

CHILD SAFETY POLICY

April 2019

This policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of the management, staff and volunteers of the La Trobe University Hockey 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.

The scope of this policy applies to all Club Juniors Program activities, as well as situations where children from the Juniors program are participating in Senior Club training, matches or social events.

This policy has been developed in consultation with the Club Committee with input from Junior parents, and uses templates developed by *Play By The Rules* and *VicSport*.

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 committee members, 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.
- 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 Indigenous 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.
- Seek appropriate staff from diverse cultural backgrounds.

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.
- Physical contact when coaching or managing children.

RECRUITING STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

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

- Require Working with Children Checks for relevant positions. This includes coaches and team managers, umpires, members of the Juniors Committee and others who have a role engaging with children in Club activities.
- 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.
- As part of the induction process, coaches and volunteers are asked to complete the *Play by the Rules* Child Protection Course:
<https://www.playbytherules.net.au/online-courses/child-protection-online-course>.

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.

GUIDELINES FOR INTERACTING WITH CHILDREN

Coaches, managers, umpires and other adults must:

- Maintain clear physical boundaries
 - o Use drills to develop fitness, not as a punishment.
 - o Only use physical contact that is appropriate for the development of a particular skill and has the permission of the athlete.
 - o Generally, physical contact with players or participants should be to:
 - Develop sport skills
 - Treat an injury
 - Prevent or respond to an injury.
 - o All physical contact by personnel should fulfil the following criteria:
 - Physical contact should be appropriate for the development of a sport skill/s.
 - Permission from the player or participant should always be sought.

- Players or participants should be congratulated or comforted in public not in an isolated setting.
- Work within sight of others at all times.
- Maintain clear emotional boundaries
 - Use positive feedback on performance, not negative feedback about the person.
 - Be encouraging and avoid put-downs.
- Maintain clear social boundaries
 - Attend sport related events such as sponsorship and fundraising events, celebrations and annual meetings but do not socialise with athletes outside sporting functions.
 - Do not socialise with athletes via social media.
- Maintain clear sexual boundaries
 - Do not have sexual relationships with athletes you are coaching.
 - Do not touch athletes in ways likely to make them feel uncomfortable.
- Avoid being alone with a child. To protect yourself and the child from risk:
 - Do not isolate yourself and a child and avoid being alone with any particular child.
 - If a child approaches you and wants to talk to you privately about a matter, do so in an open area and in sight of other adults (e.g. other coaches, officials or parents/guardians).
 - Before going into change rooms knock or announce that you will be coming in. Try to have at least one adult with you in a change room with children.

REPORTING A CHILD SAFETY CONCERN OR COMPLAINT

The Club has appointed a Member Protection & Information Officer (MPIO) who acts as our Child Safety Officer – this person is specifically responsible for responding to any complaints or concerns made by staff, volunteers, parents or children regarding junior players.

More information about the MPIO role is available in our Code of Conduct. This Code also outlines the Club's complaints process and disciplinary action procedure.

PICKING UP AND DROPPING OFF CHILDREN

Coaches and team managers have a responsibility to:

- Make sure parents/guardians and children know the time and location of practice and games and when they can expect to collect their children.
- Ensure that coaches and other sporting personnel arrive before scheduled practice or game times.
- Have access to a register of parent/guardian emergency contact numbers and have access to a phone.
- Ensure that if parents/guardians are late, coaches will try to make contact with them and:
 - o Ask the second to last child and their parent/ guardian to wait with the coach/official and the child.
 - o Avoid transporting children to their homes unless permission has been given by parents/guardians.

JUNIOR PLAYERS ACCESSING CLUBROOMS DURING TRAINING

The location of facilities at KP Hardiman Reserve present challenges in providing a safe environment for players, specifically the distance from the playing field and the lack of a foot path to the rooms.

To address these issues, the following protocols have been developed:

DURING TRAINING

Managers of the teams will be available to provide supervision for children whose parents are not immediately available, to assist with:

- Accessing first aid kit or other needs.
- Arranging appropriate supervision for children who need to use the change rooms.
- Being a visible person that children know they can approach if their parent or coach is not available.

DURING MATCHES AND HOOKIN2HOCKEY

The Club expects that parents will be in attendance for these events, and can provide supervision for their children when accessing clubrooms, however where children will be attending without their parents, the Club asks that parents raise this with the Team Manager.

The Club asks parents to:

- Discuss these requirements with their children.
- Where possible, have children arrive at the ground ready to commence training. Where children need to use change rooms on arrival, parents should escort them to the rooms prior to commencing training.

SUPERVISION OF THIRD PARTY SERVICE PROVIDERS

The Club may at times engage external providers to run clinics or similar activities with junior players. In these situations, the following need to occur:

- At the time of the booking, the Junior's Manager or other club official will confirm that the service provider has a Working with Children Check (WCC), request the card number and check the status at <https://online.justice.vic.gov.au/wwccu/checkstatus.doj>.
- The provider should be made aware that they will be asked to show their card on the first session at the Club.
- The Junior's Manager or delegate will visually confirm the WCC prior to commencement of the first session.
- An adult Club member will be in attendance during activities run by external providers.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND SOCIAL MEDIA

All members, parents and position holders are expected to comply with the standards of the Club as well as Hockey Victoria with respect to social media use. For more information please see our Social Media Policy.

Additionally, the following guidelines should be observed:

- Photography involving children should be restricted to showing children engaged in club activities (e.g. on field play, team photos).
- There should be no photography occurring in changing areas under any circumstances. All Club members and others are requested not to operate smart phones in changing areas.
- Photographs that directly relate to Club activities may be uploaded to the Club official social media sites, however there should be no identifying information provided (i.e. no surnames, contact details or links to children's social media accounts) without first requesting permission from a parent or guardian. The Club commits to removing any content where possible by request of the people featured (or their parent or guardian).
- Photographs that show children (including opposition players) in an unflattering light should not be circulated either on social media or by other means.
- Children should not join adult social media groups as the Club cannot provide supervision over the interactions that occur in these forums.

Parents are advised that the Club will take photographs of activities throughout the season, primarily during matches. Should parents wish for their child not to be photographed for Club use, please notify your Coach.

BREACHES

Breaches of this policy are subject to disciplinary action as per the Club's Code of Conduct.

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions regarding this policy, please contact the Member Protection & Information Officer.