

Carlton Town FC Juniors

Social Media & Communications Policy



The club's priority and responsibility is to safeguard children and young people involved in football. Alongside the very beneficial aspects of modern communication technologies we recognise that there are also increased risks to children and young people. These risks must be appropriately managed.

Everyone involved in football must recognise that the responsibility to safeguard exists both on and off the field of play.

It's essential that club officials (committee members, coaches/managers, team assistants, first aiders and team administrators), referees, parents and players make informed decisions about how they use internet, mobile phone, and email communications.

Club officials and those in a position of responsibility at Carlton Town FC must ensure they communicate responsibly.

Communicating with players:

All communications from Carlton Town FC club officials with players should be via the parents / guardians specified as the contact when the player is registered with the club on the membership system for that season.

CLUB OFFICIALS MUST NOT CONTACT PLAYERS DIRECTLY THROUGH ANY FORM OF DIGITAL COMMUNICATION (i.e. emails, text, social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, WhatsApp etc).

If a player contacts a club official directly, any replies from the club official must include the parent / guardian and immediately advise that future communications are to be done through the parent / guardian.

Use of Social Media:

The Club's website and social media officer maintains and monitors a Facebook, Twitter and Instagram account as a way of getting the club's messages across to the widest audience possible. This is used for marketing and raising awareness of relevant events, news and achievements.

Club officials may request to publish social media posts through the club's Facebook, Instagram and Twitter profile via the club's social media officer. This will be judged individually whether the content complies with our policy before agreeing to publish the post.

If any other social media profiles / groups are created by other club officials for team specific communications (e.g. WhatsApp or Facebook groups), this must be with the parent / guardian only and not include any players under the age of 18. Communications must be solely about football matters, e.g. fixtures, cancellations and player availability. At no time should there be any personal communications, 'banter' or comments. It is the responsibility of the club officials in the group to maintain this policy and raise any concerns with the Club Secretary or Safeguarding Officer.

The FA has published the below as best practice in relation to social networking:

Do

- Ensure all the privacy settings are locked so that the page(s) are used explicitly for club or league matters and are not used as a place to meet, share personal details or have private conversations
- Nominate a club official to monitor the social networking page regularly and remove access for anyone behaving inappropriately
- Make sure everyone within your club / team knows who is responsible for monitoring the content of the social networking areas and how to contact them
- Inform the Safeguarding Officer if you have received inappropriate communications online, keeping a record of any inappropriate, threatening or offensive material as this may be needed as evidence.

Don't

Unless the U18 is a direct relation, the club officials should not:

- Accept a friend request from players or referees U18 on social networking sites 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
- Send personal messages of a non-football nature to a child or young person
- Engage in any personal communications, 'banter' or comments.

Use of images:

Any images posted on social media or the club's website must not include the named individuals (unless further permission has been provided by the parent / guardian); and the club official taking the photo must ensure that consent has been provided by the parent / guardian to use safe images on digital media (this consent is given upon registration in the membership system).

PARENTS ARE REQUESTED TO NOT POST IMAGES OF PLAYERS ON SOCIAL MEDIA WITHOUT THE CONSENT OF THE PARENTS OF THOSE PLAYERS.

Communicating with referees under 16:

As with players, most referees are still minors and must be safeguarded and treated with respect. Some of these referees are as young as 14 years old.

FOR REFEREES UNDER THE AGE OF 16 (AGED 14 & 15), communications must be through the parent / guardian and club officials must not contact referees directly through any form of digital communication.

FOR REFEREES UNDER THE AGE OF 18 (AGED 16 & 17), communications can be direct but must include a copy to the parent / guardian.

Mobile phone and email contact details for referees under the age of 18 should not be posted on website pages that can be accessed by the general public.

U18 Assistants:

On occasion, managers may have U14's to U18's assisting at training sessions for the purposes of Duke of Edinburgh etc. Again, these assistants are still minors and the same rules of communication apply as for players and referees.

Safeguarding Children and Young People:

Children and young people must be advised by their coaches, parents / guardians and CWO to always tell an adult they trust about communications that make them feel uncomfortable or where they've been asked not to tell their parent / guardian about the communication.

IF ANY INAPPROPRIATE COMMUNICATION OR CONTENT IS SHARED BETWEEN AN ADULT AND A PLAYER / REFEREE THIS SHOULD BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY TO THE CLUB WHO, WHERE NECESSARY, WILL SEEK ADVICE FROM THE COUNTY FA WELFARE OFFICER AND / OR STATUTORY AGENCIES AS APPROPRIATE.

For members of the club (players and parents / guardians):

Members of the club must not post on any social media platform, text or email anything that would be hurtful, insulting, offensive, abusive, threatening, racist or sexist. This would go against Carlton Town Juniors FC's ethos and rules and can also be against the law.

The club expects you not to post personal comments in relation to the management of your team, the operation of the club, club officials, match officials, players in your team and other players in the club, opposition teams' member(s), or any family members of the above.

Clear breach of these rules may result in a club suspension, expulsion and for serious matters will be referred to the correct authorities. Please see the code of conduct for players and the code of conduct for parents / spectators.