**Bromley Bulldogs Social Media Policy**

BAC is committed to safeguarding and protecting all young people under the age of 18. This policy provides guidance on how BAC and players use the internet and social media and the procedures for doing so. It also gives guidance on our expectations for staff who work with us and how we expect young cricketers who are part of our programme to behave online.

Problems, misunderstanding and grooming have all occurred within sport where coaches and others working with children start to become overfamiliar with them when using social media and messaging. All advice is primarily to safeguard children, but this advice if heeded, will also safeguard staff. BAC staff must recognise they are in a position of trust and any breaches of this Policy may be referred to Police, Statutory Services, or the ECB.

**Aims**

The aims of our social media policy are:

• To protect all children and young people involved within BAC and who make use of technology (such as mobile phones, games consoles, i pads, computers and the internet) while in our care.

• To provide staff, parents and players with our policy and procedures for online safety and inform them of how to respond to incidents.

• To ensure BAC is operating in line with our values and within the law regarding how we behave online.

**Guidance on age appropriate communications**

**16 to 18-year-old Area players**

The coach or team manager may communicate by message (eg text, WhatsApp) with individual area players or squads about their cricket programme, provided parental permission has been granted and the parent is always copied in.

**Under 16 Area players**

Staff must not communicate with any area players under the age of 16 by message (eg text, WhatsApp). Communication must always be with the parent/guardian.

 **Parental waivers to this Policy must not be accepted**

**What do we mean by “Social Media”**

Any form of electronic communication allowing people to interact and share information. This includes social networking (including Facebook, twitter, LinkedIn) and media/photo/video sharing sites (including Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat, Pinterest) and interacting via messaging on our phones (texts, instant messages, WhatsApp etc) and blogging. Mobile phones, computers, i pads, games consoles etc can all be used for social media. Social media platforms are continuously evolving – it is impossible to list every site here and if you are unclear about the meaning of any part of this Policy, you must ask the Area Safeguarding Officer or County Safeguarding Officer.

**What we expect of our Staff**

When using Social Media, Staff should always:

• Be aware of this Policy and abide by it

• Ensure they always copy the parents in, if it is a message to an individual area player over 16.

• Use this medium to disseminate information about training or matches and do not enter into any other dialogue with them. This is to ensure no misunderstandings occur regarding your conduct or intentions, and to safeguard you too.

• Report anything to the Area Safeguarding Officer straight away, if it causes you concern. For example, if you receive any e mail, text or other communication from a child that causes you concern, or appears overfamiliar

• Make it clear to area players that they must copy their parent into any texts, e mails or social media messages they are sending you

• Use professional language and behaviour when using social media.

 Staff must never:

• Communicate with any area player under the age of 18 by connecting on any social media network (eg Facebook, Twitter etc)\*

• Use social media networks to connect and ‘Friend’ or ‘follow’ area players under the age of 18 \*

• Accept any area player under 18 as a ‘friend’ on a social media network (eg Facebook/other)

• Post anything inappropriate on their own account, or anything that could reasonably be considered offensive or bring the sport or BAC into disrepute

• Sign off messages with emojis or ‘kisses/xxx’

• Take, send or forward images of people that are illegal, offensive or invading someone’s privacy

• Communicate with any area player under the age of 16 via messaging (eg text, WhatsApp) – always communicate with the parents.

\* except family members

If staff would like to set up any form of closed group for their squad that does not meet the criteria above, they must speak with their Safeguarding Officer first.

**What we Expect of our Players**

• Our area players should be aware of this social media policy and agree to its terms

• We expect our players’ behaviour online to be consistent with this guidance and this relates to all digital devices including smart phones, tablets, consoles, i-pads, computers etc

• Players must not engage in bullying on social media, or making offensive or upsetting comments about other players, officials, teams or staff

• Players must not engage in “sexting”(sending someone sexual, naked or semi- naked images or videos of themselves or others or sending sexually explicit messages) or sending pictures to anyone that are obscene, indecent or menacing.

• Players under the age of 16 must never communicate with staff via messaging

• Players aged 16 or over must only contact the coach/team manager by messaging if they also copy their parents in to all messages.

• No player under the age of 18 must ask coaches or team managers to be their ‘friend’ on social media. If a coach or team manager asks them to be a ‘friend’ this must be reported immediately to the Safeguarding Officer.

If you are a player and are concerned that hurtful messages or indecent images of you have been circulated on line, the Area or County Safeguarding Officer can support you.

The Area or County Safeguarding Officer is available to support any players or staff who need help regarding the use of social media.

If you need further guidance or advice, please contact either:

Area Safeguarding Officer – Hannah Crisp – 07910 522499 – h.crisp91@gmail.com

County Safeguarding Officer – Bridget Owen - 07807 026247 – Bridget.Owen@Kentcricket.co.uk