.
7. Young people should not be given the opportunity to text back to the system. It should only be used as a one-way communication channel.
8. The text messages which are sent must never contain any offensive, abusive or inappropriate language.
9. All of the text messages sent should include a sentence at the bottom which provides the young people with the opportunity to unsubscribe from receiving any further text messages.
10. All text messages sent to young people should also be sent to an external moderator – preferably someone with designated safeguarding responsibility in the organisation. Hence, it is essential that the moderator's mobile phone number is included in every 'communication group' that is set up, and in every text messaging bundle that is sent out. The moderator's role will be to ensure that the text system is being used appropriately, and to respond to any concerns arising.

11. Consideration will be given to initiating the organisation's child protection and disciplinary procedures should any breaches of this protocol arise, including consultation with or referral to statutory agencies if indications of illegal activity (e.g. grooming for abuse) come to light.

12. County Sports Partnerships should insist on in the application of the guidance above by any individuals or organisations using the text messaging system as part of the Sport Unlimited or any other funded programme. This should include a signed commitment on behalf of the organisation and those individuals who will operate the texting system to abide by the guidance. If additional partners also want to use the system, a similar guidance document should also be drawn up and agreed between the CSP and the organisation concerned.

## **Guidelines for Texting Individual Young People**

The use of text messaging to communicate with individual young participants increases the vulnerability of both the young person and (typically) the coach - see 'benefits and risks' above. However, there may be exceptional circumstances in which it is justified, subject to appropriate safeguarding considerations. For example the coach of an elite athlete who is not part of a group of participants may need to pass on information about practical training arrangements or feedback on competition results.

In these circumstances the following guidelines will apply:

1. The coach should have been through relevant safeguarding checks (e.g. enhanced level DBS checks and references), and have undertaken a recognised safeguarding training (e.g. sports coach UK 'Safeguarding & Protecting Children' workshop or an equivalent).
2. The decision to use text messaging should not be made by a coach in isolation, and should be discussed and agreed with the organisation's designated safeguarding officer. This will ensure that the organisation's safeguarding expectations and requirements can be clarified, and an undertaking given by the coach to comply with them.
3. In circumstances where this guidance is being developed and applied retrospectively, clubs/organisations should take steps to identify where texting is already being used by staff to communicate with young athletes, and to ensure that these guidelines are both effectively communicated to and agreed with all parties.
4. The details of coaches using text messaging should be recorded and maintained by the organisation's lead child protection officer. A record should be made of the mobile phone number/s which will be used to send the texts – ideally this should be a single number used consistently.
5. Consent must be obtained prior to sending the young people text messages. For young people aged 15 or under, specific consent must be obtained from their parents. Parents should be offered the option to be copied into any texts their child will be sent.
6. Although parental consent is not required for young people aged 16 and over, written consent must be obtained from these individuals themselves. Please note that for the over 16's (who are children as defined by the Children Act 1989) it is still recommended that their parents are also informed of the intention to send their children text messages, the reason for this, and that the organisation has taken steps to ensure their child's safety in this respect.
7. Information to young athletes and parents should include details of how any concerns arising from the use of text messaging can be reported in line with the organisation's safeguarding policies and procedures.

8. The young people's mobile phone numbers should be stored in either a locked secure cabinet, or on an electronic system which is password protected, with access only available to the staff identified in point 1 above. The mobile phone numbers should not be shared with anyone else, and should only be used for the purposes of the specific sports programme.

9. The content should relate solely to sports activity. Messages should reflect the professional relationship between coach and athlete, and the coach's position of trust. Text messages and mobile phones must never be used for any other reason or in any other way.

10. The text messages which are sent must never contain any offensive, abusive or inappropriate language, and care must be taken to avoid over-familiarity or language that could be misinterpreted or misconstrued.

11. All text messages sent to young people should also be sent either to a parent or to an external moderator – preferably someone with designated safeguarding responsibility in the organisation. The moderator's role will be to ensure that text messaging is being used appropriately in line with the organisation's procedures, and to respond to any concerns arising.

