



Southend Invictus Social Media & WhatsApp Guidelines

Purpose

This guidance is designed to help protect all players, volunteers, coaches, parents/carers and club representatives when using social media and messaging platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X (Twitter), YouTube and similar services.

Southend Invictus Football Club (SIFC) is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and respectful environment for everyone, regardless of age, disability, background or ability.

General Principles

All online communication connected to the club should:

- Be respectful, positive and inclusive.
- Protect the privacy and dignity of all members.
- Promote the club's values and reputation.
- Follow safeguarding and data protection requirements.
- Never place a child, young person or vulnerable adult at risk.

Remember:

Think Before You Post

- Is it true?
- Is it respectful?
- Is it necessary?
- Could it upset, embarrass or expose someone?

If the answer to any of these is "yes", do not post it.

Photos and Videos

Consent

- Photos and videos may only be shared if the appropriate consent form has been completed. Please note that we do have players who do not wish for their image to be shared on any social media. This must be respected at all times.

- Any play (adult or junior) who does not give consent must not be photographed or featured online.
- Please check with the Welfare officers if you are unsure.

Appropriate Content

Images and videos should:

- Show participants positively and respectfully.
- Focus on sporting activity and participation.
- Avoid close-up images where possible.
- Never include personal information.

Do not publish:

- Home addresses.
 - School names.
 - Medical information.
 - Personal contact details.
 - Details that could identify a child's location outside club activities.
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WhatsApp Guidance

Our official WhatsApp groups should only be used for:

- Training updates.
- Match information.
- Club announcements.
- Event reminders.
- Sharing details of whole club / whole section events, such as a party for a player in the U12s where all U12s are invited.

They should not be used for:

- Personal disputes.
- Criticism of players, referees, coaches or volunteers.
- Political discussions.
- Offensive jokes or inappropriate content.

For players under 18, all messages must be

- Sent through a parent/carer group.
- Information shared in a managed team group with parents included.

✗ Not Acceptable:

- Private one-to-one messaging between an adult volunteer and a child.
- Sharing personal phone numbers without permission.
- Private chats unrelated to club activities.

Where possible, all communications involving young players should include a parent/carer.

Social Media Accounts

All social media accounts are run and maintained by the club's committee.

Respect and Inclusion

We are a pan-disability club and expect everyone to:

- Use respectful language.
- Celebrate differences.
- Support inclusion and accessibility.
- Avoid language that could be discriminatory or offensive.

By participating in club social media or messaging groups, members agree to:

- ☒ Be respectful and inclusive
- ☒ Protect privacy and confidentiality
- ☒ Follow safeguarding requirements
- ☒ Use groups for club-related purposes only
- ☒ Report concerns appropriately

The following will not be tolerated:

- Bullying, harassment, discrimination.
- Hate speech.
- Mocking disability or additional needs.
- Offensive comments relating to race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability.
- Sharing of confidential information
- Any inappropriate material
- Contact of any child privately
- Damage the reputation of the club or its members

Safeguarding Concerns

If you see anything online that causes concern regarding the welfare of a child, young person or vulnerable adult:

1. Do not ignore it.
2. Take a screenshot if appropriate.
3. Report it immediately to the Club Welfare Officer (Vicky and Dani).
4. Do not investigate the matter yourself.

If there is an immediate risk of harm, contact emergency services.

Complaints and Breaches

Failure to follow this guidance may result in:

- Removal from social media groups.
- Formal warning.
- Suspension from club activities.
- Referral to the club's disciplinary procedures.
- Referral to relevant safeguarding authorities where appropriate.
- Ban on participating in training and/or matches and/or both

Any complaint or concern can be raised via the Welfare officers