

Ballina Town FC Social Media policy



Ballina Town FC understands that the use of Social Media helps promote football and our club if used appropriately. This policy is aligned to the FAI standards and is applicable to all individuals working / volunteering within the fame of Association football in the Republic of Ireland and within our club.

Social Media is an excellent way to promote activities and showcase success of the club. It also helps the club communicate with our members and the general public. Members should use social media in a responsible, respectful and friendly manner.

When using sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, etc., members should not post negative comments about referees, opposition, teammates, coaches or any other member of their own club or any other club.

Cyber/online bullying is completely unacceptable and will not be tolerated and poor behaviour online will be treated as a breach of the Code of Conduct.

Risks:

Risks associated with using social media include: cyber bullying, grooming and potential abuse by online predators, identity theft and exposure to inappropriate content. The capabilities of social networking services may increase the risk for sexual exploitation of children and young people.

Rules to adhere to:

Everyone has their own personal profile on a social media website, they should make sure tht others cannot access any content, media or information from that profile that:

- They are not happy for others to have access to
- Which would undermine the position as a manager, coach or volunteer representing Ballina Town FC

As a basic rule, if you are not happy with others seeing particular comments, media or information, then simply do not post these materials on a public forum site. When using social media sites the following should be considered:

- Ensure that information published on social media sites complies with Ballina Town FC Code of Conduct
- Beware of how your actions could be captured via images, posts or comments online as these will reflect on the sport and Ballina Town FC
- Do not upload post or forward any content belonging to a third party unless you have that third party's consent. For example, don't discuss colleagues, competitors, coaches and / or players without their prior approval.
- Avoid publishing your contact details where they can be accesses and used widely by people you did not intend to see them and never publish anyone else's contact details.
- Do not engage with irate players, parents or coaches on a public forum. Organise a meeting to allow all parties to discuss possible outcomes. This is also applicable to communicating within WhatsApp groups

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- Respond to online bullying – what is said online should be treated as if said in real time by the Designated Child Welfare Officer
- If you are a manager, coach, club official, referee or medic **you should not:**
 - i. Accept any player or referee who is under the age of 18 as a friend on your personal Social Media page. Instead encourage them to follow Ballina FC social media pages. Do not comment on individual players you are coaching through your personal page. Your personal views should not conflict with your existing role in football
 - ii. Communicate with any person under 18 through Social Media, text message, WhatsApp, phone or email
- All communications concerning under 18's must be made through parents/guardians. It is important to ensure all communications relate to specific club matters e.g. fixtures, training etc.
- When setting up a WhatsApps Group please ensure the following text is included when adding participants:
“You have been added to this group using the number provided by you to Ballina Town FC for this purpose. This group and its content are for the sole purpose of Ballina Town FC. Any reproduction or use of data in this group is not permitted under GDPR and Data Protection Regulations. You are free to exit this group or request your removal at any time.”

Photography & Filming

Many people use cameras and video equipment at soccer activities and the vast majority, do so for perfectly legitimate reasons. However there is evidence that people have used sporting events to take inappropriate photographs and video footage of children and young people in vulnerable positions.

Ballina Town FC has adopted a social media policy in relation to the use of images of players on their websites and in other publications.

Where possible we will try to use illustrations when promoting an activity and avoid the use of the first name and surname of individuals in a photograph. This reduces the risk of inappropriate, unsolicited attention from people within and outside the sport.

Rules to guide use of photography:

- If the player is named, avoid using their photograph unless permission given by player or parent/guardian if U18
- If a photograph is used, avoid naming the player unless permission given by player or parent/guardian if U18
- Ask for the player's permission to use their image. This ensures that they are aware of the way the image is to be used to represent the sport. A player's permission form is one way of achieving this.

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- Ask for parental permission to use their image. This ensures that they are aware of the way the image is to be used to represent the sport. A parental permission form is one way of achieving this.
- Only use images of players in suitable dress to reduce the risk of inappropriate use. The content of the photograph should focus on the activity not on a particular child

Create recognised procedures for reporting the use of inappropriate images to reduce the risks to players. Follow the child protection procedures, ensuring either the designated person or, if necessary, the health board and/or gardai are informed.

Amateur photographers/film/video operators wishing to record an event or practice session should seek permission/accreditation with the children's officer, team manager/coach and/or event organiser of session. This club will display the following information prior to the start of an event to inform spectators of the policy:

"In line with the recommendation in the Ballina Town FC Code of Conduct, the promoters of this event request that any person wishing to engage in any video, zoom or close range photography should register their details with the organisers. Children and young people should only be photographed or filmed with their permission and/or the permission of their parents/guardian".

When commissioning professional photographers or inviting the press to an activity or event we will aim to ensure they are clear about our expectations of them in relation to child protection.

Professional photographers/film/video operators wishing to record an event or practice session should seek accreditation with the children's officer/event organiser/team manager by producing their professional identification for the details to be recorded.

We will then:

- Provide a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour
- Inform players and parents that a photographer will be in attendance at an event and ensure they consent to both the taking and publication of films or photographs
- Do not allow unsupervised access to players or one to one photo sessions at events
- Do not approve/allow photo sessions outside the events or at a players home

Videoring as a coaching aid:

Video equipment can be used as a legitimate coaching aid. However, permission should first be obtained from the player and the player's parent/carer.

Ballina Town FC is aware of the dangers of permitting camera phones in dressing rooms and should apply appropriate safety rules.

Anyone concerned about any photography taking place at events/matches or training sessions should bring their concerns to the attention of the committee/team manager/coach children's officer.

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There are inherent risks in posting personal information about Children as it can lead to being able to identify the child and their location, or it is possible that images may be subject to inappropriate use.