



WHATSAPP USE IN JUNIOR SPORT

A guide for players, parents and carers

Communication is an important part of being in a team. When used well, platforms like WhatsApp help everyone stay informed, connected, and organised. This guide outlines how we can all contribute to a safe, respectful, and positive team environment.

WHY THIS MATTERS

We want all players to feel safe, included and respected, both on and off the field. Clear communication helps prevent misunderstandings and supports a positive team culture.

HOW WE COMMUNICATE

To keep communication open and transparent:

- Team communication will take place in **group chats**, not private messages between adults and players
- Where possible, groups will include **both players and parents/carers**
- If a separate player group is used, parents/carers will be informed and **at least two adults** (e.g. coach or team manager) will be included to help monitor the group

USING WHATSAPP APPROPRIATELY

Think of WhatsApp as a **team noticeboard**.

It's a good place for:

- Training updates
- Game details
- Team logistics and reminders
- General team-related chat

To keep things safe and respectful, please avoid:

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



RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION

All players are expected to:

- Communicate respectfully at all times
- Be mindful of tone - messages can be easily misunderstood
- Think before posting or sharing content

Parents and carers can support this by:

- Talking with young people about appropriate online behaviour
- Encouraging respectful and inclusive communication

BEING AWARE OF OTHER GROUP CHATS

Sometimes players create separate or “unofficial” group chats. While this can seem harmless, these spaces can sometimes lead to misunderstandings, exclusion, or messages being shared more widely than intended.

We encourage families to:

- Stay aware of the different platforms young people are using
- Support players to communicate respectfully in all online spaces

KEEPING EVERYONE SAFE

Our coaches and team managers will:

- Monitor who joins team communication groups
- Keep communication focused and appropriate
- Step in if something doesn't seem right

If any concerns arise, they will be **documented and shared with the club's Child Safety Officers and Leadership team** so they can be addressed appropriately.

IF SOMETHING DOESN'T FEEL RIGHT

Players are encouraged to speak to a trusted adult (parent, coach, or team manager) if they feel uncomfortable about something in a group chat.

Parents and carers are also encouraged to reach out if they have any concerns.



A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

Creating a safe and positive team environment is something we all contribute to. By working together, we can ensure communication remains respectful, inclusive and focused on supporting every player.