

Social Media Policies & Guidelines for St Joseph's Boys AFC

Responsibility for implementation of the policy

The Board of Management has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy.

The Media & Communications team is responsible for monitoring and reviewing the operation of this policy and making recommendations for changes to minimise risks to the successful operation of the Club .

Each individual is responsible for their own compliance with this policy and for ensuring that it is consistently applied and should ensure that they take the time to read and understand it. Any breach of this policy should be reported to the Board of Management.

Digital Guidelines

These guidelines will evolve over time as new technology and platforms emerge. They currently deal with the social media world as it is today (**Sept 2014**) to help deliver on the following

- promote and develop positive online discussion of St Josephs
- protect the reputation of St Joseph's social media platforms online.
- help moderate discussions appropriately.
- ensure that St Joseph's provides an official voice in this area.

The Club may engage with online audiences, not just on Facebook and Twitter, but also on blogs and other social and digital media platforms. This document will outline how members of our board, our staff, team managers, team coaches and players behave when using social media when representing or expressing views on behalf of St Josephs

When members of St Joseph's share opinions online, they may reflect positively or negatively on the Club.

- Individuals or organisations outside St Joseph's may use digital and social media to challenge the way in which the Club is managed, the policies/procedures that the Club adhere too, or, its reputation. The Club has the right to defend its position in such circumstances.
- where social media platforms are being used to facilitate negative commentary on the Club it would be important that we use these same platforms to promote the many positives of being part of the St Joseph's community.

Our guidelines for communicating on social media forums and other online platforms will help us manage what is being said about St Josephs on social media platforms, and how we and our audience interact when online.

These guidelines:

- **Apply to all staff members, players, officials , managers or coaches who create or contribute to blogs, wikis, social networks, virtual worlds, or any other social media platforms;**
- **Outline the principles that apply when engaging in social media activity on behalf of the Club**
- **Include a section for members referring to the Club while using social media platforms in a personal capacity.**

The Club expects each individual to follow these guidelines, to participate in a responsible, respectful and relevant manner that protects the reputation of St Josephs

The Policy

When officially representing the Club

The following principles should be adhered to when representing the Club in an online, official capacity or when speaking on behalf of the Club.

1. Follow Club Values

Approach online communities using sound judgment and common sense. Adhere to the Club's values, as well as other applicable policies. Please familiarise yourself with the Club's **Code of Behaviour** available from www.joeys.ie website

2. Confidential Information

When posting on the internet do not disclose any information that is confidential or proprietary to the Club, or confidential to any third party that has disclosed information to the Club.

When in doubt, **do not post**.

You are personally responsible for your words and actions online. As an official Club online spokesperson, you must ensure that your posts are completely accurate and not misleading. They should not reveal any non-public information regarding the Club. Use sound judgment and common sense; if there is any doubt, **DO NOT POST IT.**

3. Be Respectful

If representing the Club in an official capacity, be respectful of all individuals, races, religions and cultures. (How you conduct yourself online not only reflects on you – it also reflects directly on the Club).

When disagreeing with the opinions of others online, keep it appropriate and polite. If you find yourself in a situation that might become antagonistic, do not get defensive or disengage from the conversation abruptly. It is also important not to respond in the heat of the moment, in a way you may regret later. Feel free to seek advice or disengage from the dialogue in a polite manner that reflects well on the Club.

4. Be Honest

Stick to your area of expertise and feel free to provide your unique perspective on non-confidential activities of the Club.

Keep in mind that you won't always know all the answers. Don't be afraid to seek help and advice from others who may have access to the relevant information.

5. Use of Images/Video

Internet postings should not include St Joseph's logos or trademarks without permission. Please respect brand, trademark, and copyrighted information and imagery.

6. Respect the law

Internet postings must respect copyright, privacy, fair use, financial disclosure, and other applicable laws. Do not post pictures of others without their permission.

Do not upload, post, forward or post a link to any abusive, obscene, discriminatory, harassing, derogatory or defamatory content.

The Club reserves the right to withdraw certain posts, and to remove inappropriate comments.

Security is essential. When using social network sites you may wish to pass on interesting content or links.

