



Oak Park Football Club

Child Safe Policy

Approved by: OPFC Committee

Endorsed by: Pauline Strkalj

Date for Review: March 2025

Purpose

All Victorian organisations that provide services to children are required under the Child Safety and Wellbeing Act to ensure that they implement compulsory child safe standards to protect children from harm. This policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment the management, committee members and volunteers of the Oak Park Football Club have to child safety and to provide an outline of the policies and practices the Club has developed to keep everyone safe from any harm, including child abuse. This applies to all participants under the age of 18. Children's ages range from 0-14 and young people ages range from 15-17 years old.

Commitment to Child Safety

All children and young people who are a part of the association have a right to feel and be safe. The welfare of children and young people in our care will always be our first priority and the club has a zero tolerance to child abuse. The Oak Park Football Club aims to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children and young people feel safe, have fun and the Clubs activities are always carried out in the best interests of the children and young people.

Application of this Policy

This policy was developed by the Oak Park Football Club. The Football Club includes staff, committee members, volunteers and the children who use our services including their parents and guardians.

This policy applies to all individuals involved in our Football Club (paid and volunteers) including, but not limited to:

- Administrators / Committee members / Managers
- Coaches
- Officials
- Volunteers
- Participants
- Parents / Guardians
- Spectators



All of the people to which this policy applies have a role and responsibility in relation to child protection.

They must all:

- Understand the indicators and risks of child abuse
- Appropriately act on any concerns raised by children; and
- Understand and follow all applicable laws in relation to the protection of children and reporting or management of child safety concerns.
- [Failure to Disclose](#) and [Failure to protect](#) legislation stands for all individuals over 18 years of age. See the following government website for full details of current Victorian Legislation
- www.justice.vic.gov.au

Child Abuse

Child abuse can take a broad range of forms including physical abuse, sexual abuse, bullying, emotional or psychological abuse and neglect. People to whom this policy applies need to be aware that child abuse can occur whenever there is actual or potential harm to a child or young person, and these are circumstances that the Association is committed to reducing the risk of occurrence.

Children and Young Persons Rights to Safety and Participation

The Oak Park Football Club encourages children and young people to express their views about their safety. We listen to their suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect them. We actively encourage all children and young people who use our services to ‘have a say’ about things that are important to them. We teach children and young people about what they can do if they feel unsafe. We listen to and act on any concerns children, young people, or their parents, raise with us.

Valuing Diversity

We value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices.

To achieve this we:

- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Indigenous children and their families;
- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families;
- Welcome children with a disability and their families and act to promote their participation; and
- Seek appropriate staff and volunteers from diverse cultural backgrounds.



Recruiting Staff and Volunteers

The Oak Park Football Club takes the following steps to ensure best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of staff and volunteers

- Interview and conduct referee checks on all relevant Staff (Coaches), Committee members and volunteers.
- Require Police checks and Working with Children checks for relevant positions

Supporting Staff and Volunteers

The Oak Park Football Club seeks to attract and retain the best staff and volunteers. We provide support and supervision, so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated. We have developed a Code of Conduct for each sporting code to provide guidance to our staff and volunteers, all of whom receive training on the requirements of the Code.

Reporting a Child Safety concern or complaint

The Oak Park Football Club has appointed a Child Safety Officer (CSO), this is a voluntary based role. The role of the CSO is to give children and parents a known point of contact for matters relating to child safety. The CSO will lead a child safety committee and together they will respond to all reports/complaints that are made. They will manage each complaint seriously with maximum levels of confidentiality and discretion.

The CSO can be contacted on the following email address: childso@oakpark.org.au

While the CSO and child safety committee may be the best point of contact on child safety issues, it is also the responsibility of the Oak Park Football Club and community members to be diligent in relation to child protection.

Risk Management

We recognise the importance of risk management approach to minimising the potential for child abuse or harm to occur and use this to inform our policy, procedures and activity planning. In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children and young people. To reduce the risk of child abuse occurring, adults to whom this policy applies should avoid direct, unsupervised contact with children and young people at all times.

For example, this should be considered when:

- Using change room facilities



<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Using accommodation or overnight stays
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Travel
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Physical contact when coaching or managing children and young people

Reviewing this Policy

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years and we undertake to seek views, comments and suggestions from children, young people, parents, guardian, staff and volunteers involved in the Oak Park Football Club.

This resource is supported by the Victorian Government.

This document was developed utilising and adapting content from:

The Commission for Children and Young People (2016), Child Safe Policy.
