

Child Safe Standards

CHILD SAFE POLICY – SHORT FORM TEMPLATE

The following Child Safe resource is provided as a reference and template only.

This document and its content is provided as a guide for what your organisation may consider for inclusion when drafting a Child Safe Policy in line with the Victorian Child Safe Standards. Your organisation should also consider referencing any information, documents and strategies that might be specifically required for your organisation/sport and relevant to its circumstances, structure and operations.

Vicsport reminds organisations that the information contained in this document is general in nature and should not be considered as a substitute for legal advice.

Please note that references in [square brackets] throughout this document should be tailored for your sport or organisation's policies and procedures.

Vicsport recommends sporting organisations develop a Child Safe Policy with due consideration and consult Vicsport, a child safe expert or legal advisor to assist with any questions.

Further Information

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*This resource is supported by the **Victorian Government** and has been developed in consultation with **Laura Johnston of People, Integrity & Culture Consulting.***

*Vicsport developed this resource utilising and adapting content from **Gymnastics Victoria: Child Safe & Child Friendly Policy (2016).***

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| Audience: | Churchill United Soccer Club | | | | |
| Version: | 2021:2 | | | | |
| Purpose of Document: | To provide | | | | |
| Actions: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and understand. • Parents acknowledge that they have read and understand this guide via confirming the registration checkbox around club policies • Encourage others to read and understand | | | | |
| Review: | 15 January 2025 | | | | |
| Churchill Utd SC Contact: | Stephen Breheny - Junior Steering Group Chair 0448 996 453 | | | | |
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| Child Safe Policy | 3 | | | | |
| Other relevant resources (see [ORGANISATION] website) [and insert hyperlinks to all resources listed]: | <p>[AMEND ONCE RESOURCE NAMES ARE FINALISED FOR YOUR SPORT – EG:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Safe User Guide • Summary of the Code of Conduct for dealing with Children & Young People • Child Safe Parents and Guardians Guide • Kids Guide • eSafety Guide • Guidance to deal with Child Safe Concerns • Tips and Scripts for Complaint Management • Form – Confidential Record of Child Safe Concern | | | | |

Fortuna '60 Soccer Club
CHILD SAFE POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Churchill United Soccer Club is committed to ensuring that children and young people who participate in its activities have a safe and happy experience. Churchill United Soccer Club supports and respects children, young people, staff, volunteers and participants.
- 1.2. The aim of Churchill United Soccer Club's Child Safe Policy (the Policy) is to protect the safety of children in our care and prevent abuse from occurring, and in the event that allegations are raised in relation to child abuse, to ensure that the allegations are properly addressed. All complaints will be treated seriously and fully investigated and handled with maximum confidentiality and discretion.
- 1.3. Should a person wish to make any enquiries in relation to this Policy, please contact the Churchill United Soccer Club Junior Steering Lead, Stephen Breheny.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

- 2.1. Churchill United Soccer Club is committed to providing the highest level of safety for all involved with [SPORT]. This includes protecting members' privacy, promoting positive behaviours and attitudes, protecting the health safety and wellbeing of members, particularly children and delivering the Churchill United Soccer Club's activities while acting in the best interests of children in the sport.
- 2.2. Specifically, Churchill United Soccer Club considers that the health, safety and well-being of children take priority over all other competing considerations. Churchill United Soccer Club considers that this is necessary to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all members and protect the image and reputation of the sport, Churchill United Soccer Club and its members.
- 2.3. Churchill United Soccer Club has a zero tolerance approach to child abuse and is committed to promoting and protecting children from abuse and neglect to the greatest extent possible. All children have equal rights to protection from child abuse, regardless of their gender, religion, disability, sexual orientation or sex characteristics etc.
- 2.4. Child protection is a shared responsibility between Churchill United Soccer Club, its employees, workers, contractors, associates, parents/guardians, coaches, spectators, volunteers and members of the Churchill United Soccer Club's community. Everyone that participates in Churchill United Soccer Club's activities is responsible for the care and protection of children, and reporting information about child abuse.
- 2.5. Churchill United Soccer Club supports the active participation of all children. It listens to their views, respects their views and involves them when making decisions, where appropriate, especially about matters that will directly affect them (including their safety).
- 2.6. Churchill United Soccer Club is also committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, and those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children living with a disability.
- 2.7. Churchill United Soccer Club promotes fairness and consideration for all staff, volunteers and participants. For further details please refer to the Churchill United Soccer Club Member Protection Policy.

