

## Age Group Policy

The Baulkham Hills Hawks Australian Football Club (BHAFC) is built upon community spirit, encouraging interaction among families and enabling players to play with their friends.

BHAFC support the idea that players may play above their age group to be with their friends or to support their development. Such requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The club may also need to move players to a higher age group if numbers in those groups are insufficient to field a team. However, this policy will always be in accordance with the current AFL Sydney Juniors and AFL NSW/ACT rules and by-laws regarding playing out of age group.

### Process

Requests must be submitted in writing, with relevant reasons for wanting to play above their age group, to the BHAFC Executive, ensuring that parents/guardians fully endorse the request.

Upon receipt, each case will be discussed by the committee at a subsequent meeting.

Before making a decision, the committee will consider:

- Whether the player's correct age group (as per AFL Sydney Juniors or AFL NSW/ACT competition) has enough players to field a full team each week.
- If the player has played at Baulkham Hills Hawks previously, whether the previous coach believes the player has the ability to play above their age group. This includes ensuring the player will get a fair go, not sit on the bench each week, and any risk.
- The player's year level at school, and whether they are in the same year level as the majority of players in the requested team.

If the committee approves the player to play at a higher level, the receiving coach will assess the player to ensure they are competent at that level during pre-season training and practice games. A decision is to be made no later than after the second match of the season. If the coach is satisfied, the player may continue in the higher age group. This process will be carried out each year, as maturity and competency levels vary for each individual.

If the coach feels the player is not at a competent level, they will be required to return to their correct age group. At this point, the decision is final.