



## **GCB Guidance for clubs on the use of Social Media, texts, apps, email and messaging services**

Everyone in cricket is reminded that the Relevant Codes of Conduct apply online and in text and email communications.

### **Social Media**

Social Media, when used properly, is exciting and opens up a lot of opportunities, but at times it can seem strange and even intimidating for people who did not 'grow up' with it. Facebook, twitter, texting, Whats App, online gaming and personal emails are everywhere. By following some simple guidelines potential pitfalls can be avoided, and Social Media can be safely used as a promotional tool and a means of communication for the club.

### **Club Officials / Coaches / Managers**

Facebook and Twitter accounts are great for promoting your club and cricket in general, as well as being a fun way to unwind and stay in touch with friends: it is essential to keep these two worlds separate. You should have separate cricket-club related and personal pages; all contact with players should be through the former, and strictly in relation to training, coaching, matches and cricket related activity. You should also adjust the privacy settings for your personal account so that content is only visible to accepted 'friends'. This will keep younger players safe from material that may be unsuitable for them and will reduce the risk of your online interactions being viewed with suspicion. Although younger players may see you as a friend, and may request to be your 'friend' on a social media site, you should direct them to the cricket club related page and keep all contact professional. What they might consider innocent, friendly contact may not be seen as such by their parents, people at the club and others.

It is also important to be mindful of any content you post online via the cricket-club related page - remember:

- You are representing the club
- Your communications should conform to 'Safe Hands' policy and guidance. Ensure that nothing you post could cause personal distress or be seen as inappropriate for children.
- If you wouldn't put it on the club notice board, it doesn't belong on the club's social media pages
- You should have consent before posting any personal information online – this includes photographs where an individual can be identified. Remember the picture/no name guidance for under 18s

### **Texts, apps and emails: contacting Under 18 players**

You should make arrangements for under 18s via their parents or carers; this includes text and email or Whats App messages etc.

It is understood that in the case of over 16's this may not be ideal for yourself or the parents. An acceptable exception to this rule is to text or email the parent and to copy in the 16 or 17 year old, with the parent's prior consent. This means the parent is able to monitor communications, but the 16 or 17 year old receives the information directly.

If you receive any responses that appear inappropriate they should be brought to the attention of the parent or carer.

You should not engage in individual text or email conversations with a 16 or 17 year old without their parent receiving the same messages from you.

All contact with children should be in relation to coaching, matches and cricket-related activity.

### **Social Media: Do's and Don'ts Coaches / Managers / Clubs DO**

Have separate social media accounts for cricket-club related and personal use.

Keep your photos and personal information private.

Apply the Codes of Conduct and appropriate professionalism to your behaviour online, by text and email.

Obtain consent before posting any personal information online – this includes photographs where an individual can be identified.

Remember the picture/no name guidance for under 18s

### **Coaches / Managers / Clubs DO NOT**

Send text messages to juniors – make arrangements via their parents.

Send private messages to children and young people via apps or social media.

Invite or accept children and young people to become “friends”.

Send inappropriate text messages or post messages on social media that are offensive, nasty or derogatory in any way.

### **Adult players in Open Age teams**

Please be mindful of who may have access to material you share via social media, including Facebook, twitter and other platforms.

### **If you have concerns regarding social media, texts and emails**

If you suspect that someone is using social media in an unsafe or inappropriate manner, you should report their behaviour to your Club Welfare Officer, or the GCB Safeguarding team.

If you believe that an offence has been committed, or that someone’s use of social media is placing a child at risk of harm, inform the police immediately.