3. SCOPE

- 3.1. This Policy applies to everyone involved in or connected to Soccer, including (but not limited to) participants, parents, spectators, contractors, officials, coaches, judges and staff throughout all Churchill United Soccer Club events and activities.
- 3.2. This Policy will continue to apply retrospectively to a person or Member following the cessation of their association or employment with Churchill United Soccer Club.

4. RELATED DOCUMENTS & LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

- 4.1. This Policy must be read in conjunction with:

- 4.1.1. the laws of the Commonwealth and Victoria (as amended from time to time) including but not limited to:

- 4.1.1.1. Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)
 - 4.1.1.2. Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Act 2015 (Vic)
 - 4.1.1.3. Crimes Act 1958 (Vic); and
 - 4.1.1.4. Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic)

- 4.1.2. Churchill United Soccer Club policies and procedures, including but not limited to:

- 4.1.2.1. Privacy Policy;
 - 4.1.2.2. Constitution;
 - 4.1.2.3. Codes of behaviour;
 - 4.1.2.4. Member Protection Policy;
 - 4.1.2.5. Grievance and Discipline procedures; and
 - 4.1.2.6. Photography Policy

5. DEFINITIONS

- 5.1. **Child** means a person involved in the activities of (Organisation) (including athletes) and under the age of 18 years unless otherwise stated under the law applicable to the child (eg, for the purposes of child sexual offences in Victoria, a “child” refers to a person under the age of 16 years).
- 5.2. **Child Abuse** is the mistreatment of a Child or Young Person that has Harmed, is Harming or is likely to Harm or endanger that Child or Young Person’s physical or emotional health, development or wellbeing and the Child has not, or is not likely to be protected by the parent(s) or guardian(s). For the avoidance of doubt, this includes but is not limited to Emotional or Psychological Abuse, Bullying, Grooming, Sexual Exploitation, Neglect and Harassment.

5.3. **Child protection** means any responsibility, measure or activity undertaken to safeguard children from Harm.

5.4. **Grooming** is a term used to describe what happens when a perpetrator of Abuse builds a relationship with a Child with a view to abusing them at some stage. There is no set pattern in relation to the Grooming of Children. For some perpetrators, there will be a lengthy period of time before the Abuse begins. The Child may be given special attention and what starts as an apparently normal display of affection, such as cuddling, can develop into sexual touching or masturbation and then into more serious sexual behaviour. Other perpetrators may draw a Child in and Abuse them relatively quickly. Some abusers do not groom Children but Abuse them without forming a relationship at all. Grooming can take place in any setting where a relationship is formed, such as leisure, music, sports and religious activities, or in internet chatrooms, in social media or by other technological channels.

5.5. **Harm** means Harm to a person or a Child is any detrimental effect of a significant nature to the person or Child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. It is immaterial how the harm is caused. Harm can be caused by:

- Physical, Psychological or Emotional Abuse or Neglect;
- Sexual Abuse or Exploitation;
- a single act, omission or circumstance; and
- a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.

5.6. **Sexual offence** (in Victoria) means a criminal offence involving sexual activity or actions of indecency or any act which exposes a child under the age of 16 years to or involves a child under the age of 16 years in, sexual activity or matters beyond their understanding or contrary to accepted community standards. Sexually 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, voyeurism, exhibitionism, and exposing the child to or involving the child in pornography. It includes grooming, which includes actions deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child under the age of 16 years (or their carer, family or supervisor) to lower their inhibitions and prepare them for engagement in a sexual offence.

