

ST MARTINS AC GUERNSEY



Communications & Social Media Policy Children & Young People

Introduction:

The following guidance is provided not as an obstacle but to ensure St Martins AC volunteers manage their safeguarding responsibilities effectively. It aims to ensure children, young people and adults in a position of trust are not subjected to improper communications or improper allegations.

St Martins AC and their volunteers acknowledge that they are responsible for ensuring that all forms of communication with children and young people and all content hosted on websites, social network platform and any associated message boards or blogs abide by the Rules and Regulations of The Football Association.

Adopted Practices:

- Written informed consent will be obtained from parents/carers before group email / teamer or WhatsApp are used to communicate with U18s.
- Explain to parents/carers and colleagues, that no direct communication will be made to their son / daughter if U16 (U18 if consent no obtained)
- Always include a designated member of the Association in all communications.
- Ensure teamer/ WhatsApp are only in relation to specific Association related activities e.g. giving information regarding arrangements for training / match times or venue changes etc
- Report to the Club Welfare Officer (Darren Le Tissier) or County Welfare Officer (Sara Mallet any instance(s) where inappropriate communications are received from a young person. The Club Welfare Officer and/or County Welfare Officer will then agree what action the Association will take, notifying parents/carers and any other appropriate individuals or agencies

St Martins Ac and its volunteers should not:

- Use text or emails, teamer or WhatsApp for personal conversation, with players, sending pictures, jokes or other items of a personal nature
- Respond to communications from young people directly, matters arising directly from Association related matters should be directed to parents / carers. The CEO and/or County Welfare Officer should be advised of any non-Association related emails that are received
- Use language that is directly (or could be misinterpreted as being) racist, sexist, derogatory, threatening, abusive or sexualised in tone

Social networking

The FA recommend that as a general principle, coaches, managers etc should avoid using social networking sites as the primary way of communicating with players. However, if its decided that the most effective way of communicating to young people is via a social networking site then the St Martins Ac and its volunteers are to set up an appropriately named account that is explicitly for use by named members, parents and carers solely about football matters e.g. fixtures, cancellations and team selection.

At no time should there be any personal communications, 'banter' or comments.

The Association will appoint appropriate colleagues to monitor the content of the social networking site and provide the person with primary responsibility with adequate support and safeguards.

Children and young people should be advised by their coaches, parents/carers and County Welfare Officer to always advise an adult they trust about any communication that makes them feel uncomfortable or where they've been asked not to tell their parent/carer about the communication.

Responsible use of social networking sites

- Ensure all the privacy settings are locked so that that the page(s) are used explicitly for Association matters and are not used as a place to meet, share personal details or have private conversations
- Nominate an Association official to monitor the social networking page regularly and remove access for anyone behaving inappropriately
- Ensure everyone within the Association knows who is responsible for monitoring the content of the social networking areas and how to contact them
- Provide all users with The FAs best practice guidance on using social networking sites
- Gain written parent/carer permission before access is given to U18s
- Inform the CWO if you have received inappropriate communications online, keeping a record of any inappropriate, threatening or offensive material as this may be needed as evidence.

Unless a child/young person is a direct relation, the Association staff, volunteers, and officials should not:

- Accept as a friend, players aged U18 on social networking sites they are members of, or share their own personal social networking sites with children or young people involved in youth football
- Make contact with children or young people known through football outside of the football context on social networking sites
- Use internet or web based communications to send personal messages of a non-football nature to a child or young person
- Engage in any personal communications, 'banter' or comments