



MELBOURNE
RUGBY CLUB

Child Safety Policy

The Melbourne Rugby Union Football Club

Effective date 5th of March 2018

Table of Contents

POLICY GOVERNANCE.....	3
DEFINITIONS.....	4
GUIDING STATEMENT	5
Our Vision.....	5
Our Mission.....	5
Our Values	5
Our Aims.....	5
INTRODUCTION.....	6
SCOPE.....	6
A CHILD SAFE CULTURE	7
HUMAN RESOURCES.....	7
REPORTING A CHILD SAFETY CONCERN.....	7
RISK REDUCTION AND MANAGEMENT	8
COMMITTEE POLICY MANAGEMENT	8
POLICY PROMOTION	8
POLICY REVIEW	9

Policy Governance

Approval	The Melbourne Rugby Union Football Club Committee is authorised to approve this Policy.
Effective Date	5 th of March 2018
Related policies	Internal The Rules of the Melbourne Rugby Union Football Club Vision, Mission, Values & Code of Conduct External Children, Youth & Families Act 2005 Working with Children Act 2005 Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 Department of Health & Human Services Policies Commission for Children & Young People Vic Sport ARU Code of Conduct World Rugby Regulations
Legislation	For the avoidance of doubt, this Policy will not contravene any federal or state legislation, and will be updated should there be any conflict.
Review	A review will be conducted by the committee on an annual basis, or earlier if necessitated by external changes of the Policy.

Definitions

The following definitions are provided without limiting the ordinary and natural meaning of the words. For the avoidance of doubt, words that are not described below should be read in the context of their ordinary meaning.

ARU	Australian Rugby Union Limited (Rugby AU)
Member Union	Rugby Victoria Limited (Rugby VIC)
Club	The Melbourne Rugby Union Football Club (MRUFC)
Member	A player (including an amateur or non-contract player), a referee, touch judge or other match official, a selector, coach, trainer, manager or other team official, or an individual involved in the organisation, administration or promotion of Rugby including a director, other officer or employee of a Rugby Body.
Rugby	Rugby Union

Guiding Statement

This policy has been developed with resources from the Department of Health and Human Resources, the Commission for Children & Young People, Vic Sport and The Australian Rugby Union.

This policy aims to provide a basis for the protection of children by the MRUFC and is seen as fundamental to the aims of the Club.

To ensure the aims of the Club are upheld, and that a child safe environment is being created by the Club and its members, the following requirements will apply.

Our Vision

To create a positive environment that is the best rugby experience in Victoria.

Our Mission

The Melbourne Rugby Union Football Club is committed to providing the opportunity for our members and the local community to enjoy Rugby Union and all aspects of the game. We also desire to create a centre of excellence for Rugby Union to foster development for the future of the sport.

Our Values

The Melbourne Rugby Union Football Club is committed to the provision of a high level of participation, safety, family and community spirit and opportunity in Rugby Union throughout our local community and Victoria. It aims to provide all members with fair competition; access to high standard coaching, grounds and facilities, and equity at all levels.

Our Aims

To field competitive teams in a Club environment where they can enjoy themselves both on and off the field. To develop a strong sense of unity in the Club and local community.

Introduction

This document sets out the Club's approach to creating a child safe environment, whereby children and young people feel safe, and are kept safe when attending the Club and associated events. This policy provides a framework for the Club's approach to Child Safe Standards.

The Club acknowledges that the law says that a child or young person at risk of harm or neglect as a result of a single incident or a number of ongoing incidents, must be protected. The Club will provide a safe environment where children or young people can express concerns, and these will be taken seriously, and all efforts will be made to ensure the ongoing safety of that child or young person.

The Club is committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children, it supports and respects all children and young people. As a community, we have a zero-tolerance policy to child abuse and neglect, and all allegations and safety concerns will be taken seriously, these will be investigated thoroughly, including contacting external authorities as required.

The Club is committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

The Club is committed to the cultural safety of children from a cultural or linguistically diverse background.

The Club is committed to the inclusion of children with disabilities.

