



Mornington Football Netball Club

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

1. Introduction

Mornington Football Netball Club (the **Club** or **MFNC**) is a child safe organisation which welcomes all children, young people and their families. We are committed to providing environments where our members are safe and feel safe, where their participation is valued, their views respected, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Our child safe policies and practices are inclusive of the needs of all children and members.

We have a zero tolerance for child abuse and are committed to acting in children's best interests and keeping them safe from harm. The Club regards its child protection responsibilities with the utmost importance and as such, is committed to providing the necessary resources to ensure compliance with all relevant child protection laws and regulations and maintain a child safe culture.

2. Purpose

This Policy sets out the Club's commitment to creating and maintaining a child safe and child-friendly organisation and provides an overview of our approach to implementing Ministerial Order 1359, which sets out how the Victorian Child Safe Standards apply in Club environments. It includes mandatory reporting obligations pursuant to the *Child, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)* and reportable conduct obligations pursuant to the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)*.

This Policy informs our Club community of everyone's obligations to act safely and appropriately towards children and guides our procedures and practices, and culture with respect to child safety and wellbeing.

3. Scope

This Policy applies to:

- all Club members, Committee, volunteers and contractors whether or not they work in direct contact with members;
- all physical and online Club environments used by members during or outside of Club hours, including other locations provided by for a member's use (e.g. Club camp) and those provided through third-party providers and

4. Commitments to Child Safety

- Child safety is a shared responsibility. Every person involved in our Club has an important role in promoting child safety and wellbeing and promptly raising any issues or concerns about a child's safety
- We have no tolerance for child abuse and take proactive steps to identify and manage any risks of harm to members in our Club environments
- We promote positive relationships between members and adults and between members and their peers. These relationships are based on trust and respect
- We take proactive steps to identify and manage any risk of harm to members in our Club environment. When child safety concerns are raised or identified, we treat these seriously and respond promptly and thoroughly
- Particular attention is given to the child safety needs of Aboriginal members, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, members with disabilities, children and young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) and

other members experiencing risk or vulnerability. Inappropriate or harmful behaviour targeting members based on these or other characteristics, such as racism or homophobia, are not tolerated at our Club, and any instances identified will be addressed with appropriate consequences

5. Victorian Child Safety Standards

The Club is committed to upholding the Victorian Child Safe Standards, in line with Ministerial Order 1359. We recognise the eleven Child Safe Standards to be:

Standard 1	Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued
Standard 2	Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture
Standard 3	Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
Standard 4	Families and communities are informed, and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing
Standard 5	Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in Policy and practice
Standard 6	People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice
Standard 7	Processes for complaints and concerns are child focused
Standard 8	Committee, Coaches and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training
Standard 9	Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed
Standard 10	Implementation of the Child Safe Standards (i.e., the Victorian Standards) is regularly reviewed and improved
Standard 11	Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Committee

The Committee are responsible for ensuring that the Club's governance arrangements support and prioritise a child safe culture and promotes the cultural safety and wellbeing of children. They are also responsible for ensuring the Club has appropriate resources to implement this Policy and related procedures, and to hold the Club President accountable for its implementation.

The Committee is responsible for ensuring that a strong child safe culture is created and maintained, and that policies and practices are effectively developed and implemented in accordance with *Ministerial Order 1359*. This includes reinforcing high standards of respectful behaviour between members and adults, and between members and to promote discussion on child safety issues within the Club community including at Committee meetings and Coaches meetings

Club President

The President is responsible for taking practical measures to ensure that the Club's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Child Safe Code of Conduct is implemented effectively to promote and maintain a strong and sustainable child-safe culture within the Club.

Child Safety and Wellbeing Officers

Child Safety and Wellbeing Officers are appointed by the Club to be the first point of contact raising

child safety and wellbeing questions or concerns, including this Policy and our Child Safe Code of Conduct. Child Safety and Wellbeing Officers receive additional training with respect to child safety and wellbeing issues and assist the Club President and Committee to coordinate appropriate responses to child safety and wellbeing incidents.

Senior Child Safety and Wellbeing Officers have an important role in promoting and maintaining a positive child protection culture at the Club.

Senior Child Protection Officer is the first point of contact for child abuse concerns and queries and assists the Club President to coordinate appropriate responses to child abuse incidents which may include liaising with the Police and other external agencies and responding to a child who makes, or is affected by, an allegation of child abuse.

