



Social Media Policy

1. Purpose

This policy outlines the acceptable use of social media and social networking for Ware Lions Football Club (WLFC). This includes, but is not limited to, Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, X and Snapchat. It aims to ensure that communications on these platforms are responsible, clear, appropriate, and in line with FA Guidance Notes relating to safeguarding (1.2), photographing and filming children (8.3), and running websites and social media platforms (6.1). This is to ensure children, young people, coaches, referees and adults in a position of trust are not subjected to improper online behaviour or improper allegations.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Club officials, coaches, volunteers, players over the age of 13 (minimum age for many social media platforms in the UK), and parents / guardians of all players under the age of 18.

3. Key Principles

It is against FA rules to post comments that are or maybe perceived as:

- Offensive
- Insulting
- Abusive
- Threatening
- Racist
- Discriminatory
- Any other reference that may cause offence or harm to others.

WLFC Social Media and Networking platforms must only be used for club-related communications. All communication and posts must be relevant, respectful, inclusive, positive, and safeguarding-compliant. Social media and networking platforms must not be used to share personal sensitive information, complaints or disciplinary discussions. They must also not be used to publicly criticise coaches, players, referees, parents / guardians or other clubs. Any breach of these principles may result in disciplinary action being taken by the Club or the FA in line with disciplinary policies and procedures.

WLFC Social Media Platforms

WLFC currently maintains Club pages on Facebook and Instagram. Both platforms are maintained by an Administrator responsible for monitoring and posting content, and ensuring all content abides by the Rules and regulations of the FA. These include, but are not limited to:

- Not posting children's or young people's details such as names, phone numbers, email addresses or places of education.
- Not posting photos of individuals without the express permission of parents / carers.

- Not posting match results for teams that are under 11 years of age. At this age the focus is on participation and learning.

4. WLFC Social Networking

WLFC members predominantly use Spond and WhatsApp services for communications between coaches and team families in relation to organisation of training and matches. In using these apps the following concerns should be taken into account:

- Participant telephone numbers and profile pictures may be visible leading to a GDPR and potential safeguarding concern.
- Unsuitable material may be difficult to remove once posted.
- Shared photographs and videos remain on all participants' phones.
- General groups may be able to add participants without their prior consent or without connection to the Club.

In order to address these potential concerns, WLFC implements the following rules:

- Each group has an Administrator (usually the team coach / coaches) who will name the group and control who is invited to join. They are also responsible for removing members eg. due to leaving the Club or due to disciplinary procedures. The Administrator will have completed a DBS check and FA Safeguarding Children training.
- The Administrator is responsible for the content and therefore should outline what the group will be used for.
- Members will be added through a formal invite or request from the Administrator to join – participants must not be automatically added to the group.
- Players under the age of 18 will not be included in the WLFC Team networking groups, and adults must not send messages from the WLFC group to under-18s.
- The use of polls is permitted in WhatsApp for coaches to plan and confirm training / match arrangements. However, results must not be used to criticise or single out players or parents / guardians for non-response or lack of availability.

5. Complaints & concerns

Should parents / guardians or players have any complaints or concerns, these should be addressed in the first instance to the individual team coach, or the Club Secretary or Chairman. Any safeguarding concerns should be addressed to the Club Child Welfare Officer. Contact details are provided below.

Kieran Bullworthy chairman@warelionsfc.co.uk

Adam Stock secretary@warelionsfc.co.uk

Jane Daffada welfare@warelionsfc.co.uk