



Child safe policy and statement of commitment

The Child Safe Standards require organisations that provide services or facilities for children to have a child safe policy or a statement of commitment to child safety. Aspendale Cricket Club is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children.

Child safe policy

Our commitment to child safety

Aspendale Cricket Club is committed to child safety.

We want children to be **safe, happy, and empowered**.

We support and respect all children, as well as our members, volunteers, and community.

We are committed to the safety, participation, and empowerment of all children.

We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated seriously and consistently with our policies and procedures.

We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously.

We are committed to the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

We have specific policies and procedures in place that support our committee members and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

Our children

This policy is intended to empower children, who are vital and active participants at Aspendale Cricket Club. We involve them when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them. We listen to their views and respect what they have to say.

We promote diversity and acceptance at Aspendale Cricket Club and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome. In particular, we:

- promote the cultural safety, participation, and empowerment of Aboriginal children
- promote the cultural safety, participation, and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- ensure that children with a disability are safe and can participate equally.

Our committee and volunteers

This policy guides our staff and volunteers on how to behave with children at Aspendale Cricket Club.

All our volunteers must agree to abide by our code of conduct which specifies the standards of conduct required when working with children.

Training and Awareness

Training and education are important to ensure that everyone at Aspendale Cricket Club understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility.

Our organisational culture aims for all committee members, volunteers, families, and children to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child safety concerns.

New committee members and volunteers will be informed regularly to ensure they understand Aspendale Cricket Club's commitment to child safety and that everyone has a role to play in protecting children from abuse. This will include checking that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate (please refer to Aspendale Cricket Club's code of conduct for information about appropriate behaviour). Any inappropriate behaviour will be reported through the appropriate channels depending on the severity and urgency of the matter.

Recruitment

We take all reasonable steps to engage skilled and appropriate people to work with children.

All people who are engaged in child-related work and who are not exempt, including volunteers, are required to hold a Working with Children Check and to provide evidence of this check.

Privacy

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, whether they be volunteers, families, or children, unless there is a risk to someone's safety. Everyone is entitled to know how this information is recorded, what will be done with it and who will have access to it. This is intended to protect reporters and to ensure that all members of Aspendale Cricket Club are comfortable to disclose any allegations or concerns in relation to child safety without repercussions.

Legislative responsibilities

Aspendale Cricket Club takes its legal responsibilities seriously, including:

- Failure to disclose: All adults in Victoria who have a reasonable belief that an adult has committed a sexual offence against a child under 16 have an obligation to report that information to Victoria Police
- Mandatory reporting: Any committee members or volunteers who are mandatory reporters (doctors, nurses, midwives, teacher, principals, and police officers) must comply with their duties
- Failure to protect: People of authority in our organisation will commit an offence if they know of a substantial risk of child sexual abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so
- Duty of care: If a child is abused by an individual associated with our organisation, our organisation is presumed to have breached its duty of care unless it can prove that it took 'reasonable precautions' to prevent the abuse in question.
- Risk Management: In Victoria, organisations are required to protect children when a risk is identified. In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children.

Allegations, concerns, and complaints

Aspendale Cricket Club takes all allegations seriously and has practices in place to investigate thoroughly and quickly. Our committee members and volunteers are trained to deal with allegations appropriately.

We work to ensure all children, families, committee members and volunteers know what to do and who to tell if they observe abuse or are a victim, and if they notice inappropriate behaviour.

We all have a responsibility to report an allegation of abuse if we have a reasonable belief that an incident took place. If an adult has a reasonable belief that an incident has occurred, then they must report the incident.

Factors contributing to reasonable belief may include:

- a child states they or someone they know has been abused (noting that sometimes the child may in fact be referring to themselves)
- behaviour consistent with that of an abuse victim is observed
- someone else has raised a suspicion of abuse but is unwilling to report it
- observing suspicious behaviour.

Regular review

This policy will be reviewed every two years and following significant incidents if they occur. We will ensure that families and children have the opportunity to contribute. Where possible we will do our best to work with local Aboriginal communities, culturally and/or linguistically diverse communities and people with a disability.