Child Safety and Wellbeing Officers		
Kim McKeown	Committee Member	0402 909 596
Senior Child Safety and Wellbeing Officers		
Kate Sengstock	Committee Member	0437 733 044
Allison Dillon	Club Secretary	0437 744 712 secretary@morningtonfnc.com.au
Senior Child Protection Officer		
Kim McKeown	Committee Member	0402 909 596

All Members

All members of the Club will:

- Participate in child safety and wellbeing induction and training provided by the Club and always follow the Club's child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures;
- Act in accordance with our Child Safety Code of Conduct;
- Be aware of key risk indicators of child abuse, being observant to, and raising any concerns relating to child protection with one of the Club's Child Safety Officers or a Committee Member.
- Report child abuse in accordance with their legally mandatory reporting obligations;
- Ensure members' views are taken seriously and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives;
- Follow any reasonable direction given by a management representative of the Club in the interest of protecting the safety and wellbeing of its members and
- Implement inclusive practices that respond to the diverse needs of

Volunteers and Contractors

All volunteers are required to be familiar with the content of our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policies, and their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse. They have a responsibility to be aware of key risk indicators of child abuse, their legal obligation for mandatory reporting, and to raise any concerns they may have relating to child abuse with one of the Club's Child Safety and Wellbeing Officers.

7. Child Safety Code of Conduct

Our Child Safety Code of Conduct (**Code of Conduct**) sets the boundaries and expectations for appropriate behaviours between adults and members. It also clarifies behaviours that are not acceptable in our physical and online environments. We ensure that members also know what is acceptable and what is not acceptable so that they can be clear and confident about what to expect from adults in the Club, and how to report inappropriate behaviour.

This Code of Conduct is accessible on the Club website and internal network.

8. Mandatory Reporting

Under the *Child, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)*, mandatory reporters must make a report to the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing if, while carrying out their duties, form a reasonable belief that a child needs protection from physical harm or sexual abuse.

Principals, registered teachers, early childcare workers, registered medical practitioners, nurses, registered psychologists, counsellors, people of religious ministry and all members of the police force are mandatory reporters under the *Child, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)*.

It is the responsibility of other committee, volunteers or members of the Club community to check whether they are mandatory reporters under the legislation.

All mandatory reporters must make a report to the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing as soon as practicable, if, while carrying out their professional roles and responsibilities, they form a reasonable belief that:

- a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of physical abuse and/or sexual abuse and
- the child's parents have not protected, or are unlikely to protect, the child from harm of that type.

To ensure our staff are best placed to meet their Mandatory Reporting obligations, the Club places focus on education, intervention and reporting and post-incident review.

Education

Committee

To ensure that staff are aware of and understand their obligation under the Act the Club conducts annual Professional Development for staff relating to identifying child abuse, forming a belief that a child is at risk and mandatory reporting obligations and procedures upon.

With respect to members and the wellbeing team will work to educate members on unacceptable behaviours towards them and encourage them to disclose unsafe behaviour to appropriate staff.

Members

The Club has developed programs to educate members on appropriate behaviours and how to disclose unsafe and unacceptable behaviours towards them.

Community

This Policy will be publicly available to ensure community awareness with respect to child abuse, its characteristics and the Club's programs and response. The Club regularly engages with Club Community stakeholders to ensure that there is a clear understanding of the Club's position on Child Safety.

Intervention – Reporting Obligations and Procedures

1. Mandatory Reporting Legislation

All mandatory reporters whom, in the course of carrying out their duties, form a reasonable belief that a child is in need of protection from physical harm or sexual abuse, and that the child's parents are unwilling or unable to protect the child, must report that belief to the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Child Protection Division as soon as possible after forming the belief.

2. Criminal Offences – Failure to disclose, failure to protect & grooming offences

Any committee members who forms a reasonable belief that:

- a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child;
- an adult associated with the Club poses a risk of sexual abuse to a member and/or
- a child is subject to predatory or "grooming"

behaviour must disclose that information to police.

Failure to disclose the information to the Police, or protect a student from the risk of sexual abuse is a Criminal Offence and applies to all adults in Victoria.

Reporting obligations and procedures are outlined in the *Club's Child Safety Reporting Procedure*,

Post-incident Review

The Committee will undertake a review of member responses to specific incidents to ensure best practice and compliance with the Policy, including seeking guidance and recommendations, where available, from appropriate authorities. All members involved will be offered ongoing support (see 'Support for Affected Members')

9. Reportable Conduct

The Club is required to investigate and report to the Commission for Children and Young People (the **Commission**) any and all allegations of staff reportable conduct or misconduct that may involve reportable conduct.

Reportable conduct is defined in the Act to include:

- a sexual offence (even prior to criminal proceedings commencing), sexual misconduct or physical violence committed against, with or in the presence of a child;
- sexual misconduct committed, with or in the presence of a child;
- behaviour causing significant emotional or physical harm to a child;
- significant neglect of a child or
- misconduct involving any of the above.

"Sexual misconduct" includes:

- Behaviour, physical contact or speech or other communication of a sexual nature, for example 'sexting';
- Inappropriate touching or physical contact;
- Grooming behaviour and
- Voyeurism.

"Sexual offence" for the purposes of the Reportable Conduct Scheme means a serious sexual offence as set out in clause 1 of Schedule 1 of the *Sentencing Act 1991 (Vic)*, which includes rape, attempted rape, sexual assault, incest, indecent act with a child, persistent sexual abuse of a child, grooming and the production or possession of child pornography.

"Significant" means in relation to emotional or psychological harm or neglect, that the harm is more than trivial or insignificant, but need not be as high as serious and need not have a lasting permanent effect.

The threshold for reporting allegations of reportable conduct is a 'reasonable belief', which is much lower than these other reporting obligations. There must be some objective basis for the belief, however, it is not the same as proof, and certainty is not required.

Reportable conduct reporting obligations and requirements are outlined in the *Club's Child Safety Reporting Procedure*, located on the Club's intranet/network (Zenith).

10. Support of Affected Members

Ensuring a student feels safe and supported following an incident is of paramount importance to the Club. In addition to immediate contact with our Student Wellbeing team, the Club will also work closely with the student, parents, carers or guardians to determine any additional support services that may be available to provide appropriate support.

Whilst each matter will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis to ensure the student is provided with support they require as an individual, such action may include:

Referral to Club Counselling services

- Referral to external agencies
- Family Counselling
- Academic Support
- Referral to culturally and/or linguistically diverse support services.

11. Family Violence Information & Child Information Sharing Scheme

The Victorian Governments Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS) and Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS) enable the sharing of confidential information with respect to Children when they meet a relevant threshold. For information pertaining to the FVISS and/or CISS please see our Privacy Policy available [here](#)

12. Managing Risks to Child Safety and Wellbeing

The Club identifies, assesses and manages risks to child safety and wellbeing in our physical and online Club environments. These risks are managed through our child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures and practices, and in our activity specific risk registers, such as those we develop for off-site overnight camps, adventure activities and facilities and services we contract through third party providers for student use.

A Child Safety Risk Register is used to record any identified risks related to child abuse alongside actions in place to manage those risks.

The Club's leadership team will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the actions in the Child Safety Risk Register at least annually.

13. Establishing a Culturally Safe Environment

The Club is committed to establishing an inclusive and culturally safe Club where the strengths of Aboriginal culture, values and practices are respected. We think about how every member can have a positive experience in a safe environment. For Aboriginal members, we recognise the link between Aboriginal culture, identity and safety and actively create opportunities for Aboriginal members and the Aboriginal community to have a voice and presence in our Club planning, policies, and activities.

14. Empowerment

The Club works to create an inclusive and supportive environment that encourages members and families to contribute to our child safety approach and understand their rights and their responsibilities.

Respectful relationships between members are reinforced and we encourage strong friendships and peer support in the Club to ensure a sense of belonging, our Behavioural Expectations Framework, Code of Conduct and our core values.

The Club inform members of their rights and give them the skills and confidence to recognise unsafe situations with adults or other members and to speak up and act on concerns relating to themselves or their peers. We ensure our members know who to talk to if they are worried or feeling unsafe and we encourage them to share concerns with a trusted adult at any time. Members and families can also access information on how to report concerns by contacting their Club President.

When the Club gathers information in relation to a complaint about alleged misconduct or abuse of a child, we will listen to the complainant's account and take them seriously, check our understanding of the complaint, support the student and keep them (and their parents and carers, as appropriate) informed about progress.

1. Family Engagement

Families and the Club community have an important role in monitoring and promoting children's safety and wellbeing and helping children to raise any concerns.

To support family engagement, we are committed to providing families and community with accessible information about our Club's child safe policies and practices and involving them in our approach to child safety and wellbeing.

2. Diversity and Equity

As a child safe organisation, we celebrate the rich diversity of our members, families and community and promote respectful environments that are free from discrimination. Our focus is on wellbeing and growth for all. We recognise that every child has unique skills, strengths and experiences to draw on.

The Club pay particular attention to individuals and groups of children and young people in our community with additional and specific needs. This includes tailoring our child safety strategies and supports to the needs of:

- Aboriginal children and young people
- children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- children and young people with disabilities
- children unable to live at home or impacted by family violence
- international members
- children and young people who identify as LGBTIQ+

3. Suitable Members and Volunteers

This Policy, together with Our *Child Safe Code of Conduct* and Club policies, outlines expected standards of behaviour of staff members at the Club when interacting with children and young people. Conduct which breaches these policies will constitute reportable conduct under this Policy. Where staff are under investigation for breach of this Policy, or for any reason that would question their suitability to work with children, they will be immediately stood down until such time that an investigation can be completed.

The Club applies robust child safe recruitment, induction, training, and supervision practices to ensure that all staff, contractors, and volunteers understand their child safe and wellbeing obligations, and are suitable to work with children.

All volunteers and contractors are required to comply with our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy which describes how we assess the suitability of prospective volunteers and contractors. Expectations in relation to child safety and wellbeing induction, training, supervision and management will be dependent on the role of the volunteer or contractors.

4. Committee Training

All newly appointed Committee are expected to participate in our child safety and wellbeing induction, which includes:

- Being familiar with this Policy, the Child Safe Code of Conduct, the Professional Boundaries Policy and procedures for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse (including Mandatory Reporting)
- Understand how to access Club policies and procedures
- Where to get support and assistance for Child Safety and Wellbeing matters

The Club will conduct refresher training for staff on an annual basis to reinforce the Club's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and to equip them with the skills and knowledge to maintain a child safe environment.

15. Complaints

The Club fosters a culture that encourages and expects staff, volunteers, members, parents, and the Club community to raise concerns and complaints. We have clear pathways for raising complaints or concerns and responding to these. This is documented in our Club's *Complaints Resolution Policy*.

If there is an incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion of an offence, the Club will act upon this and follow the procedures for responding to and reporting allegations of child abuse as outlined within this Policy.

16. Review

We will regularly review and update this Policy in line with legislative requirements or at least every two years, whichever comes first. The Club will assess complaints, concerns and incidents to improve our Policy and practices.

17. Further Information

Questions or further information about this Policy should be directed to the Club President.

18. Definitions

The following terms within this Policy have specific definitions:

Term	Meaning
Child	a child or young person who is under the age of 18.
Child safety	matters related to protecting all children from child abuse, managing the risk of child abuse, providing support to a child at risk of child abuse, and responding to suspicions, incidents, disclosures or allegations of child abuse
Child abuse	Includes: (a) Any act committed against a child involving a sexual offence and/or grooming offences under section 49m(1) of the Crimes Act 1958 (b) The infliction, on a child, of physical violence and/or serious emotional or psychological harm (c) The serious neglect of a child including exposure to family violence
Child-connected work	means work authorised by the Club Council and performed by an adult in a Club environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present
Contractor	A contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary) engaged by the Club to perform child-related work.
Club environment	Any of the following physical, online or virtual places, used during or outside Club hours: (a) The Club premises (b) Online or virtual Club environments made available or authorised by the Club governing authority for use by a child (including email, intranet systems, software applications, collaboration tools, and online services) (c) Other locations provided by the Club or through a third-party provider for a child to use including, but not limited to, locations used for camps, delivery of education and training such as registered training organisations, TAFEs or another Club and sporting events, excursions, competitions other events.
Coach	a person who is directly employed by the Club
Member	a person who attends the Club.
Volunteer	a person who performs work without remuneration or reward for the Club in the Club environment

Relevant references and documents

Ministerial Order 1359

Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005

Child, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)

Worker Screening Act 2020

Mornington Football Netball Club – Child Safe Code of Conduct

Mornington Football Netball Club – Child Safety Reporting Procedure

Mornington Football Netball Club – Working with Children Check Policy

Mornington Football Netball Club – Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy

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