



Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy



Melbourne Cricket Club

Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy

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1. Policy Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out the requirement on the Melbourne Cricket Club (MCC), its staff, volunteers and contractors to prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and young people who attend the MCG and outside venues and who participate in and/or access the services and facilities offered through the MCC and the necessary steps to achieve a safe and welcoming environment.

2. Scope

This policy applies to MCC staff, volunteers and contractors. This policy should be read in conjunction with and is supported by the MCC's Commitment Statement to Safeguarding Children and Young People, MCC Child Safety Code of Conduct, MCC Child Safety Complaints and Reporting Procedure. This policy reflects the compliance requirements for child safe organisations in accordance with the Victorian Child Safe Standards (Appendix 1).

3. Background

The MCC has adopted this policy to provide guidance on our commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people who attend our venues and /or participate in our programs. These are the principles which all MCC staff, volunteers and contractors are expected to operate within to ensure a safe, respectful and positive experience for all children and young people who come into contact with the MCC.

4. Acknowledgement of Country

The Melbourne Cricket Club would like to acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of the Country on which the MCG and Yarra Park are situated. We look to them to guide us as the custodians of all children and young people visiting the MCG as they have guided their children, who have gathered and played games on this great land for thousands of years.

We recognise and respect the cultural heritage of all First Nations people and promise to look after the land, the waterways and the skies as they have done. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

5. Our Purpose

Our purpose is to move Australia through the transformative power of live sport, entertainment and culture. We do this by fostering the love of sport by creating unrivalled experiences that inspire and cultivate a sense of connection and belonging.

We also do this through our dual role as custodians of these incredible grounds, through the development of our outstanding club, and by preserving the heritage and 'spirit of the 'G'.



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6. Our Values

Respect the past and shape the future

- We celebrate our rich heritage, and blend this with fresh thinking to remain at the forefront as our world evolves

We recognise that much has been learned through the brave disclosures by victims of abuse, about institutional responsibilities in protecting children from harm and we commit to playing our part in creating a community in which children and young people feel safe and welcome.

Strive for excellence

- We always look to improve, setting the standard in everything we do, to be the club and the stadium that everyone loves

We will continue to grow and enhance our commitment to child safety and safe practices by implementing action plans and regularly and rigorously reviewing our progress.

Lend a hand

- We know we are stronger when we work together and collaborate, bringing everyone on the journey to cross the finish line as a team

“Nothing for us without us” is our commitment to children and young people– we recognise that the voices of children and young people must be reflected in our safety plans and more importantly, our actions. We recognise that cultural safety is a critical aspect of the safety of all children and young people who engage with the MCC and participate in our programs.

Play with pride, passion and purpose

- Our purpose unites us, our passion drives us, and our pride in everything we do, gives us the energy and momentum to bring this iconic club and stadium to life

Sport has the power to transform the lives of children and young people and we are proud of the contribution we make in creating the sporting champions of the future. Any child or young person visiting the ‘G or participating in our programs will be welcomed and inspired by their experience.

7. Definitions

- **Child and Young Person** means a person under the age of 18 years.
- **Child Abuse** includes all forms of physical, emotional, psychological, verbal and/or sexual abuse. Child abuse also includes sexual exploitation, neglect or negligent treatment, grooming, harassing behaviour, bullying or other exploitation of a child or young person and includes any actions that results in actual or potential harm to a child or young person. Child abuse can be



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a single incident or take place over time. Child abuse can be committed by an adult or child-to-child (peer abuse).

