**COMMUNICATIONS, & SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

Whilst Coolaney/Mullinabreena GAA Club respect the rights of all members to use social media, it is important to be mindful of the benefits and at times its negative impact can have on our members and particularly children and young people.

The Code of Behaviour (Underage) seeks to give guidance, [www.gaa.ie/api/pdfs/image/upload/ukepuvlq3qhyie10jfqy.pdf](http://www.gaa.ie/api/pdfs/image/upload/ukepuvlq3qhyie10jfqy.pdf)

not in a manner that may prohibit the use of such modern communication and recording technologies, but to urge caution and to have certain safeguards in place so as to prevent instances of harm or unacceptable behaviour. We seek in this Code to ensure as far as is practicable to avoid the misuse of social media apps. So as not to impact negatively on any child and on those who work with them.

**COMMUNICATING WITH UNDERAGE PLAYERS**

Coaches make it known that our Associations’ preferred option of communicating team information for underage teams is via the **parental/guardian mobile phone of each player** and **not** via the mobile **phone of the child**. If requested by a parent to send messages regarding games or training via the mobile phone of the child the coach/club will enquire as to the rationale of such requests and if in agreement must receive any such request in writing. Upon any agreement any messages sent to the child can only be as part of the team group text that will also go to their parents and to all other members of that group text. Coaches are not permitted to communicate individually via social media with underage players.

Full guidelines can be found in The Code of Behaviour (underage) on the following link at Section 9: [www.gaa.ie/api/pdfs/image/upload/ukepuvlq3qhyie10jfqy.pdf](http://www.gaa.ie/api/pdfs/image/upload/ukepuvlq3qhyie10jfqy.pdf)

**SOCIAL MEDIA SITES**

The World of social and digital media is an enjoyable and engaging place and is in itself a useful asset in promoting our Clubs and activities within the membership and to a wider audience. We must be aware that while these communication tools can be used to our advantage vigilance is also required to ensure that our use of such communication methods shall at all times be appropriate.

Full guidelines can be found in The Code of Behaviour (underage) on the following link at Section 9: [www.gaa.ie/api/pdfs/image/upload/ukepuvlq3qhyie10jfqy.pdf](http://www.gaa.ie/api/pdfs/image/upload/ukepuvlq3qhyie10jfqy.pdf)

**USE OF MOBILE PHONES**

Except in exceptional circumstances, or in the case of very young children, most underage players attending our training or games generally have a mobile phone or access to a phone.

While the ownership and general use of the mobile is primarily a matter between the child and their parents the use or accessing of the mobiles at our events or in our clubhouse or dressing rooms is a matter for us to monitor and or pursue and if need be to agree with parents.

While we never wish to curtail the rights of a child, we can in relation to the use of a mobile limit the use of mobiles on our premises and if doing so we will inform the parents in advance. Guidance in relation to mobile phone usage

includes:

* We do not permit the use of any phones in dressing rooms or shower area
* We avoid any instances of individual communication via mobile phone with any of the underage players
* If in agreement with other coaches we seek parental permission for all phones of underage players to be ‘bagged’ prior to a game and returned to the players after each game
* Be vigilant as to the use, or excessive use, of a mobile phone by any underage player while they are under your care
* We advise children if they receive an offensive photo, email or messages, not to reply, but to save the offensive materials, note the time and date of receipt and that they should inform their parents. Should any such incident regarding the use of mobile phones occur during their attendance at the Club the team coach will note this and report the matter to the Club Children’s Officer (Caroline Coleman). Link to this information on: [www.gaa.ie/api/pdfs/image/upload/ukepuvlq3qhyie10jfqy.pdf](http://www.gaa.ie/api/pdfs/image/upload/ukepuvlq3qhyie10jfqy.pdf)

*This policy was reviewed at a meeting of Coolaney/Mullinabreena GAA Club*

*January 2022 Next Review Date: January 2023*