



Volunteer Do and Don'ts – Communicating with young people

Volunteers are the foundation of Grassroots Football. Without the time, dedication and commitment that volunteers demonstrate every week across our county, clubs and leagues would simply not exist.

Volunteers are always welcome within the football community here in Northumberland. However it's important that everyone understands the responsibility that volunteering entails, to ensure football remains a safe and enjoyable for everyone.

Often, volunteering in football involves lots of communication – directly with young people, their parents, other adults and also via social media.

But it's important that this communication is managed appropriately, particularly when it involves U18.

Do

- If you need to contact young people, ensure parents/carers are copied into any communication – this includes emails/text messages or via What's App groups.
- Seek the consent of a young person and their parent/carer before taking any photographs of them, and also obtain consent for any promotional use of photographs of U18s.
- Ensure that any training materials/website links etc that you share with young people and their parents are suitable and appropriate for the audience.
- Maintain a professional tone in all your communications with young people and their parents/carers.
- Clearly state your club's policy on communication, including social media with young people and their parents /carers.
- If a child contacts you about a safeguarding issue, ensure you take action immediately – via your club welfare officer or Northumberland FA's safeguarding team (contact details below). If a child is in immediate danger, call 999.



Don't

- Have private contact with young people through a personal social media account – this includes having them as 'friends' or 'followers'. If a young person reaches out to you via social media, explain to them that this is inappropriate.
- Contact children or young people outside of the football activity you're involved in.
- Give out details of your social media accounts to young people, or encourage them to find you on social media.
- Respond to any message you receive from a young person.
- Share a young person's contact details with anyone else.
- If you take any photos of young people (for example for a newsletter, with appropriate permission) ensure you delete them from your personal phone or camera as soon as possible.
- Share inappropriate material or jokes which could be misinterpreted.
- Use inappropriate language – such as that which is, or could be misconstrued as being racist, sexist, derogatory, threatening, abusive or sexualised in tone.

For Safeguarding advice and guidance contact:

Designated Safeguarding Officer, Ray Johnstone on email ray.johnstone@northumberlandfa.com or mobile: 07736 924 862

Deputy DSO, Angela Forster on email angela.forster@northumberlandfa.com or mobile: 07458 043 678

Or email Safeguarding@northumberlandfa.com

Other useful numbers:

Childline 0800 1111
NSPCC 0808 800 5000