



DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS AND
CHILDREN (UNDER 18s)
FOR MANAGERS AND COACHES
2020/21

St Albans City Youth FC

Digital Communications Policy & Guidance



VIDEO CALLS WITH CHILDREN -SPECIFIC GUIDANCE FOR COACHES/MANAGERS

As we enter our third National Lockdown the Club has adapted the following guidance recently distributed by the FA to provide guidelines on 'best practice' and the safety and welfare of our young players when communicating with them over Video calls.

Online video calls (Zoom Calls) are a great way for coaches/managers to keep in touch with players and other coaches, enabling them to provide training ideas, tips on keeping fit and skills challenges online. Video calls also makes group social interaction possible, which helps the mental wellbeing of our players. As we all know it is one of the easiest ways at present to keep in touch with our City Youth community.

As a St Albans City Youth Coach/Manager, it's really important to keep and maintain appropriate boundaries in your digital space and to understand how to keep all participants safe.

Please ensure you continue to apply the principles of our various codes of conduct (all of which can be found at <https://www.cityyouthfc.co.uk/index.php/managers/club-policies-guidance>) and remember that as a City Youth coach/manager even when encouraging players/coaching online you remain in a 'relationship of trust'.

It is vital we all follow the procedures outlined below to help keep you and those you are supporting safe online.

Setting up Your City Youth On-line Session

- Always work with groups and never with an individual player.
- Within the group environment ensure you are inclusive when engaging with players.
- Wherever possible involve a second coach/manager or club official with a DBS.
- If that is not possible always ensure a trusted parent or guardian from your group is observing all activities you are undertaking on-line.
- All sessions online must be observable and interruptible.
- For all under 18's an invite to participate in an on-line session must go to a player's parents/ carers to accept or decline the player's participation. This must never go directly to the player.

Also

- Are there any individual player circumstances which may mean their involvement may not be possible? How might you ensure they still feel included as part of the team/club?

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Operating in a Safe and Positive Environment

Think about the environment when using video facilities.

- The setting for the background should be in a neutral area, avoiding anything inappropriate being heard or seen.
- Some apps may offer customisation of avatars, usernames and customised virtual backgrounds.
What you may use for personal use may be inappropriate to represent City Youth and for U18's – so think about this and make any changes, before contacting anyone.
- Do not host the session from a bedroom.
- The background must not be blurred or obscured.
- Coaches/managers and players must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.

Ideally other members of the household should not be in view when running your session(s).

Making the Most of Your Session Content

- Like any 'normal' training session planning is key. Think of the purpose of the session and what it will involve and clearly outline this to all involved.
- Try and ensure all communication provided has either; a fun, an educational or a supportive purpose or ideally a combination of all three.
- Language must be professional and appropriate at all times.
- Keep Communication positive.

And finally ...

The FA has advised that under no circumstances should any part of the session be recorded as this may create a potential risk of hacking by child sex offenders accessing recordings of sessions. The National Crime Agency (NCA), the NCA has identified the potential for an increase in online child sexual abuse during the Covid-19 pandemic.