Social Media Safeguarding Guide

Welcome to the parkrun social media community! Social media is a great way for events to interact with parkrunners, share photos, discuss the weekend's activity, arrange post-run coffees, make announcements and share inspirational stories from so many of the incredibly diverse parkrunners around the UK and the world.

This Social Media Safeguarding Guide is for everyone associated with parkrun: adults and children, volunteers, parkrunners and staff. The purpose of this guide is to provide a recommendation of best practice to all parkrun events (5k and 2k) on the use of social media. Throughout this guide, a 'young person' is anyone under the age of 18.

parkrun boasts almost one million followers across social media on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram, and the parkrun social media community is growing by the day. Whilst these technologies provide exciting opportunities, they are accompanied by dangers and potentially negative consequences if abused by others.

Potential risks include cyberbullying, grooming and abuse by online predators, identity theft, and exposure to inappropriate content. Cyberbullying is bullying that happens online, using social media, games and mobile phones; it can be one of the most extreme, menacing forms of bullying as the person being bullied may feel there's no escape.

There are a growing number of cases in sport where people have used social networking sites as a means of grooming young people or vulnerable adults for sexual abuse. The internet can be an environment where people lower their guard and allow their trust to be more easily gained.

We love social media, but we want everyone to be as safe as possible, so here are some guidelines we ask everyone to follow:

- **Know what you're doing!** For some adults, a major obstacle when it comes to using social media and technology safely, and for supporting the safeguarding of young people, is the gap between the young person's knowledge and their own. Developing a basic knowledge of the technology used by your parkrun event can help everyone keep

safe. Thinkuknow is a helpful resource for parents, young people and professionals to help raise awareness and improve knowledge.

- **Use the internet positively and do not place yourself at risk.** If you have any serious concerns about your internet use, visit https://ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/ for some useful advice.

- **parkrun staff and volunteers in a position of trust/ responsibility should not be in private, one to one contact with young people through social networking sites, for any reasons other than those related to parkrun.** There is no need, and you are putting yourself in a potentially vulnerable position by doing so.

- **The publishing of photos and videos on social media is governed by the parkrun Photo Policy.** In addition, try to avoid fueling cyberbullying by being thoughtful and considerate with the images you are posting. Once out there it can be very difficult, and at times impossible, to delete them. Report cyberbullying to parkrun's Safeguarding Lead (Clare.Fowler@parkrun.com)

- **Always be aware that social networking sites are public, and are bound by the law.** Never place a comment on the internet that you would not put in writing or say to someone face to face.

- **If you have any concerns about online content related to parkrun, always report it** to the parkrunUK Safeguarding Lead (Clare.Fowler@parkrun.com) and to CEOP if serious. If you or someone else is in immediate danger, always call the police (999) in the first instance.