WEST PARK UNITED

CLUB SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY
AS AT 17 APRIL 2019

At West Park United (hereafter referred to as 'the Club'), we recognise the positive impact of social media in developing and maintaining relationships and communities. The Club wants to encourage you to benefit from all the opportunities which social media present (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc) and help you to minimise any potential risks.

Everyone involved in football must recognise that the responsibility to safeguard exists both on and off the field of play. Coaches, club officials, volunteers and others in a position of trust in football needs to act responsibly, both on and off the field, and this includes the use of electronic communications. The Club and individual teams that set up websites and/or social networks have a responsibility to ensure safeguards are in place. Coaches, officials and those in a position of responsibility in our Club must ensure they communicate responsibly. The Club is responsible for ensuring all content hosted on websites, social network areas and any associated message boards or blogs using the West Park name abide by the Rules and Regulations of the Scottish Youth Football Association. These guidelines have been developed to assist you in managing your online reputation and consequently that of the Club.

WHAT IS SOCIAL MEDIA?

Social media, or new media, refers to the publication and dissemination of media content such as text, images and videos, through online social interactions via highly accessible and scalable publishing platforms such as websites, social networking sites, blogs and media aggregators.

The rapid and pervasive growth of social media technologies and their relative ease of use and availability have made social media a popular form of communication.

Furthermore, the levels of integration that are now possible between almost all social networking tools and sites has simplified and consequently amplified the ability to share and circulate content at great speed across the entire social graph. Once published, content may spread widely and quickly, resulting in it being cached and indexed by search engines or other third party web crawlers. This makes the task of removing content more difficult, should the need arise.

TYPES OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The principal categories of social media include but are not limited to:

Blogs

The word "blog" is a composite of "web log" a website or part of a website that is updated regularly and features commentary and updates on a topic. Example: Word Press, Blogger.

Micro-blogs

A web application that allows micro bursts of text that may also include images and links to other sites and content. Example: Twitter.

Social and Business Networking Sites

An online environment where individual, corporate and organizational users can connect to other users and display online their networks of friends and contacts for other users to see and form connections with. Example: Facebook and LinkedIn.

Social News

Services that allow people to post various news items or links to outside articles and then allows it's users to 'vote' on the items. Example: Digg and Reddit.

Media Aggregators

Websites that provide a media publishing platform, wherein images and video can be uploaded and stored. Content may be viewed, shared and commented on by others. Example: YouTube (video) and Flicker (images).

Social Calendars and Events

This refers to the use of social calendaring networks that facilitate the real life (offline) meeting of online networks and communities. Examples: Facebook Events, Tweetups (a meet up of Twitter users).

Social Bookmarking Sites

A website that allows the user to bookmark content of interest and share it across the social graph. Example: Digg. StumbleUpon.

Forums

Internet forums are online discussion sites where people gather to post comments, discuss topics and swap information. Example: Boards.ie

Virtual Worlds

A virtual world is a 3D computer environment in which users participate and navigate using a 3D avatar of their own creation. These environments may be computerised recreations of real world locations or user generated fantasy realms. Example: Second Life

Wikis

Wikis are websites that can be created and edited collaboratively with others. Example: Wikipedia

Set Up

If you or your team decides that the most effective way of communicating to your players, parents and/or supporters is via a social networking site then it is **strongly advised to set up an account in the name of the team only** and explicitly for use by named members, volunteers, parents and carers solely about football matters e.g. fixtures, cancellations and team selection. At no time should there be any personal communications, banter or comments.

Teams should appoint an appropriate adult(s) to monitor the content of their website(s). Social networking is a cost effective way to communicate and easy to set up, but labour intensive to run. Children and young people should be advised by their coaches and parents/ carers to always tell an adult they trust about communications that makes them feel uncomfortable or where they`ve been asked not to tell their parents/ carer about communication. Therefore we would suggest that, as a general principle, coaches/volunteers etc. should avoid using social networking sites as the primary way of communications with players.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

The following guidelines should be taken into consideration when engaging in online activity including social media and social networking.

