



CHILD SAFE POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Jets Junior Football Club is committed to ensuring that children and young people who participate in its activities have a safe and happy experience. Jets Junior Football Club supports and respects children, young people, staff, volunteers and participants.

The aim of the Jets Junior Football Club Child Safe 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.

Should a person wish to make any enquiries in relation to this Policy, please contact the Jets Junior Football Club Child Safety Officer: registrar@jetsjuniors.com, or the Club President: president@jetsjuniors.com.

POLICY STATEMENT

Jets Junior Football Club is committed to providing the highest level of safety for all involved with Australian Rules Football. This includes protecting members' privacy, promoting positive behaviours and attitudes, protecting the health safety and wellbeing of members, particularly children, and delivering the Jets Junior Football Club's activities while acting in the best interests of children in the sport.

Specifically, Jets Junior Football Club considers that the health, safety, and well-being of children takes priority over all other competing considerations. Jets Junior Football 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, Jets Junior Football Club, and its members.

Jets Junior Football 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.

Child protection is a shared responsibility between Jets Junior Football Club, its employees, workers, contractors, associates, parents/guardians, coaches, spectators, volunteers and members of the Jets Junior Football Club community. Everyone that participates in Jets Junior Football Club's activities is responsible for the care and protection of children and reporting information about child abuse.

Jets Junior Football 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). Some of the ways in which the Jets Junior Football Club empowers children through recognition, involvement and leadership opportunities is:

- Player/s of the match on a weekly basis awarded by the coaching staff;
- Weekly captains selected for game day nominated by the coaches (for competitive teams);
- Best and Fairest Awards at the end of year celebrations;
- Opportunities to attend and participate actively in a range of training opportunities to develop leadership and other personal skills;
- Acknowledgement of player milestones;

- Celebration of play achievements on social media;
- Opportunities for older players to volunteer and assist with younger age groups;
- Active participation in days of significance celebrated by the club.

Jets Junior Football 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.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to everyone involved in or connected to the club including (but not limited to) participants, parents, spectators, contractors, officials, coaches, and staff throughout all Jets Junior Football Club events and activities.

This Policy will continue to apply retrospectively to a person or Member following the cessation of their association or employment with Jets Junior Football Club.

RELATED DOCUMENTS & LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

This Policy must 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); and
- Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic)

This Policy must be read in conjunction with Jets Junior Football Club policies and procedures, including but not limited to:

- Jets Junior Football Club Spectator behaviour policy
- Jets Junior Football Club coaches code of conduct
- Jets Junior Football Club social media policy
- Jets Junior Football Club inclusion policy
- Jets Junior Football Club vilification and discrimination policy

DEFINITIONS

Child means a person involved in the activities of Jets Junior Football Club (including athletes) and under the age of 18 years unless otherwise stated under the law applicable to the child (e.g., for the purposes of child sexual offences in Victoria, a “child” refers to a person under the age of 16 years).

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.

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

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.

Harm 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.

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. 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.

Mandatory reporter means a person who is legally required to make a report to the Child Protection Unit of the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing Victoria (DFFH) 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.

RECOGNISING AND REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

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

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.

Specific types of **Child abuse** include:

- **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.
- **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.
- **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
- **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.

Mandatory Reporters

- 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.
- 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.

Reasonable grounds for belief

A reasonable belief is formed if a reasonable person believes that:

- the child is in need of protection;
- the child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm as a result of physical or sexual injury; and
- the child's parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child.

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.

A 'reasonable belief' or a 'belief on reasonable grounds' is not the same as having proof, but is more than mere rumour or speculation.

You will have reasonable grounds to notify if:

- a child states that they have been physically or sexually abused;
- a child states that they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves);
- someone who knows a child states that the child has been physically or sexually abused;
- 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
- signs of abuse lead to a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused.

Voluntary Reporters

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**).

Reporting Child Sexual Abuse

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.

Jets Junior Football Club's Approach to Reports of Abuse

Jets Junior Football 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.

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

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 Jets Junior Football Club Child Safety Officer for guidance and information. If in doubt, ask for assistance.

Our Club will take all concerns and complaints seriously, whether they are raised by an adult, child or young person. All child related concerns and complaints will be responded to promptly and confidentially.

If a concern or complaint includes an allegation or incident of child abuse or harm, Club staff and volunteers must report it in accordance with our Club's Complaint Handling Procedure.

Any Club staff member, board/committee member or volunteer who is the subject of a child or young person related concern or complaint may be requested to stand down from their position in the Club during an investigation, have their duties altered so they do not engage with children and young people and/or have their access to the Club's IT system/database removed.

Jets Junior Football Club will investigate allegations of inappropriate conduct against a child in accordance with procedural fairness as outlined in the Club By-Laws Section 6, and will handle the allegations in a confidential and sensitive manner to the greatest extent possible.

Jets Junior Football Club will cooperate with the directions of the Police, CCYP and/or DFFH in relation to any investigation conducted by these authorities.