12. Consideration will be given to initiating the organisation's child protection and disciplinary procedures should any breaches of this protocol arise, including consultation with or referral to statutory agencies if indications of illegal activity (e.g. grooming for abuse) come to light.

13. Young people should not be encouraged to text back; ideally it should only be used as a one-way communication channel. Young people should be made aware that if or when they choose or need to text the coach (for example to confirm attendance or advise on a travel delay), they should ensure that the content of messages relates only to matters relevant to the sports activity, and that they are (like the coach) required to copy in either a parent or the identified moderator (e.g. club welfare officer) to all communications.

14. All young people and parents should be given the opportunity to withdraw from receiving any further text messages.

## Email – Safeguarding Guidelines

Many CSPs and other sports organisations are keen to utilise emails to help to improve the success of the Sport Unlimited or other programmes, by helping to remind young people about the sport and activity sessions that they have signed up to, and to promote additional activities. The significant benefit of emails is that it is not only cheap, but it is one of the most direct forms of communication with young people.

It is hoped that using the system will help to: attract more young people to the sessions; improve the session retention rates; and it will also be useful in effectively signposting the young people to other high quality, accredited activities and sports clubs afterwards.

For children and young people the safeguarding risks associated with email include:

- inappropriate access to, use or sharing of personal details (e.g. names, email addresses);
- unwanted contact with children/young people by adults with bad intent;
- being sent offensive or otherwise inappropriate material
- online bullying by peers;
- grooming for sexual abuse;
- direct contact and abuse.

For adults involved risks include:

- misinterpretation of their communication with young people
- potential investigation (internal or by statutory agencies)
- potential disciplinary action

Due to these risks, the CPSU have produced guidelines below, which CSPs, other relevant Community Sport Network partners, and Sport Unlimited activity deliverers should follow when using emails to communicate with young people. These guidelines will help to ensure that effective safeguarding measures are put in place to protect children and young people and to minimise risk.

These guidelines are based on the principle that the same email is sent to several young people involved with a particular activity or programme – as this presents fewer opportunities for misuse and abuse than personal, one-to-one email arrangements between coaches/volunteers and children. There are commercial organisations that offer bulk emailing facilities, although the exact practical arrangements may vary.

### **Email Guidelines**

1. Only staff that have been through relevant safeguarding checks (e.g. enhanced DBS checks and references) should use and have access to the email messaging system. Ideally these staff should also have undertaken a recognised safeguarding training (e.g. sports coach UK Safeguarding and Protecting Children workshop or an equivalent).
2. The numbers of staff with access to the system, particularly data relating to young people, should be kept to a practical minimum, and their details recorded and maintained by the organisation's lead child protection officer. A record should be made of the staff member responsible for sending out the emails, and of the computer which will be used – ideally this should be a single, secure, organisational (rather than a private) computer used consistently. Some systems may involve the emails being issued by a commercial provider, but in other cases this may be undertaken by a member of staff.
3. The young people's details should be stored in either a locked secure cabinet, or on an electronic system which is password protected, with access only available to the staff identified in point 1 above. The names and email addresses should not be shared with anyone else, and should only be used for the purposes of the communication system as part of the Sport Unlimited or other specified programme.
4. Consent must be obtained prior to sending the young people email messages. For young people aged 15 or under, specific consent must be obtained from their parents, for example via an amended Sport Unlimited registration form or similar. Parents of all children should be offered the option to be copied into any messages their child will be sent. Although parental consent is not required for young people aged 16 and over, written consent must be obtained from these individual young people themselves. Please note that for the over 16's it is still recommended that their parents are also informed of the intention to send their children emails, the reason for this, and what steps the organisation has taken to ensure their child's safety in this respect.
5. All emails must be sent to a group of young people i.e. the same standard email message being sent to every member of the group. The email messaging system should never be used to send messages on an individual basis (i.e. to just one person), or to less than 5 people.
6. All emails sent must make it clear to the young people receiving it which organisation has sent the message, rather than simply giving the issuing email address or name of an individual.

