**THEYDON BOIS CRICKET CLUB**

**Loughton Lane, Essex, CM16 7JY**

**Social Media, Text Message and Email Policy**

**Statement**

Social Media, when used properly, can be exciting and opens up a lot of opportunities. However at times it can seem strange and even intimidating for people who did not “grow up” with it. Facebook, Twitter, texting iPhone messaging, online gaming and personal emails are everywhere.

By following some simple guidelines potential pitfalls can be avoided and Social Media can be safely used as a promotional tool and as a means of communication for the club.

**Club Officials/Coaches/Managers/Adult Players**

Facebook and Twitter accounts are great for promoting the club and cricket in general in addition to being a fun way to unwind and stay in touch with friends. However it is essential to keep these two worlds separate.

You should have separate cricket club related and personal pages. All contact with players should be through the former and should be strictly relating to training, coaching, matches and cricket related activity. The privacy settings on your personal account should be adjusted so that the content is only visible to accepted “friends”.

This will keep younger players safe from unsuitable material and minimise the risk of your online interactions being viewed with suspicion.

Younger players may see you as a friend and may request to be your “friend” on a social media site, you should always direct them to the cricket club related page and keep all contact professional.

What they might consider innocent, friendly contact may not be seen as such by their parents, people at the club and others.

It is also extremely important to be mindful of any contact you post online via the cricket club related page; remember:

* You are representing the club
* Your communications should conform to “Safe Hands” policy and guidance. Ensure that nothing you post could cause personal distress or be seen as inappropriate for children
* If you wouldn’t put it on the club notice board, it doesn’t belong on the club’s social media pages
* You should have consent before posting any personal information online – this includes photographs where an individual can be identified. Remember the picture/no name guidance for under 18s

**Text Messages and Emails: Contacting under 18 players**

The Children Act defines a person under the age of 18 years as a child.

You should make arrangements for under 18s via their parents or carers; this includes text and email messages.

In the case of over 16s this may not be ideal for you or the parents or carers. Therefore an acceptable exception to this rule is to text or email the parent or carer and to copy in the 16 or 17 year old, with the parent or carer’s prior consent.

This will mean that the parents or carers are able to monitor communications but the 16 or 17 year old receives the information directly. If you receive any responses from the 16 or 17 year old that appears inappropriate these should be brought to the attention of the parent or carer.

Engaging in individual text or email conversations with a 16 or 17 year old should not be entered into without the parents or carers receiving the same messages from you.

Any contact with children should be in relation to coaching, matches cricket related activity.