Child Safe Policy- Version for Adults

A. Purpose

Our child safe policy is an overarching document that provides an overview of key elements of Ringwood Swimming Club 's approach to child safety.

B. Scope

All Members, Employees, Volunteers, Contractors and Officials of Ringwood Swimming Club.

C. Definition

Child means a child or young person under the age of 18 years.

Child Safe Standards as made under section 17(1) of the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005.

D. Statement of Commitment to Cultural Safety of First People Children

We are committed to cultural safety and wellbeing of First People children and young people. This will be a primary focus of our care and decision-making. Ringwood Swimming Club has zero tolerance for child abuse or racism and as an organisation we will act on incidents of both.

First People Children are able to express their cultural identity and this makes them stronger and safer. Cultural safety includes the rights of each child to develop and express their background, customs, social behaviour, language, religion or spirituality, beliefs and way of living.

Statement of Commitment to Safety of Children and Young People

We are committed to creating and maintaining an environment that promotes the safety of all children. This includes encouraging a culture where the prevention and reporting of abuse is supported and encouraged. All staff and volunteers are responsible for promoting the safety, wellbeing and empowerment of children.

Ringwood Swimming Club is committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Particular attention will be paid to the cultural safety of First People children and young people and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children and young people with a disability.

E. Policy Statement

This policy is intended to empower children who are vital and active participants in our organisation. We involve them when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them. We listen to their views and respect what they have to say.

We promote diversity and tolerance in our organisation, and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome. In particular we:

- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of First People children
- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- ensure that children with a disability are safe and can participate equally.

This policy guides our staff and volunteers on how to behave with children in our organisation.

All of our staff and volunteers must agree to abide by our code of conduct which specifies the standards of conduct required when working with children.

F. Breaches of this Policy

Staff and volunteers who breach this policy may be subject to disciplinary action. This may include increased supervision, appointment to an alternative role, suspension, stand aside with/without pay or termination from the organisation.

Customers or Members of the community who breach this policy may be subject to disciplinary action. This may include being asked to leave the premises, suspension of membership or cancellation of membership, or being banned from the premises of Ringwood Swimming Club.

Failure to Disclose is a Criminal Offence

An adult in child-related work in an organisation will commit an offence if they know another adult there poses a serious risk of abusing a child, and they have the power to reduce or remove the risk, and they negligently fail to do so.

All adults are required to report information to police if they know, believe or reasonably ought to know that a child or young person has been abused.

How to make a report to police

If you want to report to police that a child is in immediate risk of abuse or abandonment, please call Emergency Services Ph: 000 Alternatively, you can contact your local police station

G. Human Resources Management (Standard 6)

Advertising, Recruitment and Induction

We take all reasonable steps to employ skilled people to work with children. We develop selection criteria and advertisements which clearly demonstrate our commitment to child safety and an awareness of our social and legislative responsibilities. Our organisation understands that when recruiting staff and volunteers we have ethical as well as legislative obligations.

Our Statement of Commitment is on all our paid recruitment advertising. It is also on our Position Descriptions. For the avoidance of doubt, we reiterate the organisations expectations of all employees regarding Child Safety on our position descriptions.

We actively encourage applications from First People, people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with a disability.

All people (with the exception of those aged under 18 years) engaged in child-related work, including volunteers, are required to hold a Working with Children Check and to provide evidence of this Check. Please see the Working with Children Check website www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au for further information.

For certain roles, Police record checks are used but only for the purposes of recruitment and are discarded after the recruitment process is complete. We do retain our own records (but not the actual criminal record) if an applicant's criminal history affected our decision-making process.

If during the recruitment process a person's records indicate a criminal history, then the person will be given the opportunity to provide further information and context.

Our induction process includes:

- the acknowledgement of our Child Safety Code of Conduct and a test on knowledge about this;
- The acknowledgement of this policy;
- The acknowledgement of the Employee Complaints and Grievance Policy.

Training

Training and education are important to ensure that everyone in our organisation understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility.

Ringwood Swimming Club aims for all employees, contractors and volunteers (in addition to parents/carers and children) to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns. We train our staff and volunteers to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse.

Supervision

We also support our employees, contractors and volunteers through ongoing supervision to: develop their skills to protect children from abuse; and promote the cultural safety of First People children, the cultural safety of children from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability.

New employees and volunteers will be supervised regularly to ensure they understand our organisation's commitment to child safety and that everyone has a role to play in protecting children from abuse, as well as checking that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate (please refer to the Ringwood Swimming Club Child Safe Code of Conduct to understand appropriate behaviour in more detail).

Performance

The safety and wellbeing of children is our primary concern and paramount. We are also fair and just to employees. The decisions we make when reviewing performance, assessing incidents, and undertaking disciplinary action will always be thorough, transparent, and based on evidence. This may include stand aside for an employee during an investigation.

H. Privacy

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, whether they be staff, volunteers, parents or children, unless there is a risk to someone's safety.

We have safeguards and practices in place to ensure any personal information is protected. Everyone is entitled to know how this information is recorded, what will be done with it, and who will have access to it.

We record all allegations of abuse and safety concerns, including investigation updates. All records are securely stored and only accessible by the President, Grievance Officer and Child Safety Officer.

I. Risk Management

In Victoria, organisations are required to protect children when a risk is identified (see information about failure to protect above). In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children.

We have risk management strategies in place to identify, assess, and take steps to minimise child abuse risks, which include risks posed by physical environments (for example, any doors that can lock), and online environments (for example, no staff or volunteer is to have contact with a child in organisations on social media).

J. Raising an allegation, concern, or complaint (Further Detail in Ringwood Swimming Club Child Safe Raising a Complaint Policy)

All staff, volunteers, families and community members are encouraged to speak up if they have concerns about the safety of children.

Members of the community who have concerns and complaints about child safety during service delivery by Ringwood Swimming Club can raise these with the organisations Child Safety Officer, Kay Yates.

Kay Yates can be reached using the following options:

- Ph: 0478723116
- E: Admin@ringwoodswimmingclub.org.au

Employees and contractors who have concerns and complaints about child safety during service delivery by Ringwood Swimming Club can raise these with the Head Coach in the first instance. The Head Coach must notify the Child Safety Officer, Kay Yates as soon as reasonably practicable.

Kay Yates can be reached using the following options:

- Ph: 0478723116
- E: admin@ringwoodswimmingclub.org.au

Employees may need to report immediately to the Victorian Police, the Department of Health Child Protection Unit, Swimming Australia, Maroondah City Council, amongst others. If you are not sure, please contact the Child Safety Officer for advice.

Call police on 000 if you believe a child is in immediate danger or has been abandoned.

Physical signs like bruising, **must be reported immediately** to Department of Health & Human Services Child Protective Services on 1300 360 391 (business hours) or 13 12 78 (after hours service)

K. Review of this Policy

This Policy will be reviewed each 12 months (or sooner with changes to regulations or after an incident). The next planned review will be in October 2027.

Approved by RSC Board of Management 9 October 2026