7. Young people should not be encouraged or given the opportunity to email back to the system. It should only be used as a one-way communication channel.
8. The emails must never contain any offensive, abusive or inappropriate language.
9. When this guidance is being provided in relation to the Sport Unlimited programme, all of the emails sent must be direct related to the Sport Unlimited programmes/sessions. The messaging system may be used to signpost young people on the Sport Unlimited programme to alternative sport and physical activity opportunities. However, the email system must never be used for any other reason or in any other way.
10. All of the emails should include a sentence at the bottom which provides the young people with the opportunity to unsubscribe from receiving any further messages, and signpost to how any concerns arising can be reported.
11. All emails sent to young people must also be sent to an external moderator – preferably someone with designated safeguarding responsibility in the organisation. Hence, it is essential that the moderator’s email address is included in every ‘communication group’ that is set up, and in every message that is sent out. The moderator’s role will be to ensure that the email system is being used appropriately, and to respond to any concerns arising.
12. Consideration will be given to initiating the organisation’s child protection and disciplinary procedures should any breaches of this protocol arise, including consultation with or referral to statutory agencies if indications of illegal activity (e.g. grooming for abuse) come to light.
13. County Sports Partnerships should insist on in the application of the guidance above by any individuals or organisations using the email messaging system as part of the Sport Unlimited or any other funded programme. This should include a signed commitment on behalf of the organisation and those individuals who will operate the email system to abide by the guidance. If additional partners also want to use the system, a similar guidance document should also be drawn up and agreed between the CSP and the organisation concerned.

### **Inappropriate use of images in resource and media publications, on the internet and elsewhere.**

Parents/Carers often want to be able to celebrate the achievements of their children and young people when taking part in sporting activities through taking photographs or films. Archery GB wants to promote their activities to encourage increased participation. Archery GB does not advocate the banning of photography and the use of images of children and young people, but recommends that appropriate and proportionate safeguards should be in place to ensure a safe archery environment for children and young people. This guidance will help to ensure that all necessary steps are taken to protect children and young people from the inappropriate use of their images in resources and media publications, on the internet and elsewhere. The guidance applies whether images are taken using cameras, mobile phones or any other equipment.

### **What are the potential concerns?**

There have been concerns about the risks posed directly and indirectly to children and young people through the use of photographs and videos on sports websites and other publications. Images can be used as a means of identifying children and young people when associated with personal information, e.g. this is X who lives at Y; is a member of the Z Club and who likes a certain music group. This information can make a child or young person vulnerable to an individual who may wish to start to contact and start to “groom” that child or young person for abuse – online (e.g. through websites or

social networking), or through direct contact in the off-line, “real” world. Information placed on the internet has also been used by estranged parents (e.g. in adoption or domestic violence circumstances) to identify, trace and cause significant difficulties for children and young people. Secondly the content of photographs can itself be inappropriate, or be used or adapted for inappropriate use. There is evidence of inappropriate or adapted material finding its way onto sites showing child and young people abuse images, and of inappropriate images being shared between groups of offenders.

Archery GB Organisations (Club/County/Region/Academy/Tournaments) need to develop a policy in relation to the use of images of children and young people on their websites and in other publications. The Organisation will need to make decisions about the type of images they consider suitable and that appropriately represent the organisation, without putting children and young people at increased risk. They will want to ensure that parents/carers, children, young people and others understand and support their policy. When assessing the potential risks in the use of images of children and young people, the most important factor is the potential of inappropriate use of the images of children and young people.

If Archery GB Organisations are aware of the potential risks and take appropriate steps, the potential for misuse of images can be reduced.

### **Archery GB advises Organisations to adopt the following principles:**

- the interests and welfare of Children and Young People taking part in archery is paramount;
- Children, Young People and their Parents/Carers have a right to decide whether their images are taken and how these may be used;
- Children, Young People and their Parents/Carers must provide written consent for their images to be taken and used;
- Consent is only meaningful when the organisation ensures that children, young people and their parents/carers understand the nature of potential risks associated with the intended type, use and distribution of the images.

