



Child Safety Policy

Policy - Child Safety			
Author	Ken Setiawan –	Date	15 June 2019
Revised	Child Safety Policy	Revision info.	V2: 22 June 2020
Other info.	Based on FFV Policy To be read in conjunction with RCSC Code of Conduct and RCSC Child Safety Procedure	Revision	Yearly
Related Parties			
All members of the Club – refer to relevant sections			
Requirements			
Disseminate to the Club and available on the website			

1. Introduction

All FFV football clubs are required to implement the Child Safe Standards and the mandatory reporting guidelines from the Victorian Government's amendment to the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic) ("**CYFA**") and the *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic) ("**Crimes Act**").

Ringwood City Football Club, trading as Ringwood City Soccer Club Inc. (the "**Club**") is committed to promoting and protecting the safety and wellbeing of all children. We have zero tolerance for child abuse. Everyone involved at the Club is responsible for the care and protection of children and reporting information about child abuse.

1.1. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to:

- a) work towards a Club culture of child safety;
- b) ensure that all persons are aware of their responsibilities for identifying possible occasions for child abuse and for establishing procedures for preventing such abuse and/or detecting such abuse when it occurs;



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- c) provide guidance on responding where a person suspects any child abuse within all Club Environments;
- d) provide a clear statement to players, committee members, volunteers, employees and contractors forbidding any such abuse; and
- e) provide assurance that any and all suspected abuse will be investigated.
- f) The Football Federation of Victoria (the "FFV") Child Protection Guidelines, available on the FFV website, has more detailed information on each of these areas. The Club will use all reasonable endeavours to adopt and comply with those Guidelines in its recruitment practices.

In addition to this Policy, the FFV has produced Child Protection Guidelines which are available on the FFV website. The Club will comply with those Guidelines to aid and supplement this policy.

1.2. Scope

This Policy, and the associated Code of Conduct and Child Safety Procedure, applies to all players, committee members, volunteers, coaches, team managers, assistants, employees and parents of players of the Club, whether registered via FFV or otherwise registered with our club. Non-registered individuals who otherwise participate in activities with or for our club are also bound to this policy by virtue of their participation in our Club's activities.

Breaches of this Policy or the Code of Conduct may be investigated by the Club and/or the FFV as it sees fit, or in the alternative by FFV as Misconduct in accordance with the FFV Grievance, Disciplinary and Tribunal By-Law (the "GDT").

1.3. Guiding Principles

This Policy is based on the following principles:

- a) the Club has zero tolerance for child abuse;
- b) the best interests of the child are paramount;
- c) child protection is a shared responsibility;
- d) all children have a right to feel safe and be safe when they play football, and have equal rights to protection from abuse;
- e) the Club will consider the opinions of players and use their opinions to develop child protection policies and procedures;



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- f) the Club is committed to the diversity and cultural safety of all children, including (but not limited to) the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, minors from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds, minors with disabilities, and make reasonable efforts to accommodate these matters; and
- g) everyone covered by the Policy must comply with, and is bound to, the Club's Child Safety Code of Conduct at all times.

2. Role of the Committee and Child Safety Officers

The Club's Committee is responsible for ensuring that policies are reviewed and updated and that training exists for committee members, volunteers, coaches, team managers, assistants and employees on child protection matters. The Committee is also responsible for identifying and managing risk in relation to child safety.

Child Safety Officers ("**CSOs**") are available to listen, discuss and clarify issues confronting individuals in our Club. Players, members, employees, volunteers and committee members can all speak with a CSO if they have concerns in relation to child abuse. The CSOs will make reports on behalf of the Club and ensure that adequate records are maintained. The Club CSOs will be listed on our club website and identified to all children and parents at the club.

3. Recognising Child Abuse

Child abuse includes:

- a) any act committed against a child involving
 - a. a sexual offence; or
 - b. an offence under section 498(2) of the *Crimes Act* (grooming); or
- b) the infliction, on a child, of
 - a. physical violence; or
 - b. serious emotional or psychological harm; or
- c) serious neglect of a child.

For the purposes of this policy "Child" (or minor) means a person who participates at the Club under the age of 18 years, unless otherwise stated under the law applicable to the child.

4. Reporting Obligation



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Mandatory reporting

1. Under the *Crimes Act*, all persons have a legal obligation to inform police as soon as practicable where they have a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria against a child (under the age of 16 years) by another person (of or over the age of 18 years).
2. This legal obligation above is subject to a person having a reasonable excuse for not reporting. A person will have a "reasonable excuse" to not report if that person:
 - fears for the safety of any person (other than the alleged perpetrator of the offence) if they were to disclose the information to police, or
 - believes on reasonable grounds that the information has already been disclosed to police and they have no further information.
3. The Club supports and encourages committee members, employees or volunteers, coaches or team managers to make a report to the police if they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection, or they are concerned about the safety, health or wellbeing of a child. Where a report is made to the police or DHHS, we ask the individual to also advise the Club.
4. Any committee member, employee or volunteer, coach or team manager that makes a report in good faith in accordance with their reporting obligations will be supported by the Club and will not be penalised.
5. If a committee member, employee or volunteer, coach or team manager is uncertain as to whether they should make a report to an external authority in relation to the safety of a child, they must speak to the CSO (or FFV) for guidance and information. Ultimately, it is a personal decision of the committee member, employee or volunteer employee or coach or team manager whether they choose to make a report to an external authority or not.
6. If an allegation is made against a committee member, employee or volunteer, coach or team manager, the CSO will follow the reporting procedure and take all steps to ensure that safety of the child is paramount.



