



Sheppey Swifts FC - Social Media & Communications Policy

1. Policy Statement

Sheppey Swifts Football Club recognises that digital communication and social media play an important role in the effective running of the club. Used responsibly, these tools help keep players, parents/carers and volunteers informed and connected.

The club is committed to ensuring that all online communication is safe, respectful and consistent with our safeguarding responsibilities, and that children and young people are protected from harm, abuse, inappropriate contact or allegations. This policy applies to all club-related communications, in line with The Football Association's guidance on running websites and social media platforms.

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all individuals involved with Sheppey Swifts Football Club, including:

- Committee members
- Coaches and team officials
- Volunteers
- Parents and carers
- Players

It covers all forms of club-related communication, including:

- Club website
- Social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, X, YouTube)
- Messaging apps (e.g. WhatsApp)
- Email and text messaging



3. Key Principles

Sheppey Swifts Football Club is committed to ensuring that:

- All communication is appropriate, transparent and professional
- Online behaviour reflects the club's values and code of conduct
- Children and young people are safeguarded online as they are offline
- The club complies with FA Rules and Regulations relating to online conduct and communications.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The club will:

- Appoint appropriate adults to administer and monitor club websites and social media accounts
- Ensure those responsible understand FA safeguarding guidance and reporting procedures
- Remove or report inappropriate content swiftly
- Ensure safeguarding concerns arising from online activity are referred to the Club Welfare Officer where necessary.

5. Acceptable Use

Club-Managed Accounts

All content published on Sheppey Swifts Football Club websites and social media channels must:

- Be accurate, respectful and relevant to club activity
- Contain no offensive, abusive, threatening, discriminatory or defamatory material
- Not criticise or make inappropriate comments about referees, officials or opposing teams
- Comply with FA photography and filming guidance where children are involved

The club accepts responsibility for all content hosted on its platforms.



6. Communication with Children and Young People

The club will follow FA best practice for digital communication with under-18s:

- Communication must be group-based, not one-to-one
- Parents or carers must be included in all communications involving children
- Messages must be limited to football-related matters only (e.g. training times, fixtures, venues)
- Written parental consent must be obtained before children access club digital platforms

Coaches, managers and club officials must not:

- Accept players under 18 as friends or followers on personal social media accounts (unless a direct family relation)
- Send private or personal messages to children
- Engage in online “banter” or non-football related conversations with young people.

7. Messaging Apps and Group Chats

Where messaging apps such as WhatsApp are used:

- Groups must be administered by an appropriate club adult
- Parents/carers must be included in all groups involving children
- Messages must remain professional and football-related
- Inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated and may result in removal from the group or further action

8. Cyberbullying and Inappropriate Online Behaviour

Sheppey Swifts Football Club will not tolerate:

- Cyberbullying
- Harassment or intimidation
- Discriminatory or abusive online behaviour



Any online behaviour linked to the club that causes harm or distress will be managed in line with the club's Anti-Bullying Policy, Safeguarding Children Policy, and FA reporting procedures. Serious concerns may be referred to the County FA or The FA Safeguarding Team.

9. Reporting Concerns

Anyone who becomes aware of inappropriate or concerning online content or communication should report it to:

- The Club Welfare Officer, or
- A club committee member

Concerns should be recorded and managed confidentially and promptly in line with FA safeguarding guidance.

10. Policy Review

This Social Media and Communications Policy will be:

- Reviewed annually by the club committee
- Updated in line with FA guidance or changes in technology
- Shared with coaches, volunteers, parents and players

Sheppey Swifts Football Club is committed to promoting safe, positive and responsible communication both on and off the pitch.