

# **SYFA Limited (SYFA)**



## **Use of Social Media Policy for SYFA Players, Parents/Carers, Officials, Clubs, Leagues and Regions**

## **1. Introduction**

SYFA Ltd recognises that Social Networking sites have become a significant way of life for many people and that, when used appropriately, are a positive opportunity to communicate within SYFA football.

There are instances, however, where these sites can be used inappropriately in terms of content and the following policy is designed to provide a balance between supporting innovation and creativity and good practice procedures. When communicating online and working within the terms of this policy all players, parents/carers and SYFA officials must uphold SYFA values and ensure that all social media postings are acceptable.

As more clubs, leagues and regions are using social media to communicate information on events, promotion of activities, campaigns and schedule of games/training it is essential that coaches, officials, players and parents/carers agree to follow this policy.

## **2. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all players, parents/carers, officials, clubs, leagues and regions are aware of the general principles of acceptable use of social media sites and in doing so ensure that the reputation of SYFA Ltd is not adversely affected.

Players, parents/carers, officials, clubs and leagues must be aware of their responsibilities in order to protect all concerned and also be aware of the consequences of not doing so. Inappropriate activity on Social Networking sites will be viewed as serious misconduct and will entitle SYFA to take disciplinary action against the relevant player, official, club, league and/or region in accordance with the disciplinary procedures.

## **3. Scope**

The 'Use of Social Networking Sites' policy applies to all players, parents/carers, officials, clubs and leagues. The policy should be read in conjunction with the following other policies/advice sheets;

- SYFA Protection Policies
- SYFA Disciplinary Procedures
- SYFA Advice Sheets
- SYFA Code of Good conduct for the use of photographs & Images

This policy applies to the use of any online communication tools or platforms, including SYFA owned websites and any activity on external sites where your association with the SYFA is visible. This includes wikis, social networks (e.g. LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter), social media sites (e.g. Flickr, YouTube) or even a personal blog.

Clubs, leagues and regions should ensure that everyone involved (including coaches, officials, administrators, parents/carers and players) understand and comply with their responsibilities within this policy and ensure the appropriate code of conduct which includes social media is signed.

## **4. Terms of Use**

If any official, club or league refers to SYFA Ltd in any way in their personal internet presence, either on one of the SYFA official sites or on their own personal site, then the information posted must comply with the content below;

- SYFA officials should not refer to any confidential information relating to their role which includes any sensitive information or defamation of any other official, player or parent/carer
- Any misuse of a social networking site that may bring SYFA into disrepute, may result in disciplinary action against the player, official, club, league or region and could constitute gross misconduct
- If a SYFA official, player or parent/carer is concerned by information or content posted on social media sites (i.e. Twitter, Facebook, YouTube or Flickr) they should raise this concern with their clubs player protection officer
- SYFA officials, players, parents/carers must refrain from using language which could cause offence to other or incite abuse or bullying
- Postings of photographs on social media sites must follow the SYFA Code of Good conduct for the use of photographs & Images
- SYFA officials should consider the propriety of sharing information with players or parents/carers via Social Networking sites. SYFA officials who use social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, twitter) personally must never 'friend' or 'follow' a player and should apply privacy settings to a level that prevents players having the ability to send friend requests. For more information, please refer to the SYFA Child Wellbeing and Protection Policy.
- If you choose to include SYFA official in your professional capacity to the publicly available information on your Social Media profile, please include 'All views expressed are my own and not those of the SYFA'.

## **5. Good practice guidelines for the safe use of social networking**

Officials, clubs, leagues and regions must be clear what they want to achieve by using social media networking sites. . The following should be considered:

- Are you planning discussions with interactions?
- Who will monitor interactions? (This should be more than one adult)
- How will you best present and provide information and activities online?
- Content to be uploaded e.g. photos, video clips, discussions
- Links and sharing from other sites
- Interactions are age appropriate, respectful, polite and factual

SYFA Ltd are clear what is unacceptable. These include:

- Sending rude, offensive language (including swearing) or harassment, defamation of others
- Embarrassing postings (e.g. some game results), breaching others privacy, friend requesting/following players who are children
- Stalking other SYFA officials, players or parents/carers

- Revealing confidential information about a player, official, club, league or region including financial information, club/league plans, policies, members and/or internal discussions
- View, create, send or forward illegal material, defamatory material; pornographic or sexually explicit material, forward material that may cause offence to others, including, but not limited to discriminatory material or material that would violate the dignity of others, create an offensive or degrading environment (whether or not that is intended) including on the grounds of sex, race (including ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sexual orientation, disability or age
- Unprofessional content – audience dependent
- Setting up or establishing virtual groups which may cause harm or discomfort to any other person
- View, create, send or forward illegal material

This list is not definitive.

It's important that the club, league or region develops procedures and has specific codes of conduct in place to promote a safe online environment for all.

## **6. Monitoring, Policies and Legal Issues**

- E-mail is also subject to national law, in particular the Computer Misuse Act, Copyright Act, Data Protection Act and the law of libel
- The fact that e-mails can so easily and quickly be forwarded to others and that e-mails are not automatically and permanently deleted when wiped from a desktop means that defamation is a real danger. Care should be taken with the content of messages and derogatory remarks about another player, official, club, league or region
- The same rule applies to indecent, sexist, racist or obscene remarks