



Ashbourne United A.F.C
Communications Policy (rev 1.0)
(Updated 4th February 2019)

Document Purpose

This document is designed to provide guidance to all members, players, parents, committee and team officials in ensuring that we create an environment where all communications within and beyond the club meet their purpose, the desired audience and represent the club in a positive light on all occasions.

The Communications Policy should be a tool for club and team administrators, and will provide guidance to parents and members. It should read in conjunction with the constitution, corporate plan and other club policies and procedures.

Aim

The provision of clear, concise, timely and respectful information to and from all club stakeholders on all occasions.

Background

Ashbourne United A.F.C needs to communicate with multiple teams, with many players and families, layers of officials including team managers and coaches, committee members, league officials, other clubs, sponsors and stakeholders. Information flow in such an environment requires an organised approach and due care to ensure communication is balanced, timely and meets the needs of its audience.

The Communication Policy and Plan should allow for free communication of information and for feedback and suggestions via multiple avenues to add value for individuals and the club. We will endeavour to maintain communication channels that best suit the receivers of the communication and not just the conveyor of that information.

Application

The policy applies to all club members.

The policy applies to all communication including but not limited to:

- The website
- Newsletters
- General correspondence to members
- Letters, emails to or from the club
- Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.) posts
- Communication from Coach or Team Managers to team members (parents and/or players)
- Communication with the league, sponsors, stakeholders and other clubs

Principles

- All club communication should be aligned through the committee, club, team, and individual/family to provide consistency and avoid unnecessary repetition.
- Regardless of the subject matter, communication should be respectful, positive and consistent with the values and behaviours of the club.
- The club remains accessible to all members and stakeholders and will always respond appropriately to all communications.
- The club remains receptive to all ideas and suggestions and will treat them in a manner consistent with their intent.
- Communication on behalf of the club can only be undertaken by those who are authorised to represent the club.
- Club communication should clearly identify the author, position and club.
- The club will adopt/create communication channels to meet the needs of all members.
- The policy applies equally to all.

Data Protection

{Insert GDPR Document}

Communications

Website

The club will make available all relevant content on its website as the major repository of information. The website will include all policies and procedures, contact information, fixtures, ground locations and most importantly with respect to this policy, how to communicate to and within the club. The website is managed by the communications committee.

General correspondence to members

These will be issued on an adhoc basis, via the communications committee. Such correspondence may include notification of important club events (e.g. Family Day, Presentation Day) or administrative matters (e.g. notification of General Meetings).

Email distribution groups

The Communications committee will maintain an email distribution list for information for general communication.

Only these email distribution groups should be used for email communication from club/team officials to members; as such, it is essential for members to ensure their email address on the club registration database are current if they wish to receive important communications via email. Under no circumstances are club/team officials to create and save their own distribution lists consisting of individual member email addresses.

Letters, emails to or from the club

The Secretary should be the addressee for all correspondence to the club. The Secretary will ensure all correspondence is distributed appropriately and is responsible for ensuring all correspondence is responded to on a timely basis.

Only committee members or authorised individuals should be sending correspondence on behalf of the club. Club correspondence is required to identify the individual, their position, and clearly identify the club via letter head or signature block.

Social media posts (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc)

The nature of Facebook and other social media makes it accessible to all. It is administered by the communications committee who will moderate and delete any inappropriate posts. All members are responsible for the content they post and all posts must maintain the standards required by our values and behaviours and this policy. The FAI also has a social media policy with which we must comply.

(<https://www.fai.ie/sites/default/files/atoms/files/2015%20Social%20Media%20Policy%20-%20Final%20-%20November.pdf>)

Team communication from Coach or Team Managers

Team officials are responsible for communications to players and families within their playing group as it pertains to their team. The Team Manager is the link between the coach, the football manager and the players, parents and guardians and, in association with the coach, should manage this process.

The Team Manager is responsible for the flow of information before, during and after matches. It is important that this is effectively managed to ensure players are aware of team and games news and times. It is equally important that the level and number of communications are appropriately managed.

Communication with the league, sponsors, stakeholders and other clubs

External communication should be managed by officers of the club. It is not expected that non-committee members (other than the club secretary and football committee) has any direct contact with the league unless approved by the executive.

Media queries with respect to the Ashbourne United A.F.C should be directed to the Chairman or the Secretary.

Guidance for members

It is important to the club that the officials of the club remain accessible to the members. This is important in ensuring members have appropriate channels for feedback, positive and negative, direct football related, and anything at all about the club. It is only by creating feedback opportunities can we hear from our major stakeholders, the members.

Members should direct their feedback appropriately.

Individual team issues with respect to your child should be directed to the Team Manager in the first instance. The Team Manager is the most appropriate first contact for any player/team issue/feedback.

If this does not meet the immediate need, members should always feel free to contact any committee member. Specific committee members have specific roles, for instance:

- the Child Welfare Officer deals with individual player issues, hardship or related;
- the Secretary is in charge of all registration issues;
- the Football Committee deals with all football matters and facilities;
- the chairman for any member issues especially if any member does not consider their communication has been treated appropriately by the club.