- Be careful, and do not blindly repost something without checking the content.
- Avoid linking to outside websites unless you trust the source.
- Before clicking on unfamiliar links, pay attention to the security warnings that pop up on your computer. These protect you, the Club and our members from computer viruses and malware.
- When using Twitter, Facebook and other social networking tools, follow their terms and conditions.

7. Be Transparent

Use of Forums - Make it clear that you volunteer or work for the Club. Your honesty will be noted in social media environments. If you are writing about the Club use your real name, identify your position within the Club, and be clear about your role. If you have a vested interest in what you are discussing, be the first to say so. You should neither claim nor imply that you are speaking on the Club's behalf – instead, use the following disclaimer:

“St Joseph's accepts no responsibility for the opinions expressed which are those of the individuals expressing them, and do not necessarily, represent the views of St Joseph's.”

Do not post images which include the St Josephs Logo that may be deemed inappropriate or damaging to the reputation of the Club.

Note to Staff

St Josephs Boys and Girls FC internet connections are intended for activities related to the club. The Internet is not intended for **personal use**. Staff members who abuse this facility will face disciplinary action.

There are a number of rules that apply to using social media. Failure to abide by these rules may result in disciplinary action.

The following are the conditions of use of Social Media:

If you access social networking sites using St Joseph Boys and Girls FC facilities you must **not**:

- Use the internet under any circumstances to attack or abuse anyone, or post derogatory or offensive comments or images
- Use the internet to publish any content that may result in actions for defamation, discrimination, breaches of copyright, data protection or other claims for damages. This includes but is not limited to material of an illegal, sexual or offensive nature
- Use the internet for the promotion of personal financial interests, commercial ventures or personal campaigns
- Engage in activities on the internet that might bring St Joseph Boys and Girls FC into disrepute
- Breach the laws of the country in which the St Joseph Boys and Girls FC service is provided
- Breach St Joseph Boys and Girls FC policies
- Disclose confidential information relating to another person using the facilities at St Joseph Boys and Girls FC
- Attempt to use the internet to establish any personal relationships

Protecting young people online

Young people nowadays excel at technology, but this may not be the case with their social skills. Some may be at risk from online bullying, or from publishing personal information without considering the possible consequences.

The club will take all reasonable steps to ensure that the website is suitable for a family audience, including content that our users post on the site, and articles we post. If we link to outside sites, we will ensure those sites are also suitable for our audience.

All Club staff, officers and Leaders/Coaches are strongly advised not to Facebook 'friend' any children involved with any of the Club's teams in the interests of online safety.

Guidelines for Coaches/Leaders

Facebook – Note to Coaches/Leaders

Facebook's own policy requires a person to be over 13 yrs. to hold an account – so if a Coach were to 'friend' a player that should not be using FB in the first instance he/she would not be modelling professional behaviour. Facebook 'friending' in this situation should not be considered by the Coach.

If the Coach has responsibility for a 13+ team then the following needs to be given serious consideration before engaging on FB with children:

- Maintaining the privacy setting of the Coach's page if 'friends' of the player (FB updates are known to reset privacy settings)
- Will I 'friend' all the players on the squad, or, just some?
- How is 'friending' instigated – by each individual player, or do I tell them all to 'friend' me – that could leave the Coach open to a suggestion of 'bullying', or, it could lead to peer pressure from dominant squad members on others to 'friend' someone they may not wish to

The St Josephs Official FB 'page' is intended to serve all Teams - it is only used for the purposes to communicate general information, training session outcomes, fitness routines, nutrition & diet, directions to games etc.

It also provides a 'safe' digital engagement pathway between coaches & players and separates the Coach's social & private life from his/her professional role as team coach. In this way a Coach can 'connect' with his/her players in an open more 'public' manner and safer – especially for the Coach. A coach needs to ensure that they do not put themselves in a situation that leaves themselves 'at risk' – it's the same when we go into the dressing room where there are young players – we have another appropriate adult with us and we avoid one-to-one situations. These basic principles should also apply when on FB.

The Club takes the welfare of young people extremely seriously. Further details of our child welfare related policies can be found at www.joeys.ie/

The internet is forever

What goes on the net stays on the net. If you post something on behalf of the Club, you can't take it back. So only post material that upholds the Club's reputation.

Social Media Policy – Sept 2014