

# Blyth Spartans AFC

## SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY



### Overview

Social media offers the opportunity for people to gather in online communities of shared interest and create, share or consume content. As a public-facing organisation, Blyth Spartans AFC (BSAFC) recognises the benefits of social media as an important tool of engagement, communication and marketing to our customers and supporters.

It is important that the reputation of BSAFC, as well as its affiliated sponsors and partners, is not tarnished in any way by anyone using social media tools inappropriately, particularly in relation to any content that directly references BSAFC.

When someone clearly identifies their association with BSAFC, or can easily be associated with BSAFC, in this type of open forum, they are expected to behave and express themselves appropriately and in a manner that is consistent with BSAFC's social media policy. The purpose of this social media policy is to provide some guiding principles for employees, officials, coaches, players and volunteers of BSAFC (referred to in the remainder of this document as 'Associates') of BSAFC to follow when using social media.

### Scope

This policy applies to all Associates of BSAFC. This policy covers all forms of social media. Social media includes, but is not limited to, activities such as:

- Maintaining a profile page on social networking sites (such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, etc)
- Content sharing including using sites such as Flickr (photo sharing), Instagram (photo sharing) YouTube (video sharing) and Sound Cloud (recorded media sharing)
- Commenting on blogs for personal or business reasons
- Leaving product or service reviews on retailer sites or customer review sites
- Taking part in online votes and polls
- Taking part in conversations on public and private web forums (message boards)
- Editing a Wikipedia page

The intent of this policy is to include anything posted online where information is shared that might affect officials, employees, members, sponsors, partners, customers, or supporters of BSAFC as an organisation and the reputation of both the club, the Northern Premier League or the Football Association and the competitions associated therewith.

This policy does not apply to the personal use of social media by Associates where no reference is made to the club (BSAFC), officials, employees, members, sponsors, partners, customers, supporters, the Northern Premier League or associated governing bodies.

### **Guiding Principles**

The web is not anonymous. Associates of BSAFC should assume that everything they write online, especially in open forums, can be traced back to them. It is essential that associates of BSAFC consider at all times their connection to BSAFC and, as such, their role as a representative of the club when using social media. The guidelines are in place to ensure that the intellectual property of both BSAFC and our affiliated associations is not compromised and the organisation is not brought into disrepute.

### **Usage**

For all Associates of BSAFC using social media, such use:

- Must not contain libelous, defamatory or harassing content.
- Must refrain from publishing comments about other clubs, players or referees and any controversial subjects.
- Must not comment on, or publish information that is confidential in any way
- Must not bring BSAFC or the sport and any affiliated governing bodies into disrepute
- Under no circumstances should offensive comments be made about or too BSAFC players, club staff, supporters or any affiliated partners or sponsors online.
- Must not otherwise be in breach of the BSAFC Social Media Policy or Codes of Conduct.

### **Official BSAFC Blogs, Social Pages & Online Forums**

When creating a new website, social networking page or forum that is in any way or can in any way judged to be associated with BSAFC, care should be taken to ensure the appropriate person is given permission to create the page or forum. Similarly, appropriate permissions must be obtained for the use of logos or images. Images of children may not be replicated on any site without the permission of the child's parents and/or guardian.

For official BSAFC blogs, social pages and online forums:

- Posts must not contain, nor link to, pornographic or indecent content
- Associates of BSAFC must not use official BSAFC pages to promote personal projects
- All materials published or used must respect the copyright of third parties
- If a blogger or any other online participant posts an inaccurate or negative comment about your club or anyone associated with your club, do not respond to the post and contact the club for guidance/advice ([Media@blythSpartans.com](mailto:Media@blythSpartans.com) or [GeneralManager@blythspartans.com](mailto:GeneralManager@blythspartans.com)).

### **Consideration of Others**

Social media allows photographs, videos and comments to be shared with thousands of other users. Associates of BSAFC must recognise that it may not be appropriate to share photographs, videos and comments in this way. For example, there may be an expectation that photographs taken at private BSAFC functions will not appear publicly or on the internet. Associates of BSAFC should not post information they have been asked not to or where consent has not been given. They must also remove information about another person should they be asked to do so.

### **Breach of Policy**

BSAFC will continually monitor online activity in relation to the club and the sport. Detected breaches of this policy should be reported to BSAFC. If detected, a breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action from BSAFC under the BSAFC disciplinary procedures. Disciplinary action may involve a verbal or written warning or, in serious cases, termination of association with BSAFC.

### **Consultation or Advice**

This policy has been developed to provide guidance for Associates of BSAFC use of social media. If you are unsure of your rights, liabilities or actions online and want to seek clarification please contact the club via email:  
GeneralManager@blythspartans.com

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## **DOCUMENT CONTROL**

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>Approver</b>
1.0	March 2025	Board Meeting, 6 <sup>th</sup> March 2025

### **Reviews**

Next Scheduled Review	July 2025
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