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ACADEMY SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY

Social Networking - Version 3
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Academy Social Networking Policy produced in accordance with the Football League's Guidance to Member Clubs for developing a social media policy'

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PURPOSE OF THE CLUB / ACADEMY SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY

Scunthorpe United FC understands the value of social media and realises the potential that it has for entertainment and effective communication with a large audience.

Scunthorpe United FC recognise that the majority of children and young people today have access to computers and mobiles with internet, whilst at home or at school. The increasing use of mobile internet means that there are few if any restrictions on when and where children have access to social media sites.

However, along with the benefits of this modern communication, there are risks to children and young people. Scunthorpe United FC is committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and young people involved with the Club both on the pitch, off the pitch, and online. This policy has been developed to encourage the safe use of all electronic communication.

This policy aims to provide advice to the staff, volunteers, parents/carers, and children who are involved with the Club through the Academy or through the Community regarding the acceptable use of social networking sites, mobile phones and other methods of communication. The Club also has responsibilities to children and young people who are engaging with social network sites operated and utilised by the Club, so the policy also provides guidance with regards to these communications.

The policy is designed to assist staff, volunteers, parents, carers and young people to make informed decisions about how they use the internet, mobile phones and e-mail communications. This aims to ensure that children and adults in a position of trust are not subjected to improper online behaviour and not exposed to allegation of impropriety.

The social networking policy will be reviewed where necessary and at least on an annual basis prior to the start of every season. The policy will be issued to all new players, staff and volunteers during the season, and reissued to all players, staff and volunteers during Inductions in pre-season.

CLUB USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR YOUNG PLAYERS

Although the Club does not use social networking sites to communicate with young players, it recognises that communication is done electronically via e-mail, and occasionally text for older players. Whilst the Club mainly uses an information only approach to disseminating information to young players and not an interactive method, it also recognises that the majority of players and parents use social networking sites and communicate with each other using them.

ACADEMY STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Club staff and volunteers receive a copy of this policy on an annual basis and sign to confirm that they have read it, understood it, and agree to adhere to it, at all times. Staff and volunteers also receive Safeguarding training through the FA and through the Club's In Service Training.

Club staff are aware from their Induction and their staff handbook that the Academy Safeguarding Officer is Pete Wallace and that he can be contacted by the following methods:

Telephone 07841 163110

Email: pete.wallace@scunthorpe-united.co.uk

Address Glanford Park, Jack Brownsword Way, Scunthorpe, DN15 8TD

Wherever possible, information is communicated via e-mail or text to Parents/Carers of Academy players by the Academy Secretary, the Academy Manager, the Academy Physio or the Phase Lead Coaches. This is because of the speed and effectiveness of e-mails and text messages. Young players in the older age groups (U15 and upwards) can be included on the e-mail distribution list at the request of a Parent/Carer. Their e-mail address forms an additional contact for the player and not the sole contact. Therefore, the parent/carer is always copied into communication. E-mails are usually sent out to a whole squad rather than individual players.

The Club recognises that there are occasions when other members of staff may need to have communications with one or more players via e-mail or text. In these instances, communications will solely be in relation to specific Club related activities.

Club staff must report any inappropriate communications or any non-club related communications that they receive from a young person or one of their family members to the Safeguarding Officer who will decide on the most appropriate course of action after liaison with the Academy Manager.

Club Staff must not:

- Use text or emails for personal conversations, sending pictures, jokes or other items of a personal nature, or engage in any 'banter' or comments with or about children at the club.
- Use internet or web based mobile phones or other form of communications to send personal messages of a non-football nature to a child or young person;
- Respond to emails or texts from young people other than those directly related to club matters;
- Use language that is directly (or could be misinterpreted as being) racist, sexist, derogatory, threatening, abusive or sexualised in tone;
- Accept as a friend, young players or any person employed or volunteering at the club who is under 18 on any social networking sites;
- Share their own personal social networking sites with children or young people involved at the football club or ask them to be a friend or follower;
- Make contact with children or young people known through football outside of the football context on social networking sites;
- Post personal comments in relation to the management or operation of the club, club officials, match officials, children, their parents/guardians or opposition teams, or any family members of those groups;
- Delete any inappropriate text or email messages sent to them as they may form part of any subsequent investigation.

Academy Players

- Do not give out personal details including mobile numbers and e-mail addresses to people you don't know well offline.
- Do not post personal comments relating to the management or operation of the Club.
- Do not invite any adult involved with the club to become a friend online - they have been told not to accept such invitations.
- Do not use the internet, mobile phone or other method of communication to send personal messages to a member of staff/volunteer at the Club
- Do not delete any inappropriate communications that are sent to you as they may be needed should there be an investigation;
- When using Club electronic equipment such as laptops, remember that these are for educational purposes. Any attempt to use them for non-educational purposes will result in disciplinary action.
- Confirm that you understand that you are not allowed to take your mobile phone in to the changing rooms.
- Confirm that you understand that you are not allowed to take any inappropriate photographs or videos of any one at the Academy.

The Club recognise that there are two issues for young players using social networking sites. The first is their personal safety and the second is how they portray the Football Club and themselves as a young player. At all times, players are representing Scunthorpe United Football Club and any actions on social networking sites should not bring the Club into disrepute. As such, young players must adhere to the following guidelines;

- Tell an adult you trust about any communications that you receive via internet, social networks, text messages or e-mail that make you feel uncomfortable, that make you feel unhappy, that ask you not to tell a parent/carer, or if a member of staff/volunteer from the Club asks you to become their friend.
- Set privacy settings on your social network sites so as to limit the visibility of your profile to those whom you do not actively wish to have access to your profile whilst also considering the prohibition of the club staff and personnel from being able to be "friends with you on social networking sites;
- Know who from the football club should be contacting you and how they should be contacting you. The Club uses e-mails to send information out for young players. These e-mails will either be sent only to Parents or copied in to Parents;
- On occasion, and as requested, for example in the furtherance of an investigation, permit the safeguarding officer access to your online social media profile. However, this access would only be requested and undertaken in your presence and will only extend to having sight of your social media profile. The club will never ask or expect you to provide access details or passwords for such platforms.

PARENTS OF YOUNG PLAYERS

In order to protect young players, Parents and Carers should be aware of the following guidelines:

- Learn how to use social networking sites and talk to your child about them;
- Encourage children to only upload pictures that they would be happy showing to a parent/carer. Children shouldn't upload pictures that identify the school or clubs that they attend as these would help to locate them;
- Tell children not to post their address, phone number or e-mail address on their profile or give them out to online friends who are not known offline;
- Children should know what constitutes personal information and how small pieces of information can be pieced together to create unwanted intrusion insight into their life;
- Help your child manage their account settings, in particular the privacy settings;
- Encourage children not to give information away about forthcoming events and parties;
- Tell children not to reply to junk emails or spam or open files from unknown senders;
- Children should understand that people lie online so it is always best to keep online friends online and never meet up with any strangers, no matter how well they may know them online, without a parent being present
- Ensure that your child understands that they should tell someone they trust about communications that make them feel in any way uncomfortable or that they have been asked not to tell a parent/carer about;
- Familiarise yourself with the Club's social networking policy. As a parent of a child at the club, you are responsible for them abiding by this policy;
- Ensure that you are aware of the communication methods that the Club will be using to communicate with your child and show an interest in these communications;
- Contact the Safeguarding Officer in the event that your child receives any inappropriate communication from a member of staff or a player involved at the Club or if you have any other concerns in relation to internet safety;
- Obtain further guidance from the Child Exploitation Online Protection (CEOP) Centre using their website, www.thinkuknow.co.uk



Social Networking Policy

I can confirm that I understand the social networking policy and will adhere to its content.

- A. I know who my designated Child Safeguarding Officer is (Pete Wallace).
- B. I will report any Child Safety concerns that I have to our designated Safeguarding Officer.
- C. I have been issued with a copy of the Academies Social Networking Policy.

Signed.....

Name.....

Age Group.....

Date.....

Coaches Sign Off

Signed.....

Name.....

Date.....

Academy Safeguarding Officer is Pete Wallace and he can be contacted as follows:

Telephone 07841 163110

Email : pete.wallace@scunthorpe-united.co.uk

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