Confidentiality

Be aware of disclosing sensitive, confidential and proprietary information as it pertains to the Club, its members or suppliers. Always seek clarification before commenting anywhere. This includes all internal communications and transmissions, documents and data of all kind, and references to the company's financial performance or situation

Privacy Policy

Be aware of any and all privacy policies set out by the Club that are currently in effect.

Personal Privacy

Protect your identity online. Do not disclose sensitive and private information about yourself such as your home address, telephone number, PPSN or bank account information. In other words, do not post any information that you would not ordinarily post in a public forum.

Check your privacy settings for each social network. Limit access to your information to only those you trust most within your network and do not have your profile, photos or videos visible to the public at large.

Privacy of Others

Seek permission before posting content relating to other people or situations involving other people, especially if you are tagging them in images or videos, irrespective of whether they appear in them or not.

Are you infringing on their privacy? Are you hurting them or damaging their reputation in some way? Remember, such activity may be in violation of the terms of service of the social network site you are using.

Copyright and Intellectual Property

Be aware of copyright issues pertaining to the use of images and logos belonging to the Club or any third parties. Similarly, use watermarks when uploading or posting proprietary assets to protect from download and dissemination by others.

Where a social media account is used primarily for Club business and where contacts and content are gained principally due the fact that the account user is identified as a West Park memeber, then the intellectual property rights for any such account including contacts lies with the Club and remains with the Club even after an member has left the Club, ownership of such accounts and contacts will be held by the company.

Terms of Service

Be aware of the basic terms of service of each social network or social media site upon which you are active. Such terms of service typically govern copyright infringement, privacy violation and issues of impersonation and abuse. Failure to adhere to these terms leaves you susceptible to being reported by other community members and having your account terminated.

Best Practice Guidelines

The following guidelines are applicable to both Club and personal social media activity.

Authorisation and Responsibility

In respect of each social media profile and online presence, identify and assign responsibilities to individuals tasked with populating and maintaining content and responding to comments.

Identify your audience

If you want to use these sites to communicate with players, parents and/or supporters, you may wish to consider a site which you can keep quite personal and private. This may be a Facebook profile which you can lock down so that it cannot be publicly searched and one in which you only accept as "friends" people you know and trust.

If you want to use these sites to communicate, you may wish to consider a site which has fewer opportunities for you to share personal content such as photos or videos, e.g. Twitter. Your posts will be limited to 140 characters and you can be more selective as to which photos and personal details you share. You might want to use a Facebook Page, as opposed to a Profile, to engage with fans in a less personal, but still engaging manner.

If you are using public sites such as these, you need to let the Club know. Public comments are to be considered as comments made on behalf of the Club and its reputation. Teams and individuals must refrain from publishing comments about other clubs, players or referees and any controversial or potentially inflammatory subjects. Avoid hostile or harassing communications in any posts or other online communications. Harassment is any offensive

conduct based on a person`s race, sex, gender identity, national origin, colour, disability, age, sexual orientation, veteran status, marital status, religion or any other status identified by Scottish Youth Football Association and protected by law.

Accuracy

It is important to be 100% accurate at all times. Do not post content that is not verifiable or has not been verified in advance. Accuracy extends to spelling mistakes and grammar – present a professional image. Retractions are possible but must be done as soon as possible before the content is disseminated further.

The Acceptability Test

Before you post something, ask yourself if you would be comfortable were it detected by a media outlet, or your boss, mother or best friend. If not, consider whether it should be published online. If in doubt leave it out.
Do not engage with the media or members of the media without prior consultation and approval with the Chief Operating Officer, Charles Turner.

Visibility of Content

Unless your social media profiles are highly protected, all content is visible, searchable and returned in public search engines. This means comments and content can be traced back to you.

Indefinite Life of Content

It is difficult to get content fully removed from the Internet. Content can be shared and duplicated very easily. Despite having the source material deleted and removed, it may have been downloaded and susceptible to reposting by someone else. Bear in mind that search engines also present cached results that show older versions of websites indexed prior to any amendments. This means that deleted content can still show up in search results unless the site Webmaster took steps to prevent access to web crawlers.

