

# Child Safe Policy



## Purpose

All children at Strathfield Strikers FC have a right to feel safe, supported, protected, respected and included.

This policy is part of our organisation's ongoing commitment to protecting the children in our care from harm and abuse. It:

- outlines the child safe practices our organisation has put in place to minimise the risks to child safety
- sets out what is required from staff, including volunteers and others who interact with our organisation, so they know what is expected from them to keep children safe.

## Our commitment to child safety

At Strathfield Strikers FC we commit to the safety and wellbeing of every child in our care. Please read our Statement of Commitment to Child Safety, which is available on our website <https://strathfieldfc.com.au/> and is displayed at the canteen.

Our organisation ensures services and activities are inclusive of all children, including children with diverse needs.

## Scope and audience for this policy

The policy describes what is required from all club officials, committee members, members and volunteers in the organisation when taking part in any footballing activities, services and events that involve children.

## Responsibilities for children's safety

Everyone in our organisation is expected to carry out the requirements specific to their role to keep children safe. This includes:

- upholding our organisation's commitment to child safety
- reading, signing and upholding the behaviours set out in our Child Safe Code of Conduct
- meeting requirements across all other child safe policies and procedures, including child safe recruitment practices and risk management
- taking part in our regular reviews of our child safe documents
- reporting all breaches of our policies or any allegations of child harm or abuse, and meeting all external reporting obligations
- completing all child safe training.

Please contact **Michael Saayman (MPO, Secretary, Registrar)**, **Alexandra or Angelica Georgopoulos (Female Football Officers)**, **Chris Boulamatsis (Sr Vice President)**, **Michael Vertsonis (President)**, **Mathew Hogan (Treasurer)** or **Anton De Almaida (Admin)**, with any of your child-safety related questions or concerns.

<b>Member Protection Officer</b>	Michael Saayman	<a href="mailto:mpio@strathfieldfc.com.au">mpio@strathfieldfc.com.au</a>
<b>Secretary</b>	Michael Saayman	<a href="mailto:secretary@strathfieldfc.com.au">secretary@strathfieldfc.com.au</a>
<b>Female Football Officer</b>	Alexandra Georgopoulos	<a href="mailto:ffo@strathfieldfc.com.au">ffo@strathfieldfc.com.au</a>
	Angelica Georgopoulos	
<b>Senior Vice President</b>	Chris Boulamatsis	<a href="mailto:seniorvp@strathfieldfc.com.au">seniorvp@strathfieldfc.com.au</a>
<b>President</b>	Michael Vertsonis	<a href="mailto:president@strathfieldfc.com.au">president@strathfieldfc.com.au</a>
<b>Junior Vice President</b>	Stefan Kuzmanovic	<a href="mailto:juniorvp@strathfieldfc.com.au">juniorvp@strathfieldfc.com.au</a>
<b>Treasurer</b>	Mathew Hogan	<a href="mailto:treasurer@strathfieldfc.com.au">treasurer@strathfieldfc.com.au</a>
<b>Registrar</b>	Michael Saayman	<a href="mailto:registrar@strathfieldfc.com.au">registrar@strathfieldfc.com.au</a>
<b>General Enquiries</b>	Anton De Almaida	<a href="mailto:admin@strathfieldfc.com.au">admin@strathfieldfc.com.au</a>

## Active participation of children, families and communities

- All our child-related policies and procedures are easily accessible on our website and offline for everyone who accesses our activities, services and events, including children, parents, carers and community members.
- Children, parents and carers from diverse backgrounds and circumstances are encouraged to provide feedback on our child-related policies and procedures, including our Child Safe Code of Conduct that describes acceptable and non-acceptable behaviours and our Child Safe Risk Management Plan.
- We provide opportunities for children to provide feedback to our management, board or committee on what makes them feel safe, supported and included. