



Communications Policy and Protocols

Sustaining and developing a successful and happy football club is not just about what happens on the pitch. Today we depend more and more upon communications technology to support us in providing the back-up we need to help make everything happen.

But as with all technology, along with the huge benefits come many potential dangers. This policy is not designed to curtail creativity and initiative, but to protect Woburn & Wavendon Football Club, our members and partners from any mis-use.

The policy is broken down into four inter-related sections:- Website Policy & Protocol, Use of Texts & Emails, Responsible Use of Social Networking, & Photography/Image Guidelines. This has been written in line with Football Association guidelines, and is presented in an easy to follow 'Do's & Don'ts' format.

WEBSITE POLICY & PROTOCOL

Do:

- appoint an appropriate adult(s) as Club Webmaster to monitor the content of the website.
- make sure everyone within our club knows who is responsible for monitoring the content of the club website and social networking areas and how to contact them.
- restrict content to WWFC related issues, and individual team pages to your team only.
- produce match reports that are fair and in good spirit (no criticism of officials, players or opposition).
- refer any content you feel unsure about to the Club's Webmaster before publishing.
- only refer to players by their first name and first initial of surname.
- apply the principles detailed in the Club's Photography Guidelines (*see section 4*).
- provide links to www.TheFA.com 'Staying Safe Online' pages.

Don't:

- allow feeds or hyperlinks to social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc).
- permit addition/deletion of content by any individual who is not authorised and in possession of their own unique login.
- publish players' individual contact details.
- post irrelevant detail of individuals which may lead them to be identified e.g. school class/year, player profiles detailing personal information e.g. favourite foods, movies, teams etc.
- place pictures of individuals on WebPages without the permission of parents/carers.
- Use any images/logos that may have copywrite issues.
- with regard to U7-U10 matches, please remember there should be no information published that reveal the result/ scorers to the reader.
- post or host items which may be considered to be hurtful, insulting, offensive, abusive, threatening, racist or discriminatory or otherwise may cause offence or harm to another or might incite such behaviour in others.

USE OF TEXTS AND EMAILS

Do:

- get signed consent from parents/carers before using either of these methods of communication with children or young people.
- explain to parents/carers and club members the purpose and method for coaches, team managers, referee mentors, club officials etc to communicate by either text, email or both with their son/ daughter.
- only use group texts or emails and always copy in the parent/carer or the designated member of the club to all communications with young people.
- make sure texts or emails are only in relation to specific club related activities e.g. informing young people about changes in travel arrangements, training times or venue changes etc.
- report to the Club Welfare Officer (CWO) any instance(s) where you have received any inappropriate communications from a young person. The CWO will then agree what action the Club will take, notifying parents/carers and any other appropriate individuals or agencies.

Don't:

- use text or emails for personal conversation, sending pictures, jokes or other items of a personal nature.
- respond to emails from young people other than those directly related to club matters. Advise the CWO of any non-club related emails you receive.
- use language that is directly (or could be misinterpreted as being) racist, sexist, derogatory, threatening, abusive or sexualised in tone.

RESPONSIBLE USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING

The Club would suggest that, as a general principle, coaches, managers etc should avoid using social networking sites as the primary way of communicating with players.

Children and young people should be advised by their coaches, parents/carers 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/carer about the communication.

