



WHATSAPP USE IN JUNIOR SPORT

For Coaches and Team Managers

YOUR ROLE

You help set the tone for the team. Clear, respectful communication contributes to a positive and safe environment for everyone.

A SIMPLE GUIDELINE

Try to avoid private one-to-one messaging with players. If direct contact is needed, include a parent/carer or another adult in the conversation. Group communication is usually the safest and most transparent option.

WHAT GOOD PRACTICE LOOKS LIKE

- Keeping communication in group settings
- Being open and transparent
- Including parents/carers where possible
- Staying focused on a clear purpose
- Keeping an eye on how the group is being used

KEEP COMMUNICATION OPEN

Where possible, use group chats rather than individual messages.

A helpful approach is to create a group that includes both players and their parents/carers. If that's not practical, make sure parents/carers are aware of the group and that **at least two adults** (for example, a coach and team manager) are included to support and monitor communication.

PURPOSE: TEAM COMMUNICATION

Think of WhatsApp as a shared team noticeboard.

Appropriate use includes:

- Training updates
- Game details



- Logistics and announcements
- Club-related social chat

To keep things appropriate, please avoid:

- Personal conversations or sharing personal information (including images)
- Posting content unrelated to the team or club
- Communication that could be seen as disrespectful or unkind toward teammates, opposition players, officials, or other clubs

SETTING EXPECTATIONS

Your role includes helping to keep the group safe, purposeful, and well-managed by:

- Keeping a close eye on who is joining the group and ensuring only appropriate members are included
- Being clear about the type of information that is suitable to share
- Gently reinforcing that communication should stay relevant to the team and appropriate for all members
- Documenting and reporting any concerns to the club's Child Safety Officers and Club Leadership team

MANAGING RISK

A few simple safeguards can make a big difference:

- Adjust group settings where needed
- Be mindful of who can join the group
- Keep an eye on tone and interactions

It's also helpful to stay alert to things like:

- Cyberbullying
- Screenshots being shared outside the group
- The creation of 'side' chats or unofficial group chats