### **Easy rules to remember are:**

- Where possible to not include the name of the child/young person who image is being used;
- If naming a child/young person or a group of children in an image, only use their first names, as this will reduce the risk of inappropriate, unsolicited attention from people within and outside of archery;
- Avoid the inclusion of other detailed information about individual children/young people;
- Ask for the child/young person permission to use their image. This ensures that they are aware of the way the image is to be used to represent archery. A Photography and Filming Consent form is one way of achieving this. (Form SCF 005, see [www.archerygb.org](http://www.archerygb.org));
- Ask for parental permission to use an image of a child/young person. This ensures that parents are aware of where and how the image of their child/young person will be used to represent archery, (e.g. in a sports magazine, on a website, on Face book, etc). A Photography and Filming Consent form is one way of achieving this. (Form SCF 005, see [www.archerygb.org](http://www.archerygb.org)). Ensure parents/carers understand the nature of the potential risks associated with the intended use of the image/s.
- Be clear about how and for how long images will be securely stored (including how access to the images, associated consents and other information will be controlled);
- Only use images of children and young people in suitable dress/kit (including required or recommended safety wear) to reduce the risk of inappropriate use;

- Images should positively reflect children and young people involvement in archery (e.g. showing smiling participants rather than anxious or unhappy ones) and promote the best aspects of archery;
- With regard to the actual content it is difficult to specify exactly what is appropriate given the wide diversity of sports. However, there may be some sports activities (e.g. gymnastics or swimming) where the risk of potential misuse is much greater than for other sports. With these sports the content of the photograph should focus on the activity rather than on a particular child/young person and should avoid full face and body shots. So for example, shots of children/young people in a pool would be appropriate or, if poolside, waist or shoulder up;
- Create and publicise a procedure for reporting the use of inappropriate images or the use of inappropriate images, to reduce the risks to children/young people. Follow the Archery GB procedures, ensuring Archery GB Membership Services (Child Protection Officer) is informed.

### **First steps and things to think about:**

- Establish the type of images that appropriately represent archery for the web and other media;
- Think about the level of consideration you give to the use of images of children and young people in other publications, for example, the processes involved in choosing appropriate images for the newsletter or magazine. Apply an increased level of consideration to the images of children and young people used in the web site.

### **Guidelines for Use of Photographic Filming Equipment at Sporting Events**

- Provide a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour;
- Issue the photographer with identification which must be worn at all times;
- Inform children, young people and parents/carers that a photographer will be in attendance at an event and ensure they consent to both the taking and publication of films or photographs which feature and clearly identify their child/young person (e.g. close ups, small group and team photographs);
- At many events, organisers and others will reasonably wish to take wide angle, more general photographs of the event sites, opening and closing ceremonies, etc. Separate to the issue of contents for 'identifying' photographs/footage of individual participants (as above) parent/carers and children/young people should at least understand that these type of images will be taken during, or at specific points in the event, e.g. information could be included on the parental consent form. It is not reasonable, practical or proportionate to require parental consents for taking these general types of images, or to preclude it on the basis of the concerns or a small number of parents/carers;
- Do not allow unsupervised access to children/young people or one to one photographic sessions at events;
- Do not approve/allow photographic sessions outside the event or at a child's/young person's home;
- Children, young people, parents/carers and others should be informed that if they have concerns they can report these to the organiser;
- If parents/carers or other spectators are intending to photograph or video at an event they should also be made aware of your expectations;
- Spectators should be asked to register at an event if they wish to use photographic equipment;
- Concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography should be reported to the event organiser or official and recorded in the same manner as any other child protection concern;
- Clarify issues of ownership, retention and access (by event staff, participants and parents/carers to the images);

### **Other Professional Photographers/Filming/Video Operators**

Other Professional Photographers/Filming/Video Operators wishing to record the event should seek accreditation with the Event Organiser by producing their professional identification for the details to be recorded. Ideally, this should be provided before the event takes place.