5.7. **Mandatory reporter** means a person who is legally required to make a report to the Department of Health and Human Services or the Police if they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection. It includes (but is not limited to) teachers, principals, registered psychologists, nurses, doctors and midwives.

6. **RECOGNISING AND REPORTING CHILD ABUSE**

6.1. A person may, in the course of participating in the sport or other activities of Churchill United Soccer Club or carrying out their work, form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from child abuse.

6.2. If a person is concerned about an immediate risk to a child's safety, the person must phone Victoria Police on "000" as soon as practicable.

6.3. Specific types of **Child abuse** include:

6.3.1. **Physical abuse**: occurs when a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant Harm as a result of a physical injury, such as a non-accidental physical injury.

- 6.3.2. **Sexual abuse:** occurs when a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant Harm as a result of sexual abuse, such as when a child is exploited, or used by another for their sexual gratification or sexual arousal, or for that of others.
- 6.3.3. **Emotional and psychological abuse:** occurs when a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, emotional or psychological Harm of such a kind that the child's emotional or intellectual development is or is likely to be significantly damaged; and
- 6.3.4. **Neglect:** occurs when a child's physical development or health has been or is likely to be significantly damaged. It refers to an omission, such as depriving a child of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, or medical care.

6.4. Mandatory Reporters

- 6.4.1. Select classes of people in the community (including teachers, nurses and doctors – amongst others) are required by law to report to the Child Protection Unit of the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing Victoria (DFFH) 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.
- 6.4.2. This report must be made as soon as practicable, and after each occasion where they become aware of a further reasonable grounds for the belief.

6.5. Reasonable grounds for belief

- 6.5.1. A reasonable belief is formed if a reasonable person believes that:
 - 6.5.1.1. the child is in need of protection;
 - 6.5.1.2. the child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm as a result of physical or sexual injury; and
 - 6.5.1.3. the child's parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child.
- 6.5.2. To form a reasonable belief, you should consider and objectively assess all the relevant facts, such as the source of the allegation and how it was communicated, the nature of and details of the allegation, and whether there are any other related matters known regarding the alleged perpetrator.
- 6.5.3. A 'reasonable belief' or a 'belief on reasonable grounds' is not the same as having proof, but is more than mere rumour or speculation.
- 6.5.4. You will have reasonable grounds to notify if:
 - 6.5.4.1. a child states that they have been physically or sexually abused;
 - 6.5.4.2. a child states that they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves);
 - 6.5.4.3. someone who knows a child states that the child has been physically or sexually abused;

6.5.4.4. professional observations of the child's behaviour or development leads a professional to form a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused or is likely to be abused; or

6.5.4.5. signs of abuse lead to a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused.

6.6. Voluntary Reporters

6.6.1. In addition to the mandatory reporting obligations above, any person who believes on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from any form of child abuse, *may* disclose that information to the Police, DFFH or the Commission for Children & Young People (**CCYP**).

6.7. Reporting Child Sexual Abuse

6.7.1. If a person receives information that leads them to form a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria against a child (under the age of 16 years) by another person (of or over the age of 18 years), the person has a legal obligation to disclose that information to the Police as soon as it is practicable. Individuals who fail to comply with this obligation under the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic) may be subject to a penalty of imprisonment.

6.8. Churchill United Soccer Club's Approach to Reports of Abuse

6.8.1. Churchill United Soccer Club supports and encourages a person to make a report to the Police, CCYP or DFFH if they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection, or they are concerned about the safety, health or wellbeing of a child.

6.8.2. Any person that makes a report in good faith in accordance with their reporting obligations (whether mandatory or voluntary) will be supported by Churchill United Soccer Club, and will not be penalised by Churchill United Soccer Club for making the report.

6.8.3. If a person is uncertain as to whether they should make a report to an external authority in relation to the safety of a child, they may speak to the Churchill United Soccer Club for guidance and information. If in doubt, ask for assistance.