- **Child protection** means any responsibility, measure or activity undertaken to safeguard children and young people from harm.
- **Concerns and complaints** include any issue that a person (including an adult, child or young person) considers may negatively impact on the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person.
- **Cultural Safety** refers to an environment where a child or young person feels comfortable to express their true identity including their spiritual and belief systems safely and with the support of community.
- **Child Safe Standards** (the Standards) refers to the legislated Standards that organisations (and their staff) providing services, programs and/or facilities to children and young people in Victoria must comply with. The Standards aim to support organisations in their operational practices to provide a safe and welcoming environment for children and young people and the necessary systems to respond to allegations of child abuse and harm.
- **Harm** is damage to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child or young person, including as a result of child abuse by adults or the conduct of other children (peers). It includes physical, emotional, sexual, psychological harm and family violence. Harm can arise from a single act or event and can also be cumulative, that is, arising as a result of a series of acts or events over a period of time.
- **Grooming** is a term used to describe what happens when a perpetrator builds a relationship with a child or young person with the intent to abuse or harm them. Perpetrators may also groom parents/carers by forming relationships of trust with parents/carers before harming a child or young person. Grooming can take place over a long period of time before abuse occurs or the abuse can happen relatively quickly. Grooming can take in physical (face-to-face) environments or online.
- **Sexual abuse or exploitation** is any act which exposes a child or young person to or involves them in sexual acts beyond their understanding or contrary to accepted community standards. Sexual offence behaviours can include the fondling of genitals, masturbation, oral sex, vaginal or anal penetration by a penis, finger or any other object, fondling of breasts, grooming, voyeurism, exhibitionism, and exposing the child to or involving the child in pornography. It also includes engaging a child or young person to participate in sexual conversations online.

8. Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy (Commitment Statement)

All children and young people visiting or engaging with MCC (and grounds) have the right to feel safe and be safe, respected, valued and protected from harm.

The MCC is strongly committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people within our venue and through engagement in our programs. We aim to create enriching experiences and want children and young people to feel safe, happy and empowered by their connection to the MCG.



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The MCC is committed to the active participation of children and young people at our venues, ensuring all children and young people know their rights, have their views taken seriously and involve them in decisions that may directly affect them and their peers at the venue.

The MCC creates and maintains a child-safe environment. The welfare of children and young people is a top priority, and we have zero tolerance to the harm or abuse or any behaviours that threaten the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

We recognise the needs of First Nations children and young people, culturally and linguistically diverse children and young people, the safety of children and young people with a disability and children and young people who identify as LGBTIQ+, transgender and/or non-binary. We are committed to implementing culturally appropriate practices and procedures to address those needs.

We recognise that acting to protect and maintain the safety of children and young people is a responsibility of all staff, volunteers and contractors and we foster a culture of openness that supports all people to safely disclose identified risks or concerns of harm to children and young people.

We are committed to engaging in open communication with families and the communities of which children and young people are part of in relation to our child safe approach. The MCC encourages families and communities to conduct open conversations on matters relating to the development and review of our policies and practices.

The MCC will take all necessary steps to prevent and protect children and young people from physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, and cultural abuse and neglect. This includes protecting children and young people from peers and patrons.

9. Creating culturally safe environments for First Nations children and young people and their families

The MCC is committed to creating environments where First Nations culture is acknowledged and appreciated, and First Nations children, young people, their families and community members feel safe and included. Strategies to embed cultural safety for First Nations children include:

- Promote a Welcome to Country and/or an Acknowledgement of Country for significant meetings and formal events to show respect to the importance of First Nations cultural traditions;
- Implement the MCC Reconciliation Action Plan to celebrate the important steps taken in creating a positive cultural environment;



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- Consult with families and members of First Nations communities to identify opportunities to promote culture and practices through MCC programs, activities and events;
- Provide opportunities for First Nations children and young people to share their cultural identity and express their culture through MCC programs, activities and events;
- Provide training for staff and volunteers on First Nations culture and its importance to the wellbeing and safety of First Nations children and young people;
- Celebrate NAIDOC Week and acknowledge significant events including National Sorry Day and National Reconciliation Week;
- Seek feedback from First Nations children, young people, families and communities on their experiences of MCC programs, activities and events, particularly how safe they feel expressing their culture; and
- Take a zero-tolerance approach to any incidents or forms of racism or discriminatory behaviour.