PHOTOGRAPHY/IMAGE GUIDELINES

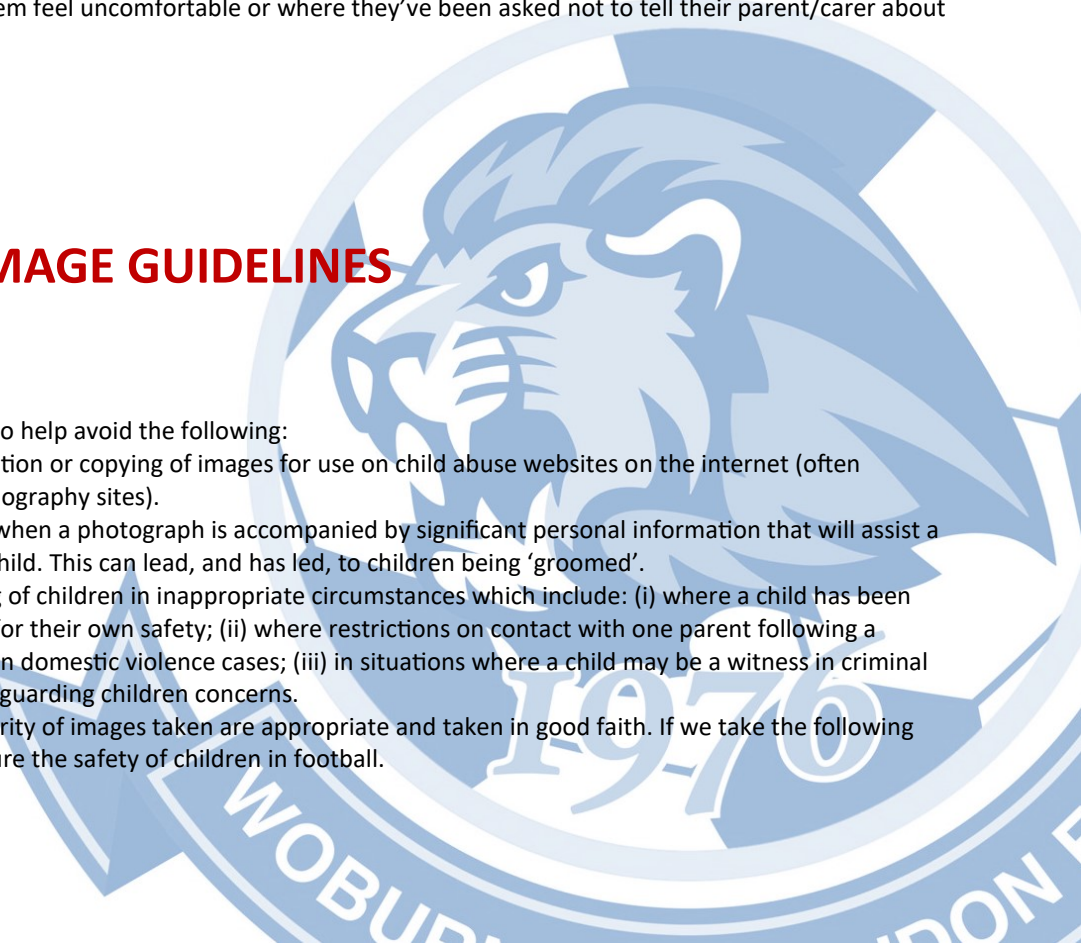
Potential risks

The FA has developed this guidance to help avoid the following:

- The inappropriate use, adaptation or copying of images for use on child abuse websites on the internet (often incorrectly referred to as pornography sites).
- The identification of children when a photograph is accompanied by significant personal information that will assist a third party in identifying the child. This can lead, and has led, to children being 'groomed'.
- The identification and locating of children in inappropriate circumstances which include: (i) where a child has been removed from his/her family for their own safety; (ii) where restrictions on contact with one parent following a parental separation exist e.g. in domestic violence cases; (iii) in situations where a child may be a witness in criminal proceedings; or (iv) other safeguarding children concerns.

It's important to remember the majority of images taken are appropriate and taken in good faith. If we take the following simple measures we can help to ensure the safety of children in football.

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Common sense considerations to ensure everyone's safety

Do:

- share The FA's guidance on taking images with all parents, carers and members when they join the club.
- ensure the Club has parental consent to use a player's image if it is to be used in the public domain e.g. Club website or newspaper article.
- ensure that any child in our club who is under care proceedings, is protected by ensuring that their image is not placed in the public domain. This can be done by using a Consent Form, so that parents/carers can identify whether this applies to children in their care.
- focus on the activity rather than the individual.
- ensure all those featured are appropriately dressed (a minimum of vest or shirt and shorts).
- aim to take pictures which represent the broad range of youngsters participating safely in football e.g. boys and girls, disabled people, ethnic minority communities.

Don't:

- publish photographs with the full name(s) of the individual(s) featured unless you have written consent to do so and you have informed the parents as to how the image will be used.
- use player profiles with pictures and detailed personal information on websites.
- use an image for something other than that which it was initially agreed, e.g. published in local press when initially produced for a clubhouse commemorative picture.
- allow images to be recorded in changing rooms, showers or toilets – this includes the use of mobile phones that record images.

Filming as a coaching aid

The FA advises that coaches using videoing as a legitimate coaching aid should make parents/carers and players aware that this will be part of the coaching programme. Care should be taken when storing the videos.

If you are concerned about the inappropriate use of images please report this to our CWO.

Remember

- It's not an offence to take appropriate photographs in a public place even if asked not to do so.
- No one has the right to decide who can and cannot take images on public land.
- If you have serious concerns about a possible child protection issue relating to the recording of images then call the Police. This action should only be taken where you believe that someone may be acting unlawfully or putting a child at risk.
- The land or facility owner can decide whether or not photography and or videoing at football activities will be permitted when carried out on private land. However you need to make this known before allowing individuals access to the private property. If they do not comply then you may request that they leave.
- Try not to use images that include individuals wearing jewellery (as wearing jewellery whilst playing is contrary to the Laws of the Game as well as being a health and safety issue).

Commissioning professional photographers and the local media

If you are commissioning professional photographers or inviting the press to cover a football activity, ensure you and they are clear about each other's expectations. The key is to plan ahead and communicate early on.

- Provide a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour.
- Inform them of your club's commitment to safeguarding children and young people. Establish who will hold the recorded images and what they intend to do with them, e.g. place on a website for sale, distribute thumbnails to the club to co-ordinate sales.
- Issue the professional photographer with identification, which must be worn at all times.
- Inform participants and parents or carers prior to the event that a professional photographer will be in attendance and ensure you have established that no under 18s will be compromised due to safeguarding children concerns if their image is taken – remember this can be done by using a Consent Form at the start of the season.