The Club will as appropriate, adapt practices to suit the specific and individual needs of all children.

Scope

This policy relates to all MRUFC members and volunteers attending any Club event, including events held off site.

A Child Safe Culture

The Club will actively encourage all members to openly disclose any concerns regarding a child's safety. Any allegations of abuse or neglect, whether occurring within the Club or external to the Club will be investigated. The Club will endeavor to provide support to all of those affected. The Club acknowledges the hidden nature of child abuse and will therefore ensure any allegation of such is investigated immediately and thoroughly.

Human Resources

Coaches, Managers and Volunteers directly associated with the Junior program will have a current National Working with Children Check, copies of a current check are held by the MRUFC Junior Sub-Committee. Without a valid check, these individuals will not be able to work within the Junior program.

Coaches will comply with Rugby VIC policy and will complete and comply with the Smart Rugby program, ensuring this remains current and up to date.

Reporting a Child Safety Concern

The Club actively encourages all members to openly and immediately disclose any concerns regarding a child's safety, this may include suspected abuse or neglect. This can be made to any member of the Club, including committee members (including senior and junior committee's), coaches, managers, physio's or trainer's. Once a disclosure has been made, the following will be adhered to:

The child should be taken to a safe space, ideally by two adults that have good relationships with the child. The child should be asked, in a non-threatening way, do they feel safe? If they do not feel safe, what is it that makes them feel unsafe? Has something happened that has made them feel unsafe? Has someone hurt them? Has someone touched them in a way that made them feel uncomfortable?

1. The child should be encouraged to speak openly, they should be assured that they have done nothing wrong, and that they will not be punished by what they say. It should be noted, that a parent may be the perpetrator of abuse or neglect, this should be considered when questioning the child.
2. If the child has made an allegation, not involving their parent or caregiver, the parent or parents should be contacted immediately. If the allegation is of a person who may be in proximity to the child, all measures should be made to prevent the child being near that person.
3. If the abuse has occurred recently, consideration should be given to having the child taken to hospital, for a medical clearance.
4. A notification to Child Protection is required to be made. This is to be made, as soon as appropriate, by calling The Child Protection After Hours Line on 13 12 78. Support to make this notification will be provided by a committee member.

5. The President and members of the committee should be contacted.
6. If an allegation has been made against a current member or volunteer of the Club, the committee will convene immediately, to decide on an appropriate course of action. This may include expulsion of the member from the Club and banning them from all events.
7. A record of the allegation will be recorded. The allegation and the outcome will be reviewed by the committee.
8. Ongoing support will be provided to the affected child and their parents, to ensure (if appropriate) their continued enjoyment of rugby.

Risk Reduction and Management

The Club believes the wellbeing of all children and young people is paramount, to ensure this the risk management process will undertake preventative measures.

1. The Club will develop a safe, inclusive and supportive environment that communicates with children, and their parents and guardians. All allegations of abuse or neglect will be taken seriously and investigated immediately.
2. The Club will encourage children, parents and guardian's active involvement that informs safe Club operations and builds the capacity of children, parents and guardians to understand their rights and responsibilities.

Committee Policy Management

Key responsibilities of the Committee is to ensure:

- Strict compliance of the Club policy in accordance with the guidelines of the Department of Health and Human Services, and the associated Acts;
- Recording any incidents in an incident register, and reviewing these on a regular basis;
- Inform parents / guardians of any concerns / complaints, providing ongoing support to the child or young person and their family.

Policy Promotion

The Club will promote the Child Safety Policy regularly by:

- Publishing a copy of the policy in the Club newsletter annually and via the website;
- Periodic announcements to members at functions.

The Club recognises the importance of educating Club members, particularly parents in the benefits of implementing a Child Safety Policy and will endeavour to provide information to assist this process.

Policy Review

To ensure this policy continues to be relevant for Club operation and that it reflects both community expectations and the guidelines of the Department of Health and Human Resources, the policy will be reviewed annually by the committee and amended as required to reflect the changing needs of the Club environment.