[The MCC Reconciliation Action Plan \(RAP\) can be found on Club Hub \(intranet\) & MCC website for further understanding of creating culturally safe environments and practices.](#)

10. Empowerment, inclusion and participation

The MCC seeks to empower children and young people and enable and promote their participation through:

- Supporting children and young people to understand and exercise their rights;
- Involving children and young people in decision making on matters that affect them and providing feedback on their suggestions; for example, asking for feedback after museum & educational school tours
- Involving children and young people in safety planning, including seeking their views about what makes them feel safe and unsafe, engaging them in the process of identifying and managing risks and communicating with them about safety measures taken;
- Encouraging children and young people to raise concerns, ask questions and speak up if they are worried or feel unsafe;
- Valuing and respecting children's opinions and encouraging their expression;
- Listening to children and young people and taking them seriously particularly about matters that affect them, including how to keep them safe and create welcoming environments;
- Promoting and paying particular attention to the cultural safety of First Nations children and young people, children and young people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, the safety of children and young people living with disability and children and young people who identify as LGBTIQ+, transgender and/or non-binary;
- Having zero tolerance for discriminatory practices; and



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- Promoting the organisation's commitment to child safety to the community.

11. Child Safety Conduct

The MCC requires all staff, volunteers and contractors to:

- Know and understand the definitions of abuse and harm and follow this policy and related child safety and wellbeing guidance (including but not limited to the MCC's Child Safety Code of Conduct and MCC Child Safety Complaints and Reporting Procedure).
- Value equity and diversity and treat all children and young people with respect regardless of their race, religion, age, disability, cultural background, gender, sexual orientation or family/social background. This includes listening to and valuing children and young people's ideas and opinions and responding appropriately.
- Be open and transparent when they are working with children and young people and always observe professional boundaries.
- Not condone or participate in any behaviour that is illegal, unsafe or abusive or seek to use children and young people in any way to meet the needs of adults.
- Not engage in any rough physical games with children and young people or have any unnecessary physical contact or do anything of a personal nature that they can do for themselves (i.e. toileting or changing clothes).
- Not develop 'special' relationships with specific children and young people, including by giving gifts or inappropriate attention towards a child and young person or their families.
- Not exchange personal details or have unauthorised contact, including by phone, social media or use any device or any means to exploit or harass children or young people.
- Take all reasonable steps to protect children and young people from abuse and harms.
- Report any instances of risk of harm to children and young people.

Breaches of the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

[For further information on the MCC Child Safety Code of Conduct please refer to Club Hub \(intranet\) and MCC website.](#)



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12. Recruitment and Selection

The MCC recruitment and selection policy ensures that candidates are appropriately screened and selected, this includes:

- Clear position descriptions for those working with children and young people which detail safety responsibilities where applicable;
- A commitment to child safety in all advertised position descriptions;
- Only engaging people who are suitable to work with children and young people and deterring those who are not through:
 1. Mandatory child safety requirements in relevant job advertisements;
 2. Ensuring applicants are properly interviewed and assessed;
 3. Conducting referee checks and other pre-employment checks with specific child safety screening questions;
 4. Working with Children Check (WwCC) register for staff members and volunteers with continuous audits performed to ensure compliance;
 5. Require all board/committee members to hold a valid WwCC; and
 6. Once engaged, all staff must read this policy and related documents and familiarise themselves with child safety practices at the MCG and outside venues and ensure they comply with the responsibilities they have and role in taking action to provide a safe environment for children and young people.

[For further information relating to recruitment please refer the MCC Recruitment Policy](#)

MCC Contractors

- All contractors with staff working on site under the age of 18 years are required to upload their child safe policy as part of their 'pre-qualification' on the Rapid Global system.
- Request for tender documentation will include a section on mandatory child safe requirements.
- Any contractor's employees who may come into contact with children and young people, upon assessment by the MCC Safeguarding Children Manager, may be requested for their employees to obtain a WwCC.
- Contractors must familiarise themselves with and comply with this policy and the MCC's Child Safety Code of Conduct and Complaints & Reporting Procedure prior to working on site or at MCC outside venues.

13. Safeguarding Children Manager and Child Safety Officers

The MCC Safeguarding Children Manager and Officers (General Manager P&C, and Executive Manager P&C):



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- Ensures the Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy and associated documents are relevant and up to date.
- Ensure training is relevant and up to date, and all staff undertake refresher training annually.
- Investigates all allegations and concerns reported and supports the person who has raised them.
- Maintains detailed records of allegations and concerns, investigations and outcomes.
- Determines and implements any mandatory reporting obligations arising from allegations made.
- Provides regular reports and advice to the MCC (Committee) on risks, concerns and recommendations.
- Monitors and improves child safety performance across the organisation.

