



SECTION	People and Culture
POLICY	Sexting
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Club Doncaster are proud of their engagement with children and young people across the entire organisation. We provide a varied timetable of activities across all parts of the Company, and it is important that we recognise the shifts and trends in behaviour and culture and the issues affecting young people.

Sexting is an increasingly common activity among young people where they share inappropriate or explicit images online or through social media/mobile portable devices. There is a national concern related to young people (under the age of 18) engaging in sending/sharing inappropriate/indecent photographs of themselves or of other children through text messages/WhatsApp, Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram and X.

This policy is intended to be used in conjunction with the Club Doncaster Safeguarding Policy, and current Government and local authority legislation, which can be found at the following link

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https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/647389/Overview_of_Sexting_Guidance.pdf

The definition of sexting is: *“Images or videos generated by children under the age of 18 that are of a sexual nature or are considered to be indecent. These images may be shared between children and young people and/or adults via a mobile phone, webcam, handheld device or website.”*

The sharing of sexual videos and pictures of children under the age of 18, even if the child/young person shares an image of themselves, is a criminal offence – specifically, crimes involving indecent photographs of a person under the age of 18 fall under *Section 1 of the Protection of Children Act 1978 and Section 160 Criminal Justice Act 1988*.

Under this legislation, it is a crime to:

- Take an indecent photograph or allow an indecent photograph to be taken;
- Make an indecent photograph (this includes downloading or opening an image that has been sent through text messages/Snapchat etc.;
- Distribute or show such an image; possess with the intention of distributing images; advertise and possess such images.

When working with young people, that may also be referred to as: Cybersex, sending a nude, x-rated selfie, trading, dirties, pic for pic. Sexting is often seen as flirting by children and young people who feel that is it part of normal life.

When an incident involving a person aged under 18 comes to the attention of any person working within Club Doncaster, the incident should be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Officer for Club Doncaster immediately, even if it is out of hours.

The person should ensure that they have made a written record of the incident, which should be logged on Patronus. Please do not save or record the image under any circumstances. Please try to record as many facts as possible if it has been disclosed to you, but do not ask any questions in respect of the incident as they may interfere with later investigations.

The Safeguarding Strategic Lead will inform the parent/legal guardian of the child, unless there is deemed to be a justifiable reason where the child may be at risk of harm, if this action were to occur.

In conjunction with the Local Authority Designated Officer, the Safeguarding Strategic Lead reserves the right to use justifiable and professional judgement in respect of any further internal actions Club Doncaster may impose on a young person following an incident.

Changes to UK law in 2023 have removed the requirement for prosecutors to prove the perpetrator's intent to cause distress when sharing intimate images. Non-consensual sharing of intimate images is a base offense with a maximum penalty of six months imprisonment. It also covered intent to cause distress, embarrassment, alarm, or to obtain sexual gratification will lead to a sentence of up to two years in prison. Additionally, individuals found guilty of sharing intimate images for sexual gratification may be added to the sex offenders register.