

Crusaders Football Development Centre

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY

November 2016

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Communication and Social Networking Policy

Crusaders Football Development Centre understands the value of social media and realise that it has the potential for effective communication with a large audience.

Crusaders Football Development Centre recognises that the majority of children and young people have access to the internet. With the increasing usage of mobile technology, there are often few restrictions on when and where they have access to social media sites. However, along with the benefits of this mode of communication, it can also be disadvantageous as it can pose risks to its users, particularly children and young people.

Crusaders Football Development Centre is committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and young people involved with the Club, both on and off the field of play and has developed this policy to encourage the safe use of electronic communications.

This policy aims to provide advice to staff and volunteers, parents and children/young people who are involved with Crusaders Football

Development Centre regarding the acceptable use of social networking sites, mobile phones and other methods of communication.

This policy is designed to assist staff and volunteers, parents and children/young people to make informed decisions about how they use electronic communications. This aims to ensure that children and adults in a position of trust are not subjected to inappropriate online behaviour or allegations of the same.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and will be distributed to all staff and volunteers, parents and children/young people at the beginning of each season.

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Use of Social Media

It is recognised that social networking sites are used informally by some Academy teams to communicate information to players. Whilst the Crusaders Football Development Centre mainly uses an 'information only' approach to disseminate information to players, the nature of these sites allows interaction between users.

As per Crusaders Football Club's Child Protection Policy, any communication between coaches and children/young people should take place on a public forum and where possible, should not take place via direct personal messages. Any attempt by a coach or player to communicate information via private messages that is not related to football matters must be reported to the Child Welfare Officer immediately and will be dealt with accordingly.

The Child Welfare Officer for Crusaders Football Club is:

Name: Davey Downes

Telephone: 078 12010056

Email: crusaders-cwo@live.co.uk

The Crusaders Football Development Centre recognises that there may be occasions when a coach needs to communicate directly with a young person or group of young people via text message. On these occasions, communications must solely be in relation to specific Crusaders Football Development Centre related activities.

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Staff and Volunteers

MUST:

Report any inappropriate communications that they receive from a young person or associated person to the Child Welfare Officer. The Child Welfare Officer will decide on the most appropriate course of action in consultation with the Academy Director /Club Chairman.

Communicate only via methods approved by the Crusaders Football Development Centre eg. Communicate with parents where possible, text messages to young people when necessary strictly about football related activities, and use of team pages on Facebook etc.

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Staff and Volunteers

MUST NOT:

Use any form of electronic communication for personal conversations, sending photographs, jokes or other items of a personal nature, or engaging in any inappropriate conversations about other players or teams.

Respond to emails, text messages or online posts from young people other than those directly related to club matters.

Use language that is of a racist, sexist, sectarian, derogatory, abusive or sexualised nature.

Accept or add as a friend any child or young person associated with Crusaders Football Development Centre, under the age of eighteen, on their personal social networking site.

Make contact with children or young people known through Crusaders Football Development Centre outside of the football context.

Post personal comments in relation to the management or operation of the club, club officials, match officials, children, their parents or opposing teams.

Delete any inappropriate correspondence sent to them, which may form part of an investigation.

GUIDELINES FOR

Crusaders Football Development Centre Players

Crusaders Football Development Centre prioritises the welfare and safety of children and young people associated with the Club, therefore all players must adhere to the following:

Tell an adult you trust about any communications you receive via the internet, social networks, text messages or emails that make you feel uncomfortable, unhappy or at risk. This includes any messages that ask you not to tell others or that ask you to keep secrets.

Know who from Crusaders Football Development Centre should be contacting you and how they should be contacting you. Any other contacts outside of this should be reported to an adult you trust.

Do not post, text or email comments that are offensive, hurtful or abusive as this would be breaching the Club's Anti-Bullying Policy and could lead to expulsion from the Academy.

Do not post personal comments relating to the management or operation of the Club, staff or volunteers, match officials, players and opposing team members.

Do not invite any adult involved with the Club to become 'friends' online.

Do not use the internet, mobile phone or other methods of communication to send personal messages to adults associated with the Club.

Do not delete any inappropriate communications that are sent to you as they may be needed as part of a subsequent investigation.

Remember that at all times, players are representing Crusaders Football Development Centre and any actions on social networking sites must not bring the Club into disrepute.

GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS

In order to protect young players, parents should be aware of the following:

Learn how to use social networking sites and talk to your child about them.

Encourage children to only upload material that they would be happy showing to a parent.

Ensure that your child understands that they should tell someone they trust about communications that make them feel uncomfortable, unhappy or at risk, or that they have been asked not to tell anyone about.

Familiarise yourself with the Club's Social Networking Policy. As a parent of a child at the Club, you are responsible for ensuring they abide by this policy.

Contact the Child Welfare Officer in the event that your child receives any inappropriate communication from a member of staff/volunteer or player involved at the Club, or if you have any other concerns in relation to internet safety.