



Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate the commitment of the committee and volunteers of the Dookie United Football and Netball Club (Club) to child safety and provide an outline of the policies and practices developed in accordance with child safeguarding standards. The policy also seeks to educate all members, staff, supporters, and spectators, of their responsibilities when interacting with children and young people at our Club and to familiarise members, staff, supporters, and spectators of the Club's processes for its response to any concerns, incidents or allegations of harm or abuse involving children and young people.

2. Scope

To actively support the club's commitment, this Policy applies to everyone involved at our Club including, but not limited to, participants, parents, spectators, contractors, officials, coaches, and board/committee members.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with Club's related policies and procedures, the Victorian Child Safe Standards (refer 'Policy' section of this document) and Commonwealth and Victorian legislation.

3. Child Safety Mission Statement

The Club is committed to promoting and protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in our care. All children and young people, regardless of their gender, race, religious beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation, family, or social background, have the right to feel safe and be free from harm or abuse. The club promotes a child safety culture and has a zero tolerance for child abuse or neglect in any form. The club aims to create and maintain an inclusive, child-safe environment that is understood, endorsed, implemented, and adhered to by everyone involved.

The mission statement will be achieved by fostering a proactive and preventative approach, upholding the club's commitment to child safety and wellbeing, and regularly reviewing practices and policies to ensure compliance and support continuous improvement.

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4. Definitions

This policy derives concepts, definitions, content, and guidelines from the Commission for Children and Young People Child Safe Standards, Sport Integrity Australia National Integrity Framework for Child Safeguarding, the AFL Child Safeguarding and Wellbeing policy, the PDFNL Child Protection Policy and other relevant material. In this Policy, the following words have the corresponding meaning:

Abuse - means any type of abuse (including physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, and inappropriate use of power) that has caused, is causing or is likely to cause harm to a person's wellbeing, whether in person or as the result of a publication viewable by any other person by any means.

Bullying - means a person or group of people repeatedly and intentionally using words or actions, or the inappropriate use of power, against someone or a group of people to cause distress and risk to their wellbeing.

Child or Children - means a child or young person, or two or more children or young persons, who is or are under the age of 18 years.

Child Abuse includes the following:

- a) Physical Abuse
- b) Emotional or Psychological Abuse
- c) Sexual Abuse
- d) Neglect
- e) Exposure to Family Violence.

Child Safe Commitment - refers to the club's commitment to child safety

Child Safe Practices - refer to the child safety requirements and practices adopted and implemented by Relevant Clubs to help ensure the safety of Children participating in a football activity.

Grooming - refers to the process by which an adult establishes a trusting relationship with a child and those associated with the child's care and wellbeing, to create an environment in which abuse can occur.

Harassment - means any type of behaviour towards a person that they do not want and that is offensive, abusive, belittling or threatening and is reasonably likely to cause harm to the person who is the subject of the harassment.

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Misconduct with a Child - means any behaviour involving a Child that is objectively age inappropriate and/or places the Child at risk of harm.

Sexual Misconduct means:

- a) Sexual Harassment, which is any unwanted or unwelcome sexual behaviour where a reasonable person would anticipate the possibility that the person being harassed would feel offended, humiliated, or intimidated; and
- b) Sexual Offences, which include any criminal offence involving sexual activity or actions of indecency (refer Annexure C – Victorian legislation)

Unlawful Discrimination includes:

- a) Direct Discrimination, when a person or group of people are treated less favourably than another person or group, because of a personal characteristic; and
- b) Indirect Discrimination, when an unreasonable rule or policy applies to everyone but has the effect of disadvantaging some people because of a personal characteristic they share, where such personal characteristic is protected by applicable anti discrimination legislation

Victimisation - means subjecting a person, or threatening to subject a person, to any unfair treatment because the person has made, or intends to pursue their right to make, a complaint or lawful disclosure, including under applicable legislation or this Policy, or for supporting another person to take such action.

Vilification - means a public act, conduct or behaviour that incites hatred, serious contempt for, or revulsion or severe ridicule of, a person or group of people because of a particular characteristic they hold, as covered by applicable legislation, including their race or religion, or sexual orientation.

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5. Conduct in Relation to Child Safety and Wellbeing

This policy relates to all those associated or involved with the Club including, but not limited to, participants, parents, spectators, contractors, officials, coaches, and board/committee members. All those associated or involved with the club have a responsibility to ensure adherence to this policy, and to support the eleven standards for child safety:

1. Culturally safe Aboriginal children and young people.
2. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in committee leadership, governance, and culture.
3. Children and young people are safe, informed, and empowered.
4. Families and communities are informed and involved.
5. Equity is upheld, and diverse needs are respected in policy and practice.
6. Robust recruitment and screening.
7. Processes for complaints and concerns are child focused.
8. Ongoing education and training.
9. Safe physical and online environments.
10. Regular improvement.
11. Child Safety & wellbeing policies and procedures.

The club will ensure compliance with all eleven standards in the following ways:

Standard 1 - Culturally safe Aboriginal children and young people.

A child's ability to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights is encouraged and actively supported. Strategies are embedded within the club which equip all members to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture and understand its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children and young people. Measures are adopted by the club to ensure racism within the club is identified, confronted, and not tolerated. Any instances of racism are addressed with appropriate consequences. The club actively supports and facilitates participation and inclusion within it by Aboriginal children, young people, and their families. All the club's policies, procedures, systems, and processes together create a culturally safe and inclusive environment and meet the needs of Aboriginal children, young people, and their families.

Standard 2 - Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in committee leadership, governance, and culture.

The club makes a public commitment to child safety. A child safe culture is championed and modelled at all levels of the club from the top down and bottom up. Governance arrangements facilitate implementation of the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy at all levels. A Code of Conduct provides guidelines for staff and volunteers on expected behavioural standards and responsibilities. Risk management strategies focus on preventing, identifying, and

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mitigating risks to children and young people. Staff and volunteers understand their obligations on information sharing and record keeping.

Standard 3 - Children and young people are safe, informed, and empowered.

Children and young people are informed of their rights, including to safety, information, and participation. The importance of friendships is recognised and support from peers is encouraged, to help children and young people feel safe and be less isolated. Staff and volunteers are attuned to signs of harm and facilitate child-friendly ways for children and young people to express their views, participate in decision-making and raise their concerns. The Club has strategies in place to develop a culture that facilitates participation and is responsive to the input of children and young people. The Club provides opportunities for children and young people to participate and are responsive to their contributions, thereby strengthening confidence and engagement.

Standard 4 - Families and communities are informed and involved.

Families participate in decisions affecting their child. The club engages and openly communicates with families and the community about its child safe approach and relevant information is accessible. Families and communities have a say in the development and review of the club's policies and practices. Families, carers, and the community are informed about the club's operations and governance.

Standard 5 - Equity is upheld, and diverse needs are respected in policy and practice.

The club, including staff and volunteers, understand the diverse circumstances of children and young people, and provide support and respond to those who are vulnerable. Children and young people have access to information, support and complaints processes in ways that are culturally safe, accessible, and easy to understand. The club pays particular attention to the needs of children and young people with disability, children and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning and asexual (LGBTIQ+) children and young people. The club pays particular attention to the needs of Aboriginal children and young people and provides/promotes a culturally safe environment for them.

Standard 6 - Robust recruitment and screening.

Recruitment, including advertising, referee checks and staff and volunteer pre-employment screening, emphasise child safety and wellbeing. Relevant staff and volunteers have current working with children checks or equivalent background checks. All staff and volunteers receive an appropriate induction and are aware of their responsibilities to children and young people, including record keeping, information sharing and reporting obligations. Ongoing supervision and people management is focused on child safety and wellbeing.

Owner: DUFNC

Created: February 2026

Updated:



Standard 7 - Processes for complaints and concerns are child focused.

The club has an accessible, child-focused complaint handling policy which clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of leadership, staff, and volunteers, approaches to dealing with different types of complaints, breaches of relevant policies or the Code of Conduct and obligations to act and report. Effective complaint handling processes are understood by children and young people, families, staff, and volunteers, and are culturally safe. Complaints are taken seriously and responded to promptly and thoroughly. The club has policies and procedures in place that address reporting of complaints and concerns to relevant authorities, whether the law requires reporting, and co-operates with law enforcement. Reporting, privacy, and employment law obligations are met.

Standard 8 - Ongoing education and training.

Staff and volunteers are trained and supported to effectively implement the club's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy. Staff and volunteers receive training and information to recognise DUFNC CSIO and will check the status of all WWCC to ensure current and linked to DUFNC. Staff and volunteers receive training and information to respond effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing and support colleagues who disclose harm. Staff and volunteers receive training and information on how to build culturally safe environments for children and young people.

Standard 9 - Safe physical and online environments.

Staff and volunteers identify and mitigate risks in the online and physical environments without compromising a child's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities. The online environment is used in accordance with the club's Code of Conduct and Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and practices. Risk management plans consider risks posed by club setting, activities, and the physical environment. Clubs that contract facilities and services from third parties have procurement policies that ensure the safety of children and young people. Coaches consider child drop off and pick up for training sessions, ensuring all children are safe following official club activities.

Standard 10 - Regular improvement.

The club regularly reviews, evaluates, and improves child safe practices. Complaints, concerns, and safety incidents are analysed to identify causes and systemic failures to inform continuous improvement. The club reports on the findings of relevant reviews to staff and volunteers, community and families, and children and young people.

Owner: DUFNC

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Standard 11 - Child Safety & wellbeing policies and procedures.

Policies and procedures address all Child Safe Standards. Policies and procedures are documented and easy to understand. Best practice models and stakeholder consultation informs the development of policies and procedures. Leader's champion and model

compliance with policies and procedures. Staff and volunteers understand and implement policies and procedures.

6. Incident and complaint handling process

Upon receipt of a report involving a child safety and wellbeing incident, the following shall occur

- The club's child safety officer is to be notified.
- The incident is recorded by the child safety officer and or witness and assessed.

An assessment may include:

- action taken by an umpire if dealt with during a game, match day manager or committee member if alerted, mandatory reporting to law enforcement requirements, league reporting (tribunal by-laws and AFL offences), internal processes and resolution.
- Reports to law enforcement - privacy shall be considered regarding reporting shared and documented at board / committee level.
- Reports to the league – details will be documented and reported on, however, the tribunal by-laws of the PDFNL will be adhered to. Outcomes of any tribunal will be reported on by the tribunal liaison officer.

Assessment requiring internal action – the matter will be discussed at committee level.

Should a further/better investigation be required, executive committee members will be nominated to undertake the investigation to provide sufficient information to the board to allow for an adequate resolution. Where disciplinary action is advised by committee members considering the report, counselling, suspension, and expulsion from the club are considerations, and available outcomes of resolution. Decision making will be documented where a disciplinary hearing is required.

- Support should be provided to any Child that has experienced abuse.
- It is important that the person providing support to the Child does not attempt to provide support which is outside of the scope of their role.
- Support should include maintaining a calm open manner when listening to any allegations and disclosures, while avoiding seeking detailed information or asking leading questions. This information needs to be well documented and shared with the police, PDFNL designated contact, or DUFNC Child Safety Incident Officer.
- Further support for the Child, relevant adults and others involved may be required, including a referral to wellbeing or healthcare professionals and or the development of a safety plan.

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7. Modification and Review

- The contents of this document represent the current policy and procedures of PDFNL.
- This policy is subject to a review each year and will be amended appropriately.
- Amendments will be communicated to members as and when appropriate, to ensure that it remains current.

8. Related Policies and other documents

- Bullying and Harassment policy
- PDFNL child protection policy
- Code of conduct policy
- Child Safety Declaration
- Social media policy
- Confidentiality Policy