Distinction

Where a staff member is operating a personal social media account, they must state their views as their own and not representative of the company. They should write in the first person and use a personal e-mail address.

Reputation

As an official representing the Club, your online behaviour should model that of your offline behaviour. Be professional at all times. Do not engage in any activity that may impugn the reputation of the Club or its members and Office Bearers, or its associated partners including other Clubs. Remember you will be held responsible and accountable for your online behaviour in the same way as your offline behaviour.

Disclosure and Transparency

State your relationship to the company identifying yourself as a company employee, including your role and department, if applicable. Due care must be taken as comments and content posted via these social profiles is a direct reflection on the company and may be perceived as the company's official viewpoint.

Authorisation

Do not enter the company into any contracts or commit the company to any agreements or courses of action unless granted the authority to do so.

Defamation

Do not post content that may be deemed false, misleading, defamatory, slanderous, libelous or offensive.

Accountability

By operating an official social profile of the company you assume full responsibility for all content posted, shared and disseminated.

Personal Social Media

These guidelines are for members and officials who wish to participate in social networking and social media. The Club does not prevent its members or officials from participating in social media but encourages them to engage and participate in a responsible and rewarding manner.

Any such personal use of social media must not interfere with or contrary to your Club responsibilities and must comply with this policy.

Disclosure

Your profile may state that you work for the company. Should you choose to identify yourself in this regard you must avoid any confusion in the minds of the public by stating that:
1. You are not representing the Club in any official capacity
2. All views, comments and opinions are strictly personal (i.e. your own)
3. All views, comments and opinions are in no way associated with the Club.

The use of the Club logo including any brand or product logos for personal social profiles is strictly prohibited.

Protect your identity and online reputation

All users of social media sites need to manage what information they share so as to protect their identity and reputation. You can do this by making sure that you lock down your team accounts by using the most secure privacy settings and only accepting friend requests from people you know and trust.

Search for yourself online

You can manage your digital footprint and online reputation by regularly searching yourself in search engines, e.g. Google or Bing, and on social media sites. There are also meta-search engines which search multiple databases at once, e.g. Dogpile or Surfwax, or people search engines such as pipl.com. This will give you a better understanding of community perceptions towards you online, as well as help you identify any fake profiles and/or accounts. The club will assist you in having fake accounts and/or profiles removed. The Club will also regularly search for the Club, officials and players online to manage the reputation of the club.

Be respectful and courteous

Think before you post a comment or respond to someone online and ensure that all of your communications are respectful and courteous. Once you have put something online, there is almost no taking it back and it is almost impossible to delete. Your comments may be seen by opponents or sponsors and could impact negatively on you and the Club.

Teams and individuals should identify all copyrighted or borrowed material with citations and links. When publishing direct paraphrased quotes, thoughts, ideas, photos or videos, give credit to the original publisher or author.

Think before you post and/or tag an image

The images you share online will reflect on your team and on the Club so it is important that you consider this before uploading or tagging photos and videos. Also be aware that you must have permission for any photos uploaded. Photos may be taken out of context and used by others so if you are not happy for the image to be shared publicly, it should not be placed online.

Maintain a balance

Whilst communicating with parents, players supporters and anyone in the wider football community online can be fun and easy, it is also important that you maintain a balance between your online and offline interactions. Encouraging face to face time with parents, players and/or supporters can help to strengthen those relationships and participating in events that away from football with your team and with other clubs can also generate further support and a sense of community.

REMEMBER:

Social Media is an area of public comment, and teams and individuals are reminded that they are liable for what is said in this sphere.

Additionally, all West Park members (Players, Coaches and Club Officials) have a responsibility to ensure that any social media comment or content made in their own name does not reflect badly on the Club or its values. Any such comment or content which are deemed by the Club to have brought the reputation of the team or Club into disrepute may result in disciplinary action and/or reporting to the authorities for further investigation.