### **Students or Amateur Photographers/Film/Video Operators**

Students or Amateur Photographers/Film/Video Operators wishing to record the event should seek accreditation with the Event Organiser by producing their student or club registration card and a letter from the Club/Educational Establishment outlining their motive for attending the event and planned use of the material.

### **Accreditation procedure**

A system should be established. Professionals should register prior to the event and their identification details be recorded. Ideally they should be:

- Name and address of the person using the camera;
- Names of subjects (if specific);
- The reason or use of the images are being or intended to be put to;
- Signed declaration that the information provided is valid and that the images will only be used for the reasons given.

Ideally, identification details should be checked with the issuing authority prior to the event. On registering, promoters of events could consider issuing a coloured identification label on the day which can serve to highlight those who have accreditation, but they must ensure that where events occur regularly, the colour and or type of identifying label is changed to prevent unofficial replication.

A clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour should be issued. It may include a list of any areas where photographic and recording equipment including mobile phones, is forbidden under all circumstances (e.g. changing rooms, toilet areas). Unsupervised access to children/young people or one to one photographic sessions at event or photographic sessions outside the events or at a child's/young person's home should not be approved/allowed.

### **Guidelines for Use of Photographic and Filming Equipment by Parents, Guardians or Spectators at Sporting Events**

- If parents/carers or other spectators are intending to photograph or video at an event they should also be made aware of your organisation's expectations;
- Spectators should be asked to register at an event if they wish to use photographic equipment;
- It is helpful for the event organisers to provide some indication e.g. a sticker for each registered camera, or badge to be displayed by the spectator to help others recognise those who have registered, and respond to those who do not appear to have registered;

### **Public information:**

The specific details concerning photographic/video and filming equipment registration should, wherever possible, be published prominently in event programmes and must be announced over the public address system, prior to the start of the event.

### **The recommended wording is:**

In line with the recommendation in the Archery GB Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, the promoters of this event request that any person wishing to engage in any video, zoom or close range photography should register their details with Event Organiser/Club Official at the spectator desk before carrying out any such photography. If parents/carers have any particular concern about their child/young person being photographed or filmed they should notify the organisers

The promoter reserves the right to decline entry to any person unable to meet or abide by the promoter's conditions.

If you are concerned about any photography taking place at this event, please contact the Event Organiser/Club Official who will be pleased to discuss this matter with you.

### **At club sessions**

There is no intention to prevent Club Coaches and Teachers using videoing as a legitimate coaching aid. However, children/young people and their parents/carers should be aware that this is part of the coaching programme and consent to it. Care should be taken in the secure storage of such materials and films. If Clubs are concerned that someone they do not know is using their sessions for photography or filming purposes, they should ask them to leave and contact their Governing Body or (depending on the nature of the concerns) the police for further advice.

Photography and Filming Consent form (Form SCF 005, see [www.archerygb.org](http://www.archerygb.org));

### **Images of elite young athletes**

As young athletes progress higher up the competitive ladder within their sport, elite level events are increasingly likely to take place in a public arena. Archery GB and Event organisers will quite reasonably seek publicity to positively promote their sport, and elite young athletes receiving endorsements or sponsorship may well welcome positive media coverage on a local, regional or national level. Archery GB and Organisers retain their duty of care to these athletes and a responsibility to safeguard them. In respect of some elite young athletes aspects of the more general guidance around the use of images detailed above (for example avoiding the inclusion of names and some other personal details alongside photographs) are neither practical nor desirable.

It is important that other aspects of this guidance (for example about the nature, content and use of images; and about ensuring that photography sessions are supervised) are considered and applied. It is important for the athletes; their parents and media representatives to be clear about appropriate arrangements and ground rules for interviews, filming and photo sessions. Young elite athletes and their parents should be supported by the sports organisation and prepared to manage these and a range of other issues (including safeguarding concerns) that may arise as a result of their sporting success and increased public profile.

Many sports governing bodies already provide information, guidance and support to help athletes manage the media, for example in planning for media interviews



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