

Using Whatsapp to communicate with ETA Youth High Performance Programme participants and individuals with parental responsibility

Background

When ETA Youth High Performance Programme teams have been selected ETA set up social media groups to manage and support regular communication with the participants. All youth athletes, coaches and team managers are included, and anyone with parental responsibility where required (i.e. where the player is U18). This is a policy statement to set out the expectations and guidelines in the use of those social media groups. This policy applies to all England Youth High Performance Programme tours.

Whatsapp

The ETA's preferred social media app for managing group chats is Whatsapp.

Current legislation has the age requirement for use of Whatsapp itself to be 13+ yrs for any country in the European Economic Area (it has previously been 16 yrs).

[About minimum age to use WhatsApp | WhatsApp Help Center](#)

In the interest of good practice, although the app allows 13+ yr olds to be self-registered on it, the content information being shared and discussed within the Whatsapp chats is relevant to individuals with parental responsibility, and as such any u18 youth athlete participant must also have an over 18 yrs old with parental responsibility included in the chat group.

It is noted that despite the current legislation, many individuals even under 13 yrs do already have Whatsapp accounts. If they have one, they can be included in the chat so long as an individual with parental responsibility is too, demonstrating the parental authorisation for their Whatsapp registration.

ETA does not request that any u18 youth athlete participants that do not already have Whatsapp create an account. If one is not already held, an individual with parental responsibility must join the chat to ensure the youth does not miss receiving team relevant information.

Teams

- For those in u15s and u18s squads, both youth athlete (if they are Whatsapp registered) and individual with parental responsibility will be added to the chat group.
- For those in u20s squads, just athlete numbers will be added.

Longevity

Whatsapp groups will be used once a squad has been selected, through to the end of the tour they have been selected for.

Group Chat Guidelines

1. Groups are set up by ETA to support communication within the squad, and to help build and enhance the squad's culture.
2. Groups will be managed and administrated by the Head Coach, Assistant Coaches and Team Manager - with the assistance of the Youth Logistics Lead and / or Head of High Performance Logistics. This includes the start up and dissolution of the group chat.
3. Telephone numbers used are solely those from the England Touch Membership system (JustGo)
4. The group chat is not used for any pivotal or difficult discussion with an individual youth athlete.
5. When writing on any social media, remember that messages can be forwarded on, without context.
6. All members of the group must adhere to the ETA code of behaviour at all times - [Code of Behaviour | England Touch](#).
7. ETA will not tolerate, at any time, bullying, harassment, defamation or intentionally causing harm to any member of the touch community.
8. ETA will not be held liable for anyone who breaches the WhatsApp terms of service - [Terms of Service - UK \(whatsapp.com\)](#)
9. Any issues or concerns should be raised with the Youth Logistics Lead and / or Head of High Performance Logistics.