

Guidance Overview

Social media is changing the way we communicate. This WhatsApp guidance has been developed to ensure those orienteering participants using WhatsApp do so in a safe and responsible manner. This provides practical guidance allowing all parties to benefit from the use of WhatsApp, whilst minimising potential risks and protecting those involved.

This guidance assists to establish a culture of openness, trust and integrity in activities related to British Orienteering. In circumstances where guidelines about WhatsApp issues have not been given in this guidance, we suggest you use common sense or seek out advice from British Orienteering's Lead Safeguarding Officer.

Purpose

The guidance specifically relates to the setting up of WhatsApp groups for the purpose of communications on British Orienteering recognised trips which include but are not limited to coaching training camps and official events/competitions.

Coverage

This guidance applies to all persons who are involved with specific activities of British Orienteering, whether they are in a paid or unpaid/voluntary capacity and including:

- All employees of British Orienteering,
- Members of British Orienteering,
- Affiliated orienteering clubs and associations,
- Junior Regional Orienteering Squads (JROS)
- All support personnel, including Team Managers, Physiotherapists,
- Coaches and assistant coaches,
- Athletes,
- Event officials,
- Other volunteers,
- Parents of those under 18.

Creation & Timelines of Groups

WhatsApp groups should be only set up for the period that it is required in relation to the trip in question. It should be deleted within a timely manner on conclusion of the trip and related activities. They should only be accessed by those directly involved within the trip which includes any parents of those aged 16 or 17 who are not in attendance.

Who can be included within a WhatsApp group?

- Adults involved in the trip, (as defined in coverage)
- 16 and 17 year olds but only with written parental permission,
 - Parents of 16 and 17 year olds involved in the trip,
- **NO ONE** aged 15 or under can be included in an official WhatsApp group.

Groups including those ages 16 and 17.

WhatsApp groups with adults in, can include those aged 16 and 17. This can only happen if the following criteria is met:

- The parent of the 16 and or 17 year old has confirmed in writing that they are happy for their child to be included in the group.
- The parent of the 16 and or 17 year old is part of the group.
- All those involved in the group are aware of its purpose and that there are 16 and or 17 year old's within the group.
- A British Orienteering staff member is part of the group.

General rules of WhatsApp groups

- **DO NOT** post or link to content that contains illegal or indecent content, including misleading and deceptive content within the group.
- All communications within the group must be appropriate to the purpose of the trip/activity/event.
- Messages and content within the WhatsApp group are not to be forwarded on to persons outside of the group, unless permission has been granted by the group administrator.
 - For clarity, the group administrator may use the group to share photos of the event/activity which can be shared wider with their permission.
 - Any individual has the right to request that any photos where they appear are not shared publicly. If an individual wishes their image not to be used/ shared, they must inform the group administrator.
- It is always recommended to be cautious while sharing messages and emoticons in groups with those that you may not be familiar with. Everyone has a different understanding level, and this must be considered.
- Neither write or say anything damaging to the reputation of British Orienteering, nor make any public statement which constitutes a "personal attack" upon another sporting competitor or official.
- **DO NOT** share any personal information about those within the group, this includes phone numbers. This could be a GDPR breach.

Group Administrators

There should be two group administrators for each group. If there are 16 or 17 year old's within the group, one of these group administrators should be a British Orienteering staff members.

A group administrator should inform those included within the group of the purpose, expectations and behaviours. It is advised to add a group description within the 'Group Info' section as a reminder for the purpose and expectations of the group.

Inappropriate behaviour

Failure to follow this guidance and anyone posting inappropriate material/content/text could be removed from the group and face the possibility of an investigation and or disciplinary action.

Online Safety

Advice and support for online safety for young people, parents/ carers or professionals working with young people can be found below:

- Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- Childline: www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/

Reporting Concerns

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, as is creating and maintaining the high standards of behaviour expected of people in the sport of orienteering. For these reasons, everyone is encouraged to report concerns of misuse or inappropriate usage of WhatsApp.

Reporting a concern or incident can be to the lead coach/ manager or to the Lead Safeguarding Officer by e-mailing safeguarding@britishorienteering.org.uk or calling 07540 150963