



## Waverley Hockey Club – Social Media Policy

### **PURPOSE:**

This policy has been written to demonstrate the commitment of the Waverley Hockey Club (WHC) Executive Committee (The Club) and its various sections (Juniors, Women's, Men's and Master's) in the provision of a safe and supportive playing and non-playing club environment for all players and members.

### **COMMITMENT TO APPROPRIATE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA:**

The use of social media is a valuable and appropriate means of communication within a large sporting organisation such as WHC. However, for the protection of all players and members, everyone needs to be aware that The Club has a zero tolerance to social media posts of an inappropriate nature that targets an individual or a group of players in an abusive, discriminatory or bullying manner.

### **APPLICATION OF THE POLICY:**

This policy applies to all individuals involved in our organisation including but not limited to:

- Club or Section administrators
- Junior and Senior team coaches and supporting personnel and officials
- Junior, Senior or Masters players
- Parents of players
- Spectators and supporters

Everyone above has a role in promoting the responsible use of social media, respecting the rights and protection of all players / members. This includes acting on notifications to WHC officials by club members of the inappropriate use of social media by other club members or representatives.

Inappropriate use of social media can take many forms and this policy will apply when there is evidence of (or potential negative impact of) inappropriate social media postings about other club members, WHC, or other affiliates and associations (eg.HV) . WHC members are reminded that the web is not anonymous and should assume that things they write can be traced back to them.

Further, they are reminded:

- To demonstrate courtesy and respect for others as you expect to be treated.
- To protect personal privacy by NOT including personal information about themselves or others in their posts.
- To NOT be abusive, threatening or harassing towards anyone.
- To NOT make defamatory or libellous commentary.
- To NOT use obscene, insulting, offensive, hateful or harmful sarcastic communication.



Social media communication or commentary includes (but is not limited to) the written word, images, photographs, videos, auditory recordings, emojis, abbreviated text, acronyms, and slang or urban language.

WHC values providing a safe, supportive environment where members can enjoy and grow with their hockey experiences. We value the diversity of our membership and hence will not tolerate social media postings of a bullying, abusive or discriminatory nature.

### **CHILD SAFE PROCESSES – SPECIFIC GUIDANCE FOR MEMBERS INTERACTING WITH PLAYERS WHO ARE MINORS**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Waverley Hockey Club Child Safety policy, in particular, Members should take note of the following expectations relating to players under the age of 18 years:

#### **Phone calls, email, text & social media including private social media groups.**

Coaches and Team Managers must not communicate directly with players without inclusion of the relevant parent/ guardian - this includes phone calls, text messages, emails, social media (public and private groups). This includes messages that may be deemed positive and harmless (eg wishing a player happy birthday or congratulations for making a rep team).

Email: All communication with junior players must be directed to the parent / guardian, unless explicit consent is sought from the parents for a junior player's email address to be added to email distribution lists and the parent / guardian email address must also be included in all communication.

Text messages: All communication with junior players must be directed to the parent / guardian unless explicit consent is sought from the parents for a junior player's mobile number to be added to mobile text distribution lists and the parent / guardian mobile number must also be included in all communication.

Social media groups: Parents / guardians must be included in any private social media groups (for example Facebook messenger, Facebook private groups, WhatsApp groups and any other such group). If players wish to have a group amongst themselves (with no adults including coaches / team managers) this group must abide by the Club's social media, code of conduct and all other policies.

Phone calls: Adults must not contact players directly by phone unless a parent or guardian is also present for the phone call.

### **SOCIAL MEDIA GROUPS WITHIN WHC**

There are many groups / teams within the WHC that utilise social media platforms to facilitate communication between members (for example, Team Playing groups, Administrator groups, Officials groups).



## Guidelines for membership to a WHC private social media group

For a WHC Section group (Mens / Womens / Masters / Juniors):

- be a registered player in that section
- be a parent/guardian of a registered player in that section who is under 18 years old
- have an official club role in that section (e.g. coach, team manager, first aid)
- be a Club administrator

Administrator of a WHC Section group should be the Section Lead (and other members of the Section sub-committee, if required by the Section Lead). The Section Lead should ratify the addition or removal of members to their group. The Section Lead should also be aware of the presence of the separate Team Playing social media groups within their section.

For a Team Playing group:

- be a registered member who is playing in that team (or potentially may be selected in that team)
- be a parent/guardian of a registered player in that section who is under 18 years old
- have an official club role in that section (e.g. coach, team manager, first aid)
- Section Lead (optional to that person in the role)

Administrator of the Team Player group should be a Team official (e.g. coach, team manager) or a member of the relevant Section sub-committee.

For other WHC groups (e.g. Administrator group, Officials group) – membership is based on the person having an official Club role relevant to that group.

Membership of the separate WHC social media groups should be reviewed on (at least) an annual basis, to ensure that the list is up-to-date, and that relevant members are included or removed.

Eligible members should be included in relevant communication channels – unless they notify to the Administrator that they wish to be excluded, or if there has been a breach in policy by a member (at which time the situation will be reviewed by the appropriate disputes personnel at the Club, and a suitable outcome determined).

### **HOCKEY VICTORIA SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

All participants at WHC must adhere to Hockey Victoria's (HV) policies, including code of conduct and social media policies which provide further guidance on appropriate social media behaviours.

These policies can be found on the HV website here:  
<https://www.hockeyvictoria.org.au/info-hub/policies/>

### **REPORTING OF INAPPROPRIATE SOCIAL MEDIA USE:**



WHC has appointed a Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO) with specific responsibility to respond to concerns made by officials, volunteers, players or parents of players. The MPIO contact details can be found on the Club's website. They can also be contacted via [safehockey@waverleyhc.org.au](mailto:safehockey@waverleyhc.org.au)

Players or parents of junior players can also report instances of inappropriate social media posts by members to Section Leads or other relevant committee members.

The Club will make all players and members aware of their responsibility to using social media in a responsible manner. Matters reported to the MPIO or other club officials will be investigated with the intention of finding resolution to the matter for the protection of all members.

**SCOPE OF ACTIONS BY WHC:**

If issues are brought to the attention of The Club, then resolution to the issue may involve speaking to the member(s) involved (and in the case of junior players, liaising with their parents) about the impact of inappropriate social media posts to protect the safe playing and club environment for all WHC members. Depending on the severity of the issue, a grievance process may be initiated to further examine the situation (refer to policy at <https://waverleyhc.org.au/policies-procedures/grievance-process/>)