

Child Safety Policy

Effective Date: February 2021
Approved: Louise Staite (Child Safety Officer)
Review: February 2023

Purpose

This policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of the management, staff, and volunteers of the East Brighton Vampires JFC (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 priority, and the Club has a zero tolerance for 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 our Child Safety Officer [Louise Staite], Club President [Ian Jickell] and Compliance Officer [Mark Barling], 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 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.

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.

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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 concern's children, or their parents, raise with us.

The Club has committed to advising all parents, coaches, staff, and children about the presence of this policy and the CSO and their function within the club – this policy is available to download on our club website always, and the CSO's details are also promoted during regular email correspondence to all parents and coaches.

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.
- Regularly communicate with relevant bodies to ensure our policies are relevant and promoted.

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 Working with Children Checks for relevant positions.
- Our commitment to Child Safety and our screening requirements are included in all advertisements and as part of the induction process for new staff or volunteers.

Supporting staff and volunteers

The Club seeks to attract and retain the best staff and volunteers. We provide support and supervision, so people feel valued, respected, and fairly treated. We have developed a Code of Conduct to provide guidance to our staff and volunteers, all of whom receive training on the requirements of the Code.

Reporting a child safety concern or complaint

The Club has appointed Louise Staite as Child Safety Persons with the specific responsibility for responding to any complaints made by staff, volunteers, parents, or children. That person can be contacted by email on childsafetyofficer@govampires.com or on 0431 632 401.

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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. For example, this should be a consideration when:

- Using change room facilities.
- Using accommodation or overnight stays.
- Travel; or
- Physical contact when coaching or managing children.

Reviewing this policy

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