



## **Communication & Social Media Policy**

Aligned to QFCC Standard 8 – Safe Physical and Online Environments

Policy Owner: General Manager

Approved by: Board of Directors

Next Review: December 2026

### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all communication and use of social media within North Gold Coast Seahawks Basketball (NGCS) is safe, respectful, transparent, and appropriate, particularly when interacting with children and young people.

This policy provides guidance on acceptable communication practices for all staff, volunteers, players, coaches, and parents.

### **2. Scope**

This policy applies to all NGCS staff, Board members, coaches, referees, volunteers, parents, and players engaging in communication or online activity associated with NGCS programs, competitions, or promotions.

### **3. Principles**

1. All communication must reflect NGCS's values of respect, inclusion, and professionalism.
2. Communication with children and young people must be open, accountable, and child focused.
3. Private one-on-one communication between adults and minors is prohibited unless unavoidable and documented (e.g. emergency situations).
4. The official communication platform for all NGCS teams is Heja. All team-related messaging must occur through this platform, including parents.
5. Social media and digital platforms must not be used to criticise, bully, or intimidate any participant or official.

#### **4. Approved Communication Platforms**

The following table outlines approved communication platforms for NGCS activities:

<i>Platform</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Conditions of Use</i>
Heja	Primary communication tool for all NGCS teams, including training, games, and announcements.	All messages must be sent within group chats that include parents. No private messages to minors.
Official NGCS Email	Used for formal communication from staff, Board, or management.	Only through official seahawksbasketball.com.au domain accounts. No personal email use for child-related matters.
Basketball Connect	Used for official announcements, event promotion, and positive community engagement.	Posts must be approved by the Management Team.
NGCS Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, Website)	Used for official announcements, event promotion, and positive community engagement.	Posts must be approved by the Communications or Marketing Team. No tagging minors without consent.

#### **5. Acceptable Communication Practices**

All NGCS representatives must:

- Communicate respectfully and professionally at all times.
- Use Heja or official email only for team-related matters.
- Include parents/guardians in all communications involving children.
- Report any concerning or inappropriate messages to the General Manager or Child Safety Officer immediately.
- Use clear, factual language and avoid emotive, personal, or ambiguous comments.

#### **6. Unacceptable Communication Practices**

The following behaviours are strictly prohibited:

- Private messaging, texting, or social media direct messages between adults and minors.

- Sharing personal contact information (mobile, social accounts) with minors.
- Posting or sharing images, videos, or personal information of children without written parental consent.
- Making public comments that could damage NGCS's reputation or target individuals.

## **7. Social Media Use**

When using personal social media, NGCS members must:

- Avoid making statements that may be perceived as representing NGCS unless authorised.
- Maintain respectful, positive engagement with the Association and its members.
- Never engage in online arguments or criticism of referees, coaches, or players.
- Report online bullying, grooming, or harassment immediately.

## **8. Responding to Online Misconduct**

If inappropriate or harmful content is identified:

- Take a screenshot (if safe to do so) as evidence.
- Report the issue immediately to the General Manager or Child Safety Officer.
- The General Manager will determine whether to escalate the issue to the Police, Basketball Queensland, or Sport Integrity Australia.
- Remove the offending content from NGCS-managed platforms as soon as possible.

## **9. Monitoring and Enforcement**

The General Manager and Communications Manager are responsible for monitoring compliance with this policy.

Any breach may result in disciplinary action, suspension, or referral to external authorities, depending on severity.

## **10. Related Documents**

- Child Safe Policy
- Member Protection Policy

- Codes of Conduct
- Privacy & Data Protection Policy
- Travel & Transport Policy

## **11. References**

- Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Qld)
- Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld)
- Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld)
- Sport Integrity Australia: Safeguarding in Sport Guidelines
- Australian Childhood Foundation Safeguarding Children Accreditation Framework
- QFCC Child Safe Standards (2024)

## **Document Control and Version History**

Version	Date Approved	Approved By	Policy Owner	Next Review Date	Summary of Changes
1.0	December 2025	Board of Directors	GM	December 2026	Initial issue