

# Avoca Football Netball Club

## Child Safe Policy

**Written By:** *Donna Wardlaw*  
**Approved By:** *Bill Drummond, President     Steve Carey, Vice President*  
**Endorsed By:** *Avoca Football Netball Club Committee*  
**Date for Review:** April 30<sup>th</sup> 2021

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### **Purpose**

This policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of the management, staff and volunteers of the Avoca Football 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 the committee, staff, 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.

### **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.

## **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 official staff**

Official staff include coaches (both paid & unpaid), trainers and medical staff.

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

- Require police checks and Working with Children Checks for relevant positions.
- Our commitment to Child Safety and our screening requirements are included in advertisements and as part of the induction process for new staff or volunteers.
- Staff & volunteers are provided with a copy of all our policies, codes and procedures prior to the commencement of their roles.

## **Supporting official staff**

The Club seeks to attract and retain the best staff. 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, all of whom receive training on the requirements of the Code. Official staff (including trainers & coaches) are required to sign the Code of Conduct.

## **Reporting a child safety concern or complaint**

The Club has appointed *Bill Drummond* as our **Child Safety Officer** with the specific responsibility for responding to any complaints made by staff, volunteers, parents or children. That person can be contacted by 0417 117 911. Our complaints process is outlined in the Club's Child Safe reporting procedure.

## **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.

The Club also recognises the importance of supervision of change rooms and requires regular and consistent adult supervision of the change rooms during change over times of matches.

## **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.

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