



# Omega Netball Club - Digital Communication Child Safety Policy

## Purpose

This policy aims to ensure the safety and well-being of players and junior coaches when engaging in digital communications related to team activities. It outlines the protocols for appropriate use of digital platforms to protect children from potential online risks.

## Scope

This policy applies to all coaches, team officials, volunteers, parents, guardians and players involved at Omega.

In the context of this policy, “Adult” refers to any parent, guardian, coach, team official, volunteer or player aged 18 years or above.

## Guidelines

### 1. Age Restrictions

Children under the age of 13 should not be included in team communication groups on platforms that have a minimum age requirement of 13 or higher, such as WhatsApp.

Adults should under no circumstances contact players or coaches under the age of 18 directly (on a one to one basis) via any digital platform (including, but not limited to email, WhatsApp and SMS).

### 2. Parental Involvement

All communications intended for players under 13 should be directed to their parents or guardians. Parent or guardian email address and phone number must be provided in Netball Connect upon player registration.

Parents or guardians should be informed about the platforms used for team communications and their purposes.

### 3. Appropriate Communication



Communications should be strictly related to team activities, such as schedules, training sessions, and match details.

Personal discussions amongst parents and / or players via digital platforms should be avoided.

#### **4. Group Communication Protocols**

If a group communication platform is used for players aged over 13, at least two adults (e.g., coach and team manager) must be included in the group to monitor interactions.

Parents or guardians should be given the option to be included in group communications involving their children.

Where coaches are under 18 years of age ('junior coaches') there must be at least 2 adults also included in group communication (eg parent or guardian, or independent representative of the club such as a Head Coach or committee member).

#### **5. Use of Images and Videos**

Images and Videos of players and coaches aged under the age of 18 should not be shared without the express permission of their parent or guardian. Refer to the Omega Child Safety policy and the KDNA Photo & Video Policy for additional information.

#### **6. Data Protection and Privacy**

Omega complies with relevant data protection laws and regulations to safeguard personal information.

#### **7. Monitoring and Reporting**

Adults, including parents or guardians and club officials (coaches, committee members) have a responsibility to monitor any group communication behaviour and report any discussion that is not aligned with this policy.

Players and coaches under 18 years of age can also report any communication that they do not feel comfortable with.

Any concerns may be reported to the Omega Child Safety Officer or Grievance Officer via email to [omeganetball@gmail.com](mailto:omeganetball@gmail.com).

#### **Review**

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure it remains effective and up-to-date with current best practices and legal requirements.

## Appendix: Examples

### **Junior coaches should not be contacted directly by any adult**

**Example 1:** Penny – parent, Jane – player, Susan – 15yo coach

Penny, Jane's parent, has observed Susan becoming a bit overwhelmed with game day rotations and wants to offer some feedback to Susan, but doesn't want to embarrass her in front of the whole team by mentioning it on the team group chat.

Penny should not message Susan directly but could contact Susan either via email or message including the Team Manager or appropriate Head Coach in the communication, or if known, Susan's parent.

As an alternative Penny could email [omeganetball@gmail.com](mailto:omeganetball@gmail.com) asking for her feedback to be passed on to Susan and/or the Head Coach.

**Example 2:** Margot & Molly – 17yo coaches, Andrea – Head Coach

Margot has been unwell lately and Andrea wants to check in on whether she is feeling well enough to train her team on Friday, or if Molly needs some assistance.

Andrea can contact Margot and Molly together in a joint message, to confirm if Margot is feeling better or if Molly needs assistance.

Andrea could contact Margot's parent, or send an email or message to both Margot and her parent to ensure that Margot's parent is aware Andrea is contacting her, outside of a group message.

Andrea should not message Margot directly to check in on her.

### **Players under 18 should not be contacted directly by an adult**

**Example 3:** Charlie – 14yo player, Jamie – adult team coach

Charlie has contacted Jamie outside of the team group chat to advise that they can't make it to the game on Saturday for personal reasons. Jamie is obviously concerned for Charlie and wants to check in, but needs to ensure another adult is involved in the communication.

Jamie can respond, but should add either Charlie's parent, a trusted adult from the team or the Head Coach in the message. Jamie should also remind Charlie that they are not allowed to message each other directly.



*Please note these examples are illustrative of the intent of this policy only, and should not be considered an exhaustive list. For any questions about potential scenarios, please email [omeganetball@gmail.com](mailto:omeganetball@gmail.com). But as a general rule, if in doubt, add another adult club representative to the conversation.*