



ST MARY'S GAA ATHENRY - Texting/Web Usage/Photography Policy for working with children under the age of 18 years.

Revision date: 16.05.2018	Approved by:	
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Texting/Web Usage/Photography Policy.

St' Marys GAA Club policy re texting/emailing information to underage players?

The St' Mary's GAA Club policy states that when we pass on information regarding games, training or other activities for the attention of our underage players that we do so via group texts and that these group texts should be sent to the parents/guardians of underage players. The same good practice guidance applies when using emails or social media sites. The team Coach, Club Registrar or the Club Rúnaí should obtain these relevant contact numbers/emails when an underage player is being registered on an annual basis. This only applies to underage players i.e. under 18 years of age.

Exceptions to the proposal on texting.

If, for whatever reason, a parent/guardian insists or requests that the information is sent directly by the club to their child and gives this request in writing, the club may, if they so wish, accede to this request. However, if the club accedes to the request the information can only be sent as part of a group text and cannot be communicated individually to the underage player. A parental/guardian request to have such information sent directly to their child may be refused by the club in the interest of good practice.

The St' Mary's GAA Club would regard the individual texting of an underage player by their coach or mentor as being inappropriate and unacceptable and a breach of the above code.

An underage player.

An underage player is a person who is eligible to play in a game or event for persons under 18 years of age or a player who is under 18 years of age and playing above his age group.

Legislation in Ireland also defines a child as any person under 18 years of age and parents/guardians therefore have a particular level of responsibility for their child's welfare while they remain under 18 years of age.

Underage player on the club's senior panel.

The same recommendation applies and parental/guardian permission must be sought if you wish to directly communicate with the young person as part of a group text scheme.



Web Site Usage/Photographic/Recorded Images:

Taking photographs of players, using the Club website to publicize GAA activities and the video recording of events, games and training sessions are normal activities, however, care must be taken in the dissemination, storage and use of such material.

The GAA *Code of Best Practice in Young Sport* does not seek in any way to eliminate or curtail these activities but proposes safeguards so as to ensure that the Club minimize the risk of threats that inappropriate use of photographs or the recording of images may pose, particularly for young people.

- Young players, parents and adult players will be asked to give permission for the recording of photographic and recorded images as part of the player's registration/subscription process.
- Photography and the recording of images in a public place do not generally require explicit or prior consent. However, if at an event such as a game or training session is taking place a Mentor, parent or player is entitled to request a person to refrain from taking photos if they feel that it may be inappropriate.
- All young people featured in recordings must be appropriately dressed.
- A photograph or recording of a young player should focus on the activity rather than the young person.
- Parents and spectators taking photos and recordings should seek permission in advance from the Club and should also be prepared to identify themselves if requested and state the purpose for photos/videos.
- Group and team photos may be taken but it is not necessary to match the player's name with the position they are standing or seated in the photo i.e., the photo may appear with the player's name recorded but need not be in the order in which they appear in the photo.
- On certain occasions individual players may receive recognition and may be presented with an award. In the case of an underage player certain levels of sensitivity and common sense are required and a balance should be drawn between the publication of a photograph of a young player, who may or may not be named and the safety aspects of the publication.



- Any instances of inappropriate images should be reported to the Juvenile Games Chairperson and/or the Children's Officer who will ensure that appropriate action is taken.
- Particular care needs to be taken about the content put up on social networks such as What's App,
- Facebook or websites. It should be for information purposes only in relation to training and fixtures.