



Child Safety Policy

1. Purpose

This policy demonstrates the commitment of committee members, officials, and volunteers of the Richmond Junior Football Club (RJFC) to child safety, and provides an outline of the policies and practices that RJFC has developed to keep everyone involved with our club safe from any form of abuse or neglect.

2. Policy Statement

Commitment to Child Safety

All children who are a part of RJFC have a right to feel and be safe. The welfare of the children in our care will always be our first priority and RJFC has a zero tolerance to child abuse and neglect. RJFC strives to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe, are safe, are included and have fun.

3. Implementation

Application of Policy

This policy was developed by the RJFC Club Committee with reference to Victorian Government Child Safe Standards, and other related laws and policies and standards. The policy recognises the needs of all children to be safe. This policy applies to all individuals involved in our club including, but not limited to:

- Committee Members
- Coaches
- Volunteers
- Players
- Parents/Carers
- Spectators
- Service providers

RJFC's Child Safe Policy is communicated to volunteers and families via email and our website.

Child Abuse

Child abuse can take a broad range of forms including physical, sexual, 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, and these are circumstances that RJFC is committed to reducing the risk of.

Children's Rights to Safety and Participation

RJFC encourages children to express any concerns about their safety to a parent, carer, Team Manager, Coach, or the Club Child Safety Officer. The RJFC website provides contact details for the Child Safety Officer.

RJFC listens to and acts on any concerns children, or their parents/carers, raise with us. Mandatory Reporting requirements and guidelines are adhered to by all Committee Members and volunteers. Matters are managed sensitively while respecting the privacy and obligations of all parties concerned.

RJFC takes seriously our responsibility to deliver a sporting environment that is caring, nurturing and safe. We promote equity, respect and safety by:

- actively anticipating children's diverse circumstances and responding effectively to those with additional vulnerabilities
- by giving all children access to information, support and complaints processes, and
- paying attention to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with a disability and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all at RJFC, from the Committee to volunteers and families, to:

- protect children and young people from all forms of abuse, bullying and exploitation by our people;
- be alert to incidents of child abuse and neglect occurring outside of our sport that may have an impact on the children and young people; and
- create and maintain a child safe culture that is understood, endorsed and put into action by all the individuals who work for, volunteer or access our programs and services.

We expect all within our sport, regardless of their role or level of responsibility, to act to keep children safe from such harm by:

- adopting the practices and behaviour we have set as our standard when carrying out their roles, and reporting any abuse or neglect of which they become aware to the Child Safety Officer and/or to external authorities responsible for child protection or to police, regardless of who the abuse is being perpetrated by - staff and volunteers within our sport, or by those outside our sport including those from the child’s family, extended family, their family’s extended network or strangers.

Entity	Role/Responsibility
RJFC President	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the commitment to this policy and its expectations. • Support policy review on an annual cycle as a minimum or at a time governed by legislation, regulations, or organisational learnings that promote a change to the policy and all relevant procedural guidelines. • Ensure compliance to the policy via an inbuilt review mechanism. • Ensure adequate resources are allocated to allow for the development and effective implementation of this policy. • Ensure that the Committee are aware of the appropriate recruitment, screening and employment practice in relation to individuals with specific roles in working, coaching or volunteering with children and families.
All RJFC Committee Members (including President)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all involved in the club understand their obligations in accordance with the Child Safe Sport Commitment and any relevant RJFC policy and procedural documentation • Ensure the suite of child safe policies is implemented and adhered to amongst relevant stakeholders. • Ensure the development and implementation of required internal policy/work procedures and guidelines are in place to support child protection practice in accordance with the relevant standard, laws and policies. • Develop opportunities for regular discussion at all levels to support a culture of openness and continued improvement and accountability to child protection and member welfare. • Advocate and promote child rights, empowering and engaging children and young people in support of this policy and its expectations.

