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	<p><b>Document:</b>  <b>Cyber Safety Policy</b></p>	<p><b>Revision Date:</b> 22<sup>th</sup> October 2015</p>

## Cyber Safety Policy

Swinton FC has an obligation to maintain a safe physical and emotional environment for league officials, staff, registered players, umpires, coaches, club members, parents, spectators and sponsors. This responsibility is increasingly being linked to the use of the Internet and Information & Communication Technologies (ICT), and has seen the emergence of a number of related Cyber safety issues.

The Internet and ICT devices/equipment bring great benefits to all users and to the effective operation of the individual leagues and clubs.

Swinton FC places a high priority on the acceptable use of ICT devices/equipment, which will benefit members however? It recognises that the presence in the sporting arena of these technologies can also facilitate anti-social, inappropriate, and even illegal behavior and activities.

Swinton FC aims, therefore, to maximise the benefits of these technologies, while at the same time to minimise the dangers and manage the risks.

### Policy

Swinton FC and Manchester FA will develop and maintain rigorous and effective Cyber safety practices, which aim to maximise the benefits of the Internet and ICT and allow for the effective operation of Swinton FC and member clubs, whilst minimising and managing any risks.


These Cyber safety practices will aim to not only maintain a cyber safe sporting environment but also to address the needs of the league officials and club members to receive education about the safe and responsible use of present and developing information and communication technologies.

Swinton FC takes seriously its responsibility in providing robust policy, guidelines and education for its members in relation to what is deemed acceptable and appropriate online behaviors. The League and/or club name, motto, crest, logo and/or uniform must not be used in any way, which would result in a negative impact for the league or club and its members.

Members of Swinton FC and its clubs have a responsibility to ensure that all online communications are in keeping with the leagues expectations in relation to appropriate and respectful interactions with officials, coaches, umpires, players, parents, spectators and sponsors. Players will not post inappropriate comments about individual Swinton FC officials, umpires, players, club or club members? Which if said in person during the playing of a game would result in disciplinary action being taken.

*“Cyber bullying is a way of delivering covert psychological bullying. It uses information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated and hostile behavior, by an individual or group that is intended to harm others.”*

Cyber bullying includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, racially vilifying or threatening another person by sending or posting inappropriate and hurtful e-mail messages, instant messages, text messages, phone messages, digital pictures or images, or Web site postings (including social network sites eg Facebook or blogs) and the sending, receiving and/or possession of naked or sexually explicit images of a person.

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Club members must also be aware that postings from their individual accounts, whether done by themselves or another person will remain the responsibility of the account owner.

All members of Swinton FC and individual clubs must be aware that in certain circumstances where a crime has been committed, they may also be subjected to a criminal investigation by Police over which the league and/or club will have no control.

This particularly applies to 'sexting' where the image is of a person under the age of 18 years whereby Police will be informed immediately a club becomes aware of the situation.

## **PROCEDURE**

Swinton FC and/or club officials or members who feel that they have been the victims of such misuses of technology should save and store the offending material on their computer, mobile phone or other device. They should then print a copy of the material and immediately report the incident to the relevant club/league representative.

All reports of cyber bullying and other technology misuses will be reported to Swinton FC Senior Safeguarding Officer or any Committee member.

Swinton FC will investigate the matter, and where it believes a breach of the Cyber Safety Policy may have occurred Swinton FC may, after considering the evidence, offer a sanction to the offender/s.

Should this sanction be accepted by the offender/s the sanction will be applied immediately and the sanction entered into the player's records. Where it considers it to be required, Swinton FC may notify the Police of the incident.

## **PENALTIES**


Any proven charges will automatically lead to a minimum of a two (2)-match suspension for a registered player.

In deciding the final penalty, consideration will be given to the seriousness of the act, the impact on the victim, the impact on the club/league/WorkSafe and the prior good history or otherwise of the player.

Players charged with these types of offences for a second or subsequent time and where a suspension has been previously imposed will face deregistration.

Any player presented before the club for the first or subsequent time on a cyber bullying offence must be aware that the penalties available to the club members will cover the complete range including deregistration.

In the case of a non playing club member or visitors being proved to have engaged in harassment or bullying, the club employing, engaging or otherwise associated with the person at the time of the conduct shall be deemed to be vicariously liable for the conduct of the person and shall be investigated by the Executive Committee which could result in the non playing member, visitor or visitors being barred from the club.

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## Policy for younger Members

### Cyberbullying

This is when a person uses technology i.e. mobile phones or the internet (social networking sites, chat rooms, instant messenger, tweets), to deliberately upset someone. Bullies often feel anonymous and 'distanced' from the incident when it takes place online and 'bystanders' can easily become bullies themselves by forwarding the information on. There is a growing trend for bullying to occur online or via texts – bullies no longer rely on being physically near to the young person.

This club commits to ensure our website websites and/or social networking pages are being used appropriately and any online bullying will be dealt with swiftly and appropriately in line with procedures detailed in this policy.

### Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Individuals who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

This club has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

### Objectives of this Policy

- All club members, coaches, officials and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All club members, officials and coaching staff should know what the club policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All players and parents should know what the club policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a club, we take bullying seriously. Players and parents should be assured that they would be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

### Signs and Indicators

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- says he or she is being bullied
- is unwilling to go to club sessions
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- feels ill before training sessions
- comes home with clothes torn or training equipment damaged