

Marrickville Football Club Child Safety Policy

Marrickville FC (MFC) is a non-for-profit, grassroots sports club delivering community football services in Sydney's Inner West. Our Club's vision is to provide a friendly environment that encourages respectful behaviour towards all children and ensure their safety and wellbeing.

At Marrickville FC we have a zero tolerance for child abuse and are committed to acting in children's best interest and keeping them safe from harm. The Club regards its child protection responsibilities with the utmost importance and is committed to providing the necessary resources to ensure compliance with all relevant child protection laws and regulations and maintain a healthy child safe culture. We demonstrate this through implementing our Code of Conduct and this Child Safety Policy.

It is the responsibility of all at MFC, from the Executive Committee to staff and volunteers, to:

- Protect children and young people from all forms of abuse, bullying and exploitation by our people.
- Be alert to incidents of child abuse and neglect occurring outside of our sport that may have an impact on the children and young people; and
- Create and maintain a child safe culture that is understood, endorsed, and put into action by all the individuals who work for, volunteer, or access our programs and services

We expect all within our club, regardless of their role or level of responsibility, to act to keep children safe from such harm by:

- Adopting the practices and behaviour we have set as our standard when carrying out their roles; and
- Reporting any abuse or neglect of which they become aware to our management and/or to external authorities responsible for child protection or to police, regardless of who is perpetrating that abuse.

Responsibilities

The Marrickville FC Executive Committee is responsible for the development and endorsement of the Child Safe Policy and is responsible for its implementation. The role of each group in relation to the development and compliance of MFCs Child Safe Policy is detailed in the table below.

ENTITY	ROLE/RESPONSIBILITY
Executive Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the commitment to this policy and its expectations. • Review the policy annually to maintain relevance. • Ensure compliance to the policy via an inbuilt review mechanism. • Ensure adequate resources are allocated to allow for the development and effective implementation of this policy. • Support a culture of openness and continued improvement and accountability to child protection and member welfare.

Member Protection Information Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the development and implementation of required internal policy/work procedures and guidelines are in place to support child protection practice. • Ensure staff and volunteers are supported to initiate any form of action to protect a child from abuse, neglect, grooming or exploitation. • Ensure appropriate supports, such as counselling and formal debriefing, are provided for any staff and volunteers involved in a matter relating to responding to a concern for the safety and wellbeing of a child or young person. • Advocate and promote child rights, empowering and engaging children and young people in support of this Statement.
Managing Director/Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all staff understand their obligations in accordance with the Child Safe Commitment and any relevant policy and procedural documentation. • Ensure the suite of child safe policies is implemented and adhered to amongst relevant staff.
Staff & Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a full understanding of the commitments and expectations of this policy, as well as all other policy relevant to child safety. • To undertake any induction and training anticipated in this policy, in relation to policy and procedures relevant to keeping children and young people safe. • To seek guidance from the Member Protection Information Officer if there is ever any lack of understanding in relation to the commitments and expectations as set out in this policy. • To take action to protect children and young people from all forms of abuse, bullying and exploitation. • To assist in creating and maintaining a child safe culture and a culture of inclusion and safety.

Our Commitment

Marrickville FC is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people who are involved in our Club.

Our policies and procedures seek to address risks to child safety and to establish child safe culture and practices.

We regularly review our policies, gain endorsement of changes, and advise our staff and volunteers of changes.

Our staff and volunteers know the behaviour we expect

We ensure that each person involved in football activities with children and young people understands their role in keeping children and young people safe from abuse and neglect through application of the Child Safety Policy & Code of Conduct.

Our staff and volunteers are given a copy of and have access to the Child Safety Policy & Code of Conduct. Our staff indicate, by acceptance during the registration process, that they have read and are committed to the Child Safety Policy & Code of Conduct. Our volunteers agree to be bound by the Child Safety Policy & Child Safe Code of Conduct during their registration process.

We minimise the likelihood of recruiting a person who is unsuitable

We have appropriate measures in place to minimise the likelihood that we will recruit staff or volunteers who are unsuitable to work / volunteer with children or young people.

We have recruitment procedures that ensure:

- Our child safe commitment is communicated to potential applicants for employed positions.
- Face-to-face interviews are held for applicants of employed positions which includes child safety related questions.
- Screening checks are undertaken, including identity, working with children or equivalent checks and qualification checks.

We provide all new staff and volunteers with information about our commitment to keep children safe including our Child Safe Commitment, Code of Conduct and Child Abuse Reporting Information. We support ongoing communication with our staff and volunteers to ensure child safe information is provided in an ongoing way.

We encourage the involvement of children, young people, and their parents

We involve and communicate with children and young people, and their families in developing a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment.

We provide information to children and their carers about:

- Our commitment to keeping children safe and communicating their rights.
- The behaviour we expect of our staff and volunteers and of themselves.
- Our policy about responding to child abuse.

We have processes for encouraging two-way communication with children and families. We seek their feedback and have a process for responding. We respect diversity and seek to facilitate effective communication and involvement.

Our staff and volunteers understand their responsibility for reporting child abuse

Our policy for responding to child abuse applies to all our staff and volunteers. The policy states that:

- Staff and volunteers must immediately report abuse or neglect and any concerns with policies, practices or the behaviour of staff and volunteers.

- Staff and volunteers must meet any legislated mandatory or other jurisdictional reporting requirements.
- Staff and volunteers must follow a specified process when reporting abuse or neglect including who will receive reports.
- Failure to report is serious misconduct.

Child Abuse can be defined, but not limited to, as below:

- Emotional or Psychological Abuse
- Family Violence
- Physical Abuse
- Grooming
- Harm
- Neglect
- Sexual Abuse
- Sexual Exploitation

Our staff and volunteers are given access to the policy and understand the implications of the policy for their role.

All Staff and Volunteers understand that they should not be alone with an individual child (unless there is a valid reason relating to our Football Activities).

We document any allegation, disclosure or concern regarding child abuse and monitor responses to all allegations, disclosures, or concerns.

Marrickville FC maintain and improve our policies and practices

We are committed to maintaining and improving our policies, procedures, and practices to keep children and young people safe from neglect and abuse. We have assigned responsibility for maintaining and improving our policies and procedures to our Club Admin Team & MPIO.

We have formally reviewed our delivery of football activities to identify and document potential risks to children or young people. We undertake formal reviews, at least annually, to identify and document potential risks to children or young people associated with our club. We have a procedure to undertake annual reviews, as part of our ongoing compliance with child safe requirements.