

**Bromleians Football Club**

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

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| **Date:**  | 14TH April 2021 |
| **Date to be reviewed:**  | 14th April 2022 |
| **Author:**  | Club Welfare Officer |
| **Committee Sign off Date:**  |  |

1. **STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Bromleians Football Club supports The FA’s Social Media policy. The FA encourages the appropriate use of social media to help run teams and leagues, communicate with players (via their parents/carers when under-16), appoint referees, log results and much more.

Bromleians Football Club supports the participation in online digital communities for the benefit and enjoyment of our members, their families, prospective members and our local community. Alongside the beneficial aspects of digital and online communication technologies though, we have to recognise that there are also increased risks to children and young people. Bromleians Footbal Club must manage these risks appropriately.

**Whatever way we communicate, safeguarding principles remain the same. Retaining boundaries is just as important online as it is offline. As such this policy should be read in conjunction with Bromleians Football Club’s Safeguarding Policy and any further guidance should be sought from the Bromleians Football Club Welfare Officer/s.**

1. **Introduction**
	1. This policy applies to all involved with Bromleians Football Club.
	2. The policy encompasses all social media platforms, whether available now or in the future, including but not limited to:
* Social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok etc
* Messaging applications such as WhatsApp, SnapChat etc
* Blogs, wikis, websites, forums and all other public online communications.

This list is not exhaustive and Bromleians Football Club recognises that the way we communicate digitally can change.

* 1. If you are using a social media platform then you must remember that anyone may see what you write. In particular:
		1. Remember we all create our own digital footprint every time we post comments, photos and videos. Be sure before you post. If you wouldn’t say or do something face-to-face – then don’t do it online.
		2. If you have a role in football at Bromleians Football Club then always make sure communications are relevant to your role. They should focus on the football, be aligned to the club’s behaviours and values and must not contain personal information or comments.
		3. Even if you set your social media account so that it is only visible to your friends, there have been many instances when a well-meaning person/friend has shared a message or images outside of that group.
1. **Guidelines for Use of Social Media**

3.1 Bromleians Football Club promotes responsible use of social media. It’s essential that the club and its parents/carers, members and players make informed decisions about how they use the internet, mobile phone and email communications. As such, the club requires its members and officials, when posting about the Club, its players, parents/carers, coaches or club endorsed, promoted or conducted events or activities, to observe the following guidelines for responsible social media use:

1. Take responsibility for their own words and for the comments allowed on their sites or forums.
2. Not post unacceptable content, to delete it if received and not share any such content or comments about it.
3. Not post anything online that they wouldn’t say in person.
4. Connect privately before responding publicly. When parents/carers, members and players encounter conflicts and misrepresentation in social networking sites, they must make every effort to talk privately and directly to the person(s) involved or involve a club officer (the Welfare Officer/s, Junior Chiarman or Junior Secretary) to act as an intermediary.
5. Bromleians Football Club strongly discourages personal attacks. Offensive comments will not be tolerated, preferably not responded to and should be notified to a club officer (the Welfare Officer/s, Junior Chairman or Junior Secretary) and they made lead to the club’s disciplinary procedure being invoked.
6. To “think before posting” and consider that even if posting to a private section of a social networking site comments can appear in public areas through a variety of means and can easily be found.

For clarity, any breaches to the above or other concerns should be reported to the Club Welfare Officer/s, Junior Chairman or other Committee member as appropriate.

1. **Communications**
	1. Bromleians Football Club recognises its responsibility to ensure it has safeguards in place. Coaches and officials along with anyone in a position of responsibility at Bromleians Football club must ensure they communicate responsibly.
	2. To communicate football matters, Bromleians Football Club promotes the use of social networking groups or appropriate applications and does not use texting as the primary method. This is in accordance with FA recommendations.

Social networking groups must be set up in the name of the team and club and only used explicitly by named coaches, members, parents and carers.

The social networking groups must be solely about football matters e.g. fixtures, cancellations and team selection. At no time should these be used for personal communications, ‘banter’ or comments.

* 1. Bromleians Football Club is responsible for ensuring all content hosted on our websites, social network areas and any associated message boards or blogs abide by the Rules and Regulations of The Football Association. Bromleians Football Club has appointed appropriate adults to monitor the content of our websites and social media.
	2. Coaches, parents/carers and the Club Welfare Officer/s are required to advise children always to 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.
1. **Dealing with inappropriate behaviour online or through digital communications**
	1. **Always** report any inappropriate communications you receive from a child.
	2. **Always take action -** Find out more about privacy settings, blocking and reporting from the links provided in section 6 of this policy. Make sure you read all The FA’s **Guidance Notes** that can be found here: Section 6 - safeguarding in the digital world - Safeguarding | The Football Association (thefa.com)
2. **Further Information and Resources**
	1. Bromleians Football Club recognises that the digital world has many benefits but comes with risks that must be managed. Using the guidelines in this policy can support the safe use of social media. However, there is lots of helpful advice and guidance about staying safe online provided by experts and we’d like to signpost this for everyone’s benefit.

Here are some key organisations and the information/services they provide:

**NSPCC**

**‘Your guide to the social networks your kids use’ – by the NSPCC:**

**Net Aware**. A really useful guide to a wide range of the most popular sites, apps and games including; snapchat, YouTube, Instagram, Friv, Minecraft, Facebook and Messenger, FIFA football, Movie Planet, Viber, WhatsApp, Youbo, Twitch, Steam. If you are looking for specific guidance on the use of WhatsApp, then please visit https://www.net-aware.org.uk/networks%2Fwhatsapp/

**Share Aware*****–*by the NSPCC:** great advice on how to talk to your child about online safety, tips about how to start the conversation, helpful films and step by step advice. There’s also advice about how to set up parental controls and adjust privacy settings, supported by a free helpline.

**Childnet**

There’s really useful info for parents/carers including a parent/carers’ guide to online gaming, how to report concerns and the five things teenagers want parents/carers to know. It also offers topics aimed at primary and secondary school children, that’s age-appropriate and provides clear definitions, tips and advice.

**CEOP and Thinkuknow**

Hosts a reporting feature with information aimed at parents/carers as well as age- appropriate guidance (4-7s, 8-10s, 11-13s, 14+), advice on managing privacy settings and parental controls. They also offer a variety of educational films.

**Young Stonewall**

As well as offering general support for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT) young people, Young Stonewall offers specific guidance on managing online issues such as cyberbullying.

1. **Further Information**

If you require any further guidance relating to children and young people, please contact one of the Club Welfare Officers.