



Approved by	Version	Issue date	Review date	Contact person
Board	3	July 2023	July 2024	Paul Antrobus

### **Social Media policy**

Crewe Alexandra Football Club recognise that social media plays a major role in the business world and in the social lives of many people including the children and young people here at Crewe Alexandra Football Academy. As a business, the club use social media to promote the football club to potential sponsors and share information with our supporters and business partners.

The following sites are currently used by the club (correct at the time of this policy)

Twitter

Facebook

Instagram

You Tube

Tik Tok

LinkedIn

These sites will only show images of the under 18's to under 9's Academy players if the parents or carers of these players have provided permission by signing the photography and filming consent form. No personnel details of any players will be shared on social media by Crewe Alexandra FC.

#### **1- Using social media apps for communication**

The contact of academy players through social media will have the following restrictions in place.

- 1) Only a Crewe Alexandra FC phone will be used.
- 2) All players in the academy age groups, under 9's to under 16's, will be contacted through the parent or carer only.

- 3) Parents or carers need to sign the consent form to provide permission for Crewe Alexandra FC Staff to make contact via social media and must provide the number to be used on this.
- 4) The Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) will check the number is that of the parent or carer, before authorising the number to be contacted through the app. Currently, this is What's App.
- 5) The DSO will be part of all What's App groups (authorised through Crewe Alexandra FC) to monitor communication.
- 6) Crewe Alexandra FC Academy Lead coaches will be the distributor of information being communicated through What's App / Email / Text Messages to parents or carers.
- 7) The What's App / Email / Text Message groups will be used to communicate information only and are not to be used as general lines of communication. If parents or carers need to contact the Academy for individual or sensitive issues, then please do this through contacting Lead Coaches directly.
- 8) Crewe Alexandra FC Academy will also ask any players between the age of 16-18 years to sign a consent form if they wish to be contacted directly. Parents or carers will be informed of this.
- 9) The under 18s Players What's app group will be used to communicate information only, not for general purposes. The DSO will monitor the use of this group and any inappropriate language or use of the group will be sanctioned by Crewe Alexandra FC.

## **2 - Inappropriate communication**

Crewe Alexandra FC want the Academy to be represented by high standards at all times and this includes the use of social media, by players, staff and parents or carers. If, at any time the DSO notes any inappropriate communication, either through social media or through the club What's App groups, this can include foul or abusive language, harassment or hate speech, it will be investigated further by Crewe Alexandra FC, and could result in:

- 1) Suspension from the group
- 2) Disciplinary action
- 3) Disciplinary action resulting in dismissal from the club
- 4) A report being made to the police and possible criminal justice investigation and prosecution

## **3- Taking of and uploading inappropriate images to social media**

We, at Crewe Alexandra FC, understand that parents or carers are proud of what their son is achieving at the club and want to take photographs of them playing matches and training. However, to ensure the safeguarding of the players, as children and young people, we respectfully ask that parents or carers (this applies to both the home team or away team during matches) do not take photographs with a full professional camera. Only club and DSO approved and authorised professional photographers or media staff, are permitted to take photographs, using professional equipment, of the players.

As a development process for the players, they will be able to access the Q File, by password only, for a voice over by the coaches. Under no circumstances must this footage be used on any social media sites without prior permission of Crewe Alexandra FC.

Anyone, be that players, parents or carers or staff, found to be taking or uploading inappropriate pictures on social media, will be investigated and disciplined accordingly and this can include criminal prosecution.

Any parent or player posting any inappropriate remarks or images on social media will be asked for an explanation and could result in the following action.

- 1) A warning being issued and a reminder regarding conduct on social media
- 2) Suspension from the premises of Crewe Alexandra Football Academy for a period as set by the club
- 3) A full ban being issued, preventing the person from attending any training or games held at the Crewe Alexandra Football Academy
- 4) Any serious breach will be reported to the relevant authorities, this can include Cheshire East Local Authority, Cheshire Police and The Football Association

Please refer to the Crewe Alexandra FC player and parent Code of Conduct, signed at the Induction Meeting, for further information.

#### **4 – Social Media use outside of Crewe Alexandra FC**

Crewe Alexandra FC recognises that social media is used frequently by children and young people and this includes players at the Academy. Crewe Alexandra FC understand that there are dangers involved in using social media and children and young people can be targeted online for the following purposes:

Grooming

Sexting

Exploitation – both criminal and sexual

Blackmail

Bullying

Racism

Harassment

Hate Speech

Sending inappropriate images

Receiving inappropriate images

Receiving inappropriate communication

Sending inappropriate communication

Any of our players who report any of the above will be given the full support of the DSO and Player Care co-ordinator and the appropriate authorities will be informed.

Any of players found using the social media sites in an inappropriate manner will be taken through steps 1 to 4 on item number 3 of this policy.

#### **5- Social Media education**

Crewe Alexandra FC will give training and workshops to players and parents detailing the dangers of Social Media to help maintain a safe environment for the children and young people, both within the club but also outside of this. This will also be included within the Scholars Life Skills Programme. Please speak to either the DSO or Player Care Coordinator for more information.