Entity	Role/Responsibility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure appropriate supports, such as counselling and formal debriefing, are provided for anyone involved in a matter relating to responding to a concern for the safety and wellbeing of a child or young person. • Proactively share resources and experience in the development of child safe initiatives as they are identified.
Volunteers (eg Team Managers, Coaches, etc)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a full understanding of the commitments and expectations of this policy and the Child Safety Code of Conduct, as well as all other policies relevant to child safety. • Undertake any induction and training required by RJFC in relation to this policy and procedures relevant to keeping children and young people safe. • Seek guidance from the Child Safety Officer or a Committee Member if there is ever any lack of understanding in relation to the commitments and expectations as set out in this policy. • Take action to protect children and young people from all forms of abuse, bullying and exploitation. • Assist in creating and maintaining a child safe culture and a culture of inclusion and safety

Supervision of children

RJFC are committed to ensuring adequate levels of supervision are applied to maintain effective standards of child safety during all RJFC managed training sessions and games. Responsibilities extend not only to RJFC volunteers, put also parents / carers, in the following way:

- Children under 10 : parent / carer or person over the age of 15 to be present throughout games and training during the published/scheduled times
- Children aged 10 – 12 : parent / carer or person over the age of 15 to be drop off and pick up from training and games at the published/ scheduled times. Where a child under the age of 12 is catching public transport or walking RJFC assumes this to be with parental permission and supervision is not required
- Children 13 and above – Parents / carers will arrange pick up and drop off to training and games directly with their child. RJFC volunteers will not be responsible for supervision outside of the published/ scheduled times training and game times.

Supporting and screening volunteers

RJFC provides support to all volunteers so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated via training, briefings and communications.

Coaches and Team Managers monitor and manage behaviour of players, parents, spectators, and volunteers. Serious breaches of the Code of Conduct are reported to the Child Safety Officer who will act according to Club, League, and legislative processes.

RJFC will give equal consideration to all parties interested in volunteering for roles within the Club, and will not show bias or discrimination on the grounds of gender, race, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion or any other characteristic.

Working with Children Checks (WWCC) are mandatory for all RJFC volunteers over the age of 18. This policy is beyond the minimum requirements of the Working with Children Act, and AFL Guidelines, however the RJFC Committee believes it is in the interests of all our members.

RJFC will ensure that all Committee members and volunteers have a valid, current Working with Children Check (WWCC). Further background or reference checks will be conducted as required for Committee members or volunteers, to ensure safety of all children, families, Committee members and volunteers of the Club. WWCCs must be uploaded and monitored via Everproof.

Reporting a Child Safety Concern or Complaint

RJFC has appointed a Child Safety Officer. This person will respond to any concerns expressed by volunteers, parents, carers or children regarding known or suspected abuse of a child connected with the Club. The Child Safety Officer contact details can be found on the RJFC website.

The Child Safety Officer will:

- Provide support to the child, parent/carer, person who made the report.
- Clarify the nature of the complaint, and refer in accordance with legal requirements and duty of care, to police or Child Protection.
- Initiate processes to ensure the safety of the child, and other children.
- If necessary, make the report as soon as possible, or support the complainant in making the report as soon as possible.
- Appoint an RJFC Committee member or other appropriate person to provide support to the accused if they are a club volunteer or Committee member.

- Work with the appropriate Committee members, and/or league officials regarding behaviour and/or disciplinary action, if not found to be a Child Protection or police matter.
- Review club policies and practices to minimise risk of future similar events/behaviour.

In the event of a child safety report being made against an RJFC volunteer, where the complaint is credible and of a serious nature, the volunteer will be stood down from involvement in the club until the complaint is investigated and the outcome determined.

Refer to Child Safety Reporting Procedure for further detail

Risk Management

We proactively manage risks to our children. This includes ensuring those recruited as Committee Members or volunteers are done so in accordance with this policy, addressing child safety regularly at RJFC Committee meetings and ensuring all RJFC volunteers sign the Code of Conduct, which is available on the RJFC website.

In addition, a risk assessment for child safety will be conducted and reviewed on an annual basis by the RJFC Committee. This will aim to identify any child safety risks, identify, implement and monitor controls.

Our Child Safe Policy is communicated to all volunteers and staff via our website, and direct communications.

4. Evaluation & Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, prior to the commencement of each season, or as required by changes in legislation.

5. References

[VicSport Child Safe Standards](#)

[Commission for Children and Young People](#)

[AFL Community – Policies & Guidelines](#)

[Yarra Junior Football League – Child Safe Standards](#)