Jets Junior Football Club will keep a register of any allegations regarding inappropriate conduct.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PERSONNEL PROTECTING CHILDREN

Personnel involved in protecting children include the committee, staff and volunteers within the Jets Junior Football Club. Those people have responsibilities in relation to protection of children and are expected to:

- understand the rights of children, as appropriate to their role;
- respect the cultural and religious practices of families who access Jets Junior Football Club's services, programs or events;
- understand and appropriately respond to the needs of children with developmental delays or disabilities;
- appropriately act on any concerns raised by children;
- understand the definitions, indicators and impact of child abuse;
- at all times, know and follow regulations in relation to the care of children and follow Jets Junior Football Club Code of Conduct and the Jets Junior Football Club Coaches Code of conduct;
- co-operate with police and/or other formal investigations to the best of their ability; and
- not harm or exploit children who access Jets Junior Football Club's services.

Jets Junior Football Club has appointed a Child Safety Officer that will be the primary point of contact for all concerns related to child safety.

Jets Junior Football Club Child Safe Policy: January 2025

Review Date: January 2027

RECRUITMENT AND SCREENING

The minimum standard for background checks of employees, contractors and volunteers of Jets Junior Football Club and its members is the law as it applies in Victoria.

Jets Junior Football Club undertakes a comprehensive recruitment and screening process for all staff, contractors and volunteers which aims to:

- promote and protect the safety of all children who participate in the activities of Jets Junior Football Club
- identify and recruit the safest and most suitable candidates who share Jets Junior Football Club's values and commitment to protect children; and
- prevent a person from working or volunteering at Jets Junior Football Club if they pose an unacceptable risk to children.

Jets Junior Football Club requires staff, contractors and volunteers to pass the recruitment and screening process prior to commencing their engagement with Jets Junior Football Club.

As part of the screening and recruitment process, an applicant must provide appropriate evidence (e.g. WWCC and/or Police check) to show that they are suitable to work with children and young people in a recreational setting. Jets Junior Football Club requires that all Jets Junior Football Club staff, committee members and volunteers require a WWCC (or equivalent); and the following key event personnel must have a valid WWCC:

- those paid by Jets Junior Football Club for their services (excluding bump in and bump out);
- volunteers with regular roles in Jets Junior Football Club i.e. Coaches, Trainers, Team Managers, Runners and Committee members. Volunteers must register through PlayHQ and register their WWCC numbers prior to commencement of their role;
- relevant contractors who may have unsupervised access to children; and
- anyone else who Jets Junior Football Club staff feel requires a WWCC due to the nature of the work that they are undertaking for Jets Junior Football Club.

The type of evidence that an applicant is required to provide to Jets Junior Football 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 Jets Junior Football Club.

Jets Junior Football 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 Jets Junior Football Club in regular intervals.

Once engaged, Jets Junior Football Club will provide staff and volunteers with access to this policy and staff and volunteers must review and acknowledge their understanding of this policy.

SUPPORTING PERSONNEL

Jets Junior Football Club is committed to ensuring that all staff, committee members, volunteers and contractors receive training to ensure that they understand their responsibilities in relation to child safety.

Our Club recommends that staff, board/committee members and volunteers familiarise themselves with the following online training in child safe practices - AFL *Safe Footy* Safeguarding webinars and resources,

Play by the Rules training (child protection, cultural awareness, LGBTI+ inclusive clubs, Let Kids be Kids, Complaint handling) and eSafety Commissioner (safe online environments) (Appendix 1).

Jets Junior Football Club assists its committee members, staff, contractors and volunteers to incorporate child safety considerations into decision-making and to promote a culturally safe environment where children are supported to speak up about issues that affect them.

POLICY PROMOTION

This policy will be made available to all members via the website.

This policy will be communicated to all staff and committee members via email and discussion at meetings at least annually.

References to this policy will be included in documentation provided to all team officials that represent Jets Junior Football Club.

RECORD KEEPING

Jets Junior Football Club will retain records of reports of child abuse and complaints about child safety.

In maintaining records of reports about child safety, Jets Junior Football Club will maintain confidentiality and privacy for children and families in accordance with legislation.

Jets Junior Football Club will appropriately note identified risks to child safety through the record keeping process and will incorporate those into its risk management plan.

REVIEW PROCESS

This policy will be reviewed by the Jets Junior Football Club Committee every 2 years.

If you would like to provide Jets Junior Football Club with any feedback or suggestions to improve this policy, please contact the Club President: president@jetsjuniors.com.

In addition to the regular review of this policy, recommendations for changes to the policy may be submitted to the committee for consideration at any time. In the event that changes are accepted, the policy will be updated, and circulated to all stakeholders via the webpage and other appropriate communication channels.

RELATED CHILD SAFETY EDUCATION RESOURCES AND LINKS

- AFL Safe Footy Safeguarding webinars and resources
[Safeguarding Children - AFL.com.au](https://www.afl.com.au/safeguarding-children)
- Play by the Rules training (child protection, cultural awareness)
[Home - Play by the Rules - Making Sport inclusive, safe and fair](#)
- eSafety Commissioner (safe online environments and sporting organisations)
www.esafety.gov.au