

Mentonians Basketball & Netball Club

Child Safe Policy

Written By: MLH
Approved By: All
Endorsed By: Committee 6 June 2017
Date for Review: 1 June 2019

Purpose

This policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of the committee, staff and volunteers of the Mentonians Basketball & Netball Club (the Club) to child safety and to provide an outline of the policies and practices the Club has developed to keep everyone safe from any harm, including abuse.

Commitment to Child Safety

All children who are a part of the Club have a right to feel and be safe. The welfare of the children in our care will always be our first priority and the Club has a zero tolerance to child abuse. The Club aims to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and have fun and the Club's activities are always carried out in the best interests of the children.

Application of this Policy

This policy was developed by the Club and in collaboration with Mentone Grammar staff, club volunteers and the children who use our services and their parents.

This policy applies to all individuals involved in our organisation (paid and volunteer) including, but not limited to:

- Administrators
- Coaches
- Officials
- Participants
- Parents
- Spectators.

All of the people to which this policy applies have a role and responsibility in relation to child protection. They must all:

- understand the indicators and risks of child abuse;
- appropriately act on any concerns raised by children; and
- understand and follow all applicable laws in relation to the protection of children and reporting or management of child safety concerns.

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Child Abuse

Child abuse can take a broad range of forms including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional or psychological abuse and neglect. People to whom this policy applies need to be aware that child abuse can occur whenever there is actual or potential harm to a child, and these are circumstances that the Club is committed to reducing the risk of occurrence.

Children's Rights to Safety and Participation

The Club encourages children to express their views about their safety. We listen to their suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect them. We actively encourage all children who use our services to 'have a say' about things that are important to them.

We teach children about what they can do if they feel unsafe. We listen to and act on any concerns children, or their parents, raise with us.

Reporting a child safety concern

It is not the responsibility of anyone engaged with the Club, in a paid or unpaid capacity, to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities so that they can then make inquiries and take necessary action to protect the young person. This applies BOTH to allegations/suspicions of abuse occurring within our organisation's activities and to allegations/suspicions that abuse is taking place elsewhere.

Please refer to the **Procedure for Responding to Suspicions and Allegations**.

Valuing Diversity

We value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices. To achieve this we:

- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children and their families;
- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families;
- welcome children with a disability and their families and act to promote their participation; and
- seek appropriate staff from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Recruiting staff and volunteers

The Club takes the following steps to ensure best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of staff and volunteers:

- Interview and conduct referee checks on all staff and volunteers
- Require police checks and/or Working with Children Checks for relevant positions.
- Our commitment to Child Safety and our screening requirements are included as part of the induction process for new staff or volunteers.

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Supporting staff and volunteers

The Club seeks to attract and retain the best staff and volunteers. We provide support and supervision at the start of, and during, the two seasons every year. We have developed:

- a **Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers**,
- a **Code of Conduct for Players** and
- a **Code of Conduct for Parents/Guardians**

to provide guidance to our staff, volunteers and all of our participants so that everyone feels valued, respected and fairly treated.

Risk Management

We recognise the importance of a risk management approach to minimising the potential for child abuse or harm to occur and use this to inform our policy, procedures and activity planning. In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children. To reduce the risk of child abuse occurring, adults to whom this policy applies should avoid direct, unsupervised contact with children.

Please see the attached **Policy of Good and Poor Practice**.

Reviewing this policy

This policy will be reviewed every two years or when there is a Legislative change and we undertake to seek views, comments and suggestions from children, parents, carers, staff and volunteers involved in the Club.