Event Day Child Safety Persons

- The Event Day Security Manager is responsible for Event Day Child Safety.
- The Event Day Security Manager works in close proximity with security and police.
- The Event Day Security Manager ensures that all contractors are made aware of the MCC Child Safety Event Day Protocols prior to commencement of shift.
- Event staff, volunteers, security or police may be the initial point of contact on Event Day for any person (staff member or patron) who is concerned for the safety of a child or young person.
- They must immediately report concerns to either a supervisor, stadium management centre, security manager, security or police on site.
- Make formal reports to Safeguarding Children Manager/Officers (childsafety@mcc.org.au) of any incidents reported to them and action taken on Event Day.

Non- Event Day Child Safety Persons

- MCC Safeguarding Children Manager/Officers;
- Volunteers and non-event day staff must report immediate concerns to Security via x8881

For more information refer to the Child Safety on-line training module, Security SOP's (standard operating procedures) & Volunteer's Processes & Protocols.

14. Supervision and training

The MCC understands that maintaining child safety requires that all staff, volunteers and contractors understand their responsibilities when they are in the presence of or are interacting with children and young people. Those staff and volunteers with additional responsibilities or more direct involvement with children and young people receive targeted support and training. The MCC is committed to conducting yearly refresher online modules and improving its training and process as necessary.



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Our approach to supervision and training includes:

- This policy and supporting procedures such as the Child Safety Code of Conduct and Child Safety Complaints & Reporting Procedure which staff, volunteers and contractors will be trained as part of their MCC induction and during yearly refresher training;
- Quality supervision and professional development for employees, volunteers and contractors in relation to child safety;
- All staff, volunteers and contractors to undertake training relating to child safety to educate them on how to identify, assess and minimise risks of abuse and harm and detect potential child abuse; their reporting obligations; and
- Improving our performance by including monitoring strategies and committing to ongoing learning about child safety.

15. Reporting Concerns and Unsafe Behaviour

Staff, volunteers and contractors who witness or become aware of unsafe behaviour or the potential for unsafe behaviour must report their concerns, and MCC will respond promptly, thoroughly and fairly, and take action to protect a child and young person at risk. All staff, volunteers, contractors and children and young people should speak up when they are uncomfortable or concerned about a person's actions or behaviours.

Reporting suspected child abuse and harm is every adult's responsibility. Failure to protect a child or young person from abuse and failure to report suspected abuse including sexual abuse may be unlawful and a crime (see Appendix 2).

Any person can report a concern regarding unsafe behaviour or abuse and is encouraged to do so.

Incidents should be reported to the Child Safeguarding Manager at childsafety@mcc.org.au

Patrons can also anonymously text (via Whispir system) any child safety concerns on Event Day which will be immediately responded to by security and police on site. The MCC will also monitor this system on non-event day for visiting school groups, MCC tours, museum etc.

The MCC Safeguarding Children Manager/Officers will investigate and take appropriate action.

Staff, contractors & volunteers will:

- Take immediate action when they become aware of an incident, accusation or allegation of abuse or harm. In the first instance, action should involve eliminating as far as reasonably practicable any further risk to the child or young person (and the notification of the Event Day Security Manager on event day and MCC security on non-event day);



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- Immediately report concerns about a child's safety, including of any practices observed that may create risks to their safety. Reports should be made to the Safeguarding Children Manager/Officers, People & Culture department (childsafety@mcc.org.au), must be treated as confidential and are only to be discussed with people involved in the reporting procedure.

Reporting sexual abuse

- If a person receives information that leads them to form a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed, that person has a legal obligation to disclose that information to the police as soon as practicable. Individuals who fail to comply with this obligation under the *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic) may be subject to a penalty of imprisonment.
- A number of professions in the community (including but not limited to teachers, nurses and doctors) are also required by law to report to Child Protection where they have formed a belief, on reasonable grounds, that a child is in need of protection because they have suffered (or are likely to suffer) significant harm due to physical or sexual abuse.
- This report must be made as soon as practicable, and on any occasion where they become aware of other allegations and have reasonable grounds for that belief.

It is acknowledged that disclosures of harm and/or abuse can be traumatic for every person involved.

If an MCC staff member, volunteer or contractor requires assistance or support to report an incident or to debrief about an incident, allegation and/or disclosure they are encouraged to discuss this confidentially with their manager and/or access the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to speak with a counsellor (EAP Tel: 1300 687 327).

When a child or young person raises a concern or makes a complaint the MCC will offer that child or young person and their family assistance to access counselling and support services. The MCC will ensure they are kept up to date and made aware of the outcomes of the particular issue and options for further review.

For further information, the Child Safety Complaints and Reporting Procedure can be found on Club Hub (intranet) and MCC website.

16. Risk Management

The MCC will prioritise the safety of children and young people in its overall risk management approach through the steps in this policy and required actions under the MCC risk register.

The register is continuously updated to capture any key safeguarding children and young people risks across MCC activities, programs or services (in physical and online environments) and the controls in place to mitigate these risks.

A risk assessment should be undertaken in advance of the provision of any MCC activities, programs or services involving children and young people. The risk assessment must identify potential risks to the safety



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of children and young people and the proposed control measures to be implemented to eliminate or manage those risks. The risk assessment must be prepared in consultation with relevant stakeholders and the Safeguarding Children Manager and approved prior to the activities, programs or services taking place.

17. Privacy and Information Sharing

The MCC will comply with all privacy laws (including the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) and the Australian Privacy Principles) in handling any personal information as required by this policy. All personal information collected or recorded by the MCC in relation to the safety of children and young people will be treated seriously and the MCC will respect the privacy of the individuals involved.

From time to time, we may share relevant information with external authorities to comply with the law or to prioritise the safety of a child or young person. Any information shared will be done so in a confidential manner and in accordance with applicable data protection legislation and the MCC's Privacy Policy.

18. Record Keeping

The MCC is committed to making and retaining accurate records of reports of child safety related concerns, near misses and complaints.

We will maintain records and outcomes of investigations and resolutions of concerns and complaints. In maintaining records of reports about child safety, we will maintain confidentiality and privacy for children and young people and their families in accordance with legislation.

As part of the MCC's commitment to continuously improve our children and young people safety practices, we will review identified risks to child and young people through the incident management and record keeping process and implement action to eliminate or control the risk in the risk management plan and consider changes to training and processes.

From time to time, we may share relevant unidentified information with external authorities to comply with the law or to prioritise the safety of a child or young person but any disclosure must comply with privacy legislation.



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19. Monitoring and Review

The MCC reviews policies, procedures, practices and incident data in relation to safeguarding children and young people from abuse and harm on an ongoing basis. The MCC involves relevant stakeholders in reviews of this policy and communicates any significant alterations of this policy to staff.

The MCC undertakes reviews annually to identify and document potential risks to children and young people associated with the delivery of our programs, services and facilities. Findings from reviews will be reported to leadership and stakeholders at the MCC and such findings will also inform our approach to continuous improvement of our child safety practices. Reviews are overseen by the Safeguarding Children Manager and MCC Safeguarding Committee and will be informed by feedback, MCC data and consultation with children, young people, their families and MCC staff and volunteers.

Related Documents

Related documents include:

MCC Safeguarding Children and Young People Commitment Statement
MCC Child Safety Code of Conduct
MCC Child Safety Complaints and Reporting Procedure
MCC Child Safety Training Module
MCC Child Safety Risk Management Plan
MCC Recruitment Policy
MCC RAP

Appendix 1

Victorian Child Safe Standards

1. Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.
2. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.
3. Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
4. Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.



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5. Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.
6. People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
7. Processes for complaints and concerns are child focused.
8. Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.
9. Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
10. Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.
11. Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

Appendix 2

Related Legislation

This Policy should be read in conjunction with:

- the laws of the Commonwealth and Victoria (as amended from time to time) including but not limited to:
 - *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic)
 - *Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Act 2015* (Vic)
 - *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic) Failure to Disclose Sexual Offence Committed Against a Child Under 16 (section 327); Failure by a Person in Authority to Protect a Child from a Sexual Offence (section 49 O);
 - *Worker Screening Act 2020* (Vic); and
 - *Wrongs Act 1958* (Vic) Organisational liability for child abuse.