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Voluntary reporting

In addition to the mandatory reporting obligations above, any person who believes on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from child abuse, may disclose that information to the police. The Club encourages all persons to speak with the CSO (or FFV) for guidance or support with addressing such concerns.

What are “Reasonable grounds for belief”?

You have “reasonable grounds” to notify when:

- a) a minor tells you that he/she has been physically or sexually abused;
- b) a minor states that they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused (sometimes the minor may be talking about themselves);
- c) someone else, such as a relative, friend, acquaintance or sibling of the minor, tells you that a child has been abused;
- d) your observations of the minor’s behaviour or knowledge of children lead you to believe that the child has been abused; or
- e) you observe physical signs or indicators of abuse (e.g. bruises, cuts etc.).

The club encourages reporting where you hold a concern about the safety of a minor.

5. Prevention

Risk Management

The Club will ensure that child safety is a part of its overall risk management approach.

As part of its risk management strategy and practices, the Club will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of its risk controls. The Club will ensure that appropriate training is conducted for:

- Committee members
- Coaches, team managers and volunteers; and
- Employees.

Information will be provided to players (or for players such as Miniros and Junior teams) to their parents/carers, about child safety.



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The Club will also ensure that all committee members, volunteers, coaches, team managers, and employees are provided with ongoing supervision and support such that their performance is developed and enhanced to promote the establishment and maintenance of a child-safe environment.

Communication

The Club is pro-active in the area of prevention and will communicate the Child Safety Policy, Procedure and Code of Conduct in the manner below.

PLAYERS	PARENTS, GUARDIANS, COMMUNITY, SPONSORS, PARTNERS	COMMITTEE MEMBERS, COACHES, MANAGERS EMPLOYEES, VOLUNTEERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conditions of becoming a member • Website • Club newsletters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conditions of becoming a member (Parents will receive an electronic copy) • Website • Club newsletters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website • Letters of appointment/ contracts/agreements • Annual Training Session

Recruitment

The Club is pro-active in its recruitment of individuals to the club, including committee members, volunteers and employees, coaches and team managers, in the area of Child Safety. The Club will:

- a) Implement a recruitment process for coaches, assistant coaches, team managers, etc, for all the teams of our club.
- b) Ensure all coaches, volunteers, etc read and understand the Club's Code of Conduct and other policies.
- c) Screen for inappropriate people and conduct interviews, reference checks and online background searches to satisfy ourselves about people coming into positions of responsibility at our club.
- d) Conduct all necessary Working with Children Checks (WWCC).
- e) Include child safety issues in induction training.

The FFV Child Protection Guidelines, available on the FFV website, has more detailed information on each of these areas. The Club will use all reasonable endeavours to adopt and comply with those Guidelines in its recruitment practices.



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Further steps we will take as a Club:

- a) Unless unavoidable, no adult will have access to an unaccompanied minor without prior permission from the minor's parents or guardian.
- b) We will ensure all new coaches, team managers, etc. to our club have a WWCC check.
- c) We will ensure appropriate training and education sessions into child safety are available to all new coaches, team managers.
- d) We will communicate our Child Safety Policy and Child Safety Procedure, as well as the Code of Conduct to our stakeholders, and follow it.
- e) We will set guidelines and rules for the appropriate levels of communication between coaches, team managers and players who are minors on social media.
- f) We will take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety.
- g) We value and empower minors to participate in decisions which affect them.
- h) We will foster a culture of openness that supports disclosure of incidents.
- i) We will respect diversity in cultures and child rearing practices while keeping child safety paramount.
- j) Ensure minors know who to talk with if they are worried or are feeling unsafe, and that they are comfortable to do so.
- k) Report suspected abuse, neglect or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities; and
- l) Share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where the safety and wellbeing of children is at risk.

6. Responding to an allegation

In the case of an allegation being made against a committee member, coach, team manager, employee, volunteer and/or contractor at the Club, the CSO will follow the Child Safety Procedure.

7. Recordkeeping

All reports of alleged abuse or harm, or risk thereof, must be recorded by the CSO. Places, times, dates, names of people, observable behaviours or evidence of harm are to be recorded. Reports must be securely stored by the CSO or club administrator.



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8. Privacy and Confidentiality

The Club will collect, use, disclose and hold personal information in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)* and FFV's Privacy Policy.

There are two guiding principles in respect to a child's privacy.

- a) First, the Club will operate on the best interest's principle. All committee members, employees, volunteers and contractors will do what they believe to be in the best interest of the child. This principle supersedes all others.
- b) Second, the Club will respect a child's confidentiality except in situations where it conflicts with the best interest's principle.

Those who make reports, and those about whom accusations are being made, are entitled to confidentiality. Where there is suspected abuse or misconduct, committee members, employees or volunteers must not disclose or make use of the information in a manner that breaches confidentiality, other than to report and act consistent with this Child Safety Policy and Child Safety Procedure, as well as the Code of Conduct, and relevant statutory requirements.

At all times, the Child Safe Standards must be observed and acted upon.