

Social Media Policy & Guidelines

GO TO GUIDE

GAA

This is a guide to some of the most frequently asked questions to how GAA Units should behave online.



KEEPING IN TOUCH

Direct Messaging

The use of social media platforms and stand-alone apps such as Whatsapp and Messenger should not be used for official GAA Unit related communications (training, events, etc). These channels are not GDPR compliant when used for such communications. Text and email are still perfectly safe to use for updates (for adult members).



The GAA App includes a messaging functionality enabling Units to communicate with their members through the App which is a GDPR compliant messaging service. This messaging functionality allows Clubs to have auditing ability over the information processed within it.

Communicating with underage players and teams

Coaches, mentors and other officials should never place themselves in a compromising position by texting or communicating via social media sites with underage players. All such communications regarding GAA activities should be sent via the parents or guardians of the underage player, unless otherwise agreed with the parents/guardians.

In general, the following should apply when communicating with underage players:

- Use mobile phones, if deemed appropriate, only via an email system or the GAA app for communicating with the parents/guardians of players. Any exception to this form of group texting can only be preceded with following express permission from parents/guardians.
- Do not communicate individually by text/email sites with underage players.
- Do not communicate with underage players via social network sites.



POSTING CONTENT ONLINE

Remember this!

Top tips for web and social posts

- Keep the info on your team sheets to a minimum – just a name will do! Never include membership numbers or date of birth. In addition, for underage players, never use a photo or indicate a child's school (unless it's a school fixture).
- Keep the details of your Executive to a minimum; Name, GAA email address (when possible) and photo number will suffice. Don't include postal address or other personal details.
- Don't tag individuals in posts on any channel.

- Don't share any posts that are not GAA-related.
- Only post photos you own/have permission to use that relate to GAA activity; never copy or share images from personal pages.
- Ensure comments on your posts are frequently moderated. If in doubt, remove any content you deem inappropriate.

THINK BEFORE YOU POST

Before you post images (still or video) or personal information relating to underage members, ensure you are taking the GAA's guidelines into consideration. GAA Units should determine which, if any, social media accounts will be used to communicate personal information relating to underage members.

- Ask for the player's parent's permission to use their image. This consent could be included in the annual registration form or the GAA App.
- All children/young people featured in recordings posted online must be appropriately dressed.
- The photograph or recording posted online should focus on the activity rather than a particular young person.
- In general, no personal details relating to the young person should be revealed as accompanying materials to the photograph or recorded image, with the exception being where they are being publicly acknowledged (e.g. an award or personal achievement), for which consent has been given.
- Group and team photographs may be taken but it is not necessary to match a player's name with the position in which they may be standing or seated in the team photograph.
- Any instances of the use of inappropriate images should be reported to the GAA Unit's Children's Officer and/or appropriate person within the GAA Unit and also to the relevant statutory authorities if deemed necessary.
- Where underage members are invited to engage with a GAA Unit's social media accounts, parental knowledge and permission prior to the young person engaging in such communication must be sought.
- Ask parents not to post pictures of other children on their own social media accounts.

Please refer to the full version of GAA's Social Media Policy & Guidelines for further information.

- Such interaction with GAA Unit websites or accounts should also be carefully monitored to ensure underage members are not abused or trolled on line and that they themselves do not intentionally or otherwise post inappropriate comments or materials. The GAA has an Anti-Bullying Policy which should be adhered to at all times.
- The GAA has set out in detail its policies and standards for officials engaging with underage members in the "Code of Best Practice in Youth Sport when working with underage players" and the "Guide to Maintaining appropriate levels of behaviour in our work with children and young people". Please refer to them for further detail on any of the above.



PLAYING BY THE RULES

All GAA members are subject to the GAA Code of Conduct when online, even when they are not acting on behalf of the GAA. You are responsible for your actions but remember that those actions may have consequences for the GAA.

The GAA expects the following standards to be adhered to by its members when posting material online:

- Do not post or share material which is violent, sexually explicit, obscene, hateful, or defamatory.
- Do not post or share inappropriate behaviour relating to underage players.
- Do not suggest or encourage illegal activity.
- Do not engage in trolling, bullying, or abusive activity.
- Do not falsely claim the GAA endorses or is associated with any product or promotion.
- Do not disclose confidential information in respect of the GAA.
- Do not engage in the disparagement of any race, ethnicity or religion.
- Always respect the GAA's values.
- Always use your common sense.



HOW TO REPORT INAPPROPRIATE ACTIVITY

If you become aware of any member or official breaching any of the above social media guidelines, please contact your Club or County PRO. Alternatively concerns can be reported to communications@gaa.ie.

The inappropriate use of social media by either an official or a member will be treated with the utmost gravity by the GAA and may result in disciplinary actions.

