



INTERNET SAFETY & SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Wheathampstead Wanderers FC has adopted the guidelines set out by The FA in relation to internet safety. All concerned should adopt these procedures when using the internet to communicate with members or post information.

This Policy is applicable to all persons in a role within WWFC including All Coaches and Managers, Any Administration Role and members of the WWFC Committee

SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATION

Communicating within U17 / U18 Age Groups (School Year 12 / 13)

DO:

- Always get signed consent (or email confirmation) from parent/carers before communicating digitally with children in the club in year groups U17/U18 AND equivalent to School Years 12 and 13. (Players playing up a year group who are not in School Year 12 **cannot** be included in any social media communications)
 - Explain to parents/carers the purpose and method for coaches/managers/club officials etc. to communicate digitally with their child and this will only be in relation to club specific activities ; Ensure the parent/carer understands that reply messages from their son/daughter are always to the main group not direct to the coach/coaches. Coaches will inform the parent/carer in the event this happens.
- Only use group texts, group emails or group messenger apps and **always** include / copy-in the parent/carer or the designated member of the club to all communications with children;
- Make sure digital communications are only in relation to specific club-related activities e.g. matches, changes in travel arrangements, training times or venue changes, etc.
- Remove the player should the parent remove themselves from the chat group.

Communicating within Wheathampstead Wanderers FC & Across U7 through U18

DON'T:

- have **any** digital communications with children between year groups **U7 through U16**
- Use digital communications for personal conversation, sending pictures, jokes or other items of a personal nature;
- Respond to digital communications from children other than those directly related to club matters, and in the case of the latter, make sure you copy/contact the parent/carer;
- Use language that is directly (or could be misinterpreted as being) racist, sexist, derogatory, threatening, abusive or sexualised in tone.

- Accept as a friend, players or referees under the age of 18 on social networking sites of which they are members;
- Make contact with children or young people known through football outside of the football context by any means
- Share your own personal social networking sites with children or young people involved in youth football;
- Use internet or web-based communications to send personal messages of a non-football nature to a young person;
- Engage in any personal communications, 'banter' or comments.

DO:

- When contacting a referee known to be under 18, ensure that a fellow coach and/or the referee's parent/carer/mentor (if known) are on the email.

INTERNET SAFETY

Once you have placed something on the internet it is in the public domain – that means anyone can access it, change it and share it with others. Bear this in mind when you are using the club website to host information for or about players.

- Avoid using player profiles – do not provide personal contact details of players
- Always ensure you have parental permission to use any photos of players
- Avoid placing the full name of players who feature in photographs
- If a child tells you that they are concerned about the way someone has communicated with them online, report this to your Club Welfare Officer. See Website for Welfare Officer Contact information
- If you use the internet to communicate with players be aware of what you say and how you say it
- If you are concerned about the way a player is attempting to contact you via the internet e.g. using a social networking site or a chat area, speak to your Club Welfare Officer immediately. * See Website for Team Contact information
- Remember you are in a position of trust as a coach, team manager, referee.
- Help your children to understand that they should never give out personal details to online friends - personal information includes their instant messenger id, email address, mobile phone number and any pictures of themselves, their family or friends -if your child publishes a picture or video online – anyone can change it or share it and it may be online forever
- If your child receives SPAM/ junk email and texts, remind them never to believe them, reply to them or use them
- Help your child to understand that some people may not tell the truth online and therefore internet friends should remain online. They should never meet up with any strangers in the real world without an adult they trust being present.
- Always make sure your child feels comfortable in being able to come to you or someone they trust if they are worried about anything online. Teach young people how to block someone online and report them if they feel uncomfortable. Most sites will have guidance on this and any reports can be made directly to the CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection) Centre via www.ceop.police.uk.

‘THINKuKNOW’

Everyone should be made aware of the [‘ThinkuKnow’ Programme](#). ‘ThinkuKnow’ is an excellent education programme developed by the CEOP Centre. It delivers online safety messages to young people, their parents and the public.

The ‘Thinkuknow’ programme uses innovative materials, aimed at empowering young people and their parents, to make the right choices when using the internet. The materials include films, leaflets, posters and a website, which focus on three key themes: how to have fun online, how to stay in control and how to report. The FA has some of the ‘Thinkuknow’ films included in its own safeguarding children education programme and both the Welfare Officers Workshop and Online Safeguarding Children Recertification course highlight the importance of internet safety, making use of CEOPs essential guidance.

The ‘Thinkuknow’ education programme has an impressive website which gives simple clear messages for children – why not encourage your players/children to have a look for themselves? Simply click on any of the above links to check it out. The messages work because they have been developed with children and the information is aimed specifically for:

- 4-7 years / 8-10 years / 11-13 years / 14+ / Parent/Carer