6.8.4. If an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, Churchill United Soccer Club will follow the reporting procedure outlined in Churchill United Soccer Club Constitution and take all steps to ensure that the safety of the child and other children is paramount.

6.8.5. Churchill United Soccer Club will investigate allegations of inappropriate conduct against a child in accordance with procedural fairness and will handle the allegations in a confidential and sensitive manner to the greatest extent possible.

6.8.6. Churchill United Soccer Club will cooperate with the directions of the Police, CCYP and/or DFFH in relation to any investigation conducted by these authorities.

6.8.7. Churchill United Soccer Club will keep a register of any allegations regarding inappropriate conduct.

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PERSONNEL PROTECTING CHILDREN

- 7.1. Personnel involved in protecting children include the board, management, staff and volunteers within the Organisation. Those people have responsibilities in relation to protection of children and are expected to:
- 7.1.1. understand the rights of children, as appropriate to their role;
 - 7.1.2. respect the cultural and religious practices of families who access Churchill United Soccer Club's services, programs or events;
 - 7.1.3. understand and appropriately respond to the needs of children with developmental delays or disabilities;
 - 7.1.4. appropriately act on any concerns raised by children;
 - 7.1.5. understand the definitions, indicators and impact of child abuse;
 - 7.1.6. at all times, know and follow regulations in relation to the care of children and follow the Churchill United Soccer Club's code of conduct;
 - 7.1.7. co-operate with police and/or other formal investigations to the best of their ability; and
 - 7.1.8. not harm or exploit children who access Churchill United Soccer Club's services.
- 7.2. Churchill United Soccer Club will appoint a Child Safety Officer or equivalent role that will be the primary point of contact for all concerns related to child safety.

8. RECRUITMENT AND SCREENING

- 8.1. The minimum standard for background checks of employees, contractors and volunteers of Churchill United Soccer Club and its members is the law as it applies in Victoria.
- 8.2. Churchill United Soccer Club undertakes a comprehensive recruitment and screening process for all staff, contractors and volunteers which aims to:
- 8.2.1. promote and protect the safety of all children who participate in the activities of Churchill United Soccer Club;
 - 8.2.2. identify and recruit the safest and most suitable candidates who share Churchill United Soccer Club's values and commitment to protect children; and
 - 8.2.3. prevent a person from working at Churchill United Soccer Club if they pose an unacceptable risk to children.
- 8.3. Churchill United Soccer Club requires staff, contractors and volunteers to pass the recruitment and screening process prior to commencing their engagement with Churchill United Soccer Club.
- 8.4. As part of the screening and recruitment process, an applicant must provide appropriate evidence (e.g. WWCC or other state equivalent and/or Police check) to show that they are suitable to work with children and young people in a recreational setting. Churchill United Soccer Club requires that:
- 8.4.1. all Churchill United Soccer Club staff and Board members require a WWCC; and

8.4.2. the following key event personnel must have a valid WWCC:

- 8.4.2.1. those paid by Churchill United Soccer Club for their services
- 8.4.2.2. volunteers with regular roles in Churchill United Soccer Club;
- 8.4.2.3. relevant contractors who may have unsupervised access to children; and
- 8.4.2.4. anyone else who Churchill United Soccer Club staff feel requires a WWCC due to the nature of the work that they are undertaking for Churchill United Soccer Club.

8.5. The type of evidence that an applicant is required to provide to Churchill United Soccer Club will vary depending on the type of position that they are applying for. However, an applicant will not be offered a position until they provide the required evidence to Churchill United Soccer Club.

8.6. Churchill United Soccer Club will exercise discretion and may require applicants to provide a Police check in accordance with the law and as appropriate before they commence their engagement and during their time with Churchill United Soccer Club in regular intervals.

8.7. Churchill United Soccer Club will undertake at least two thorough reference checks prior to engaging any personnel.

8.8. Once engaged, Churchill United Soccer Club will provide staff and volunteers with access to this policy and staff and volunteers must review and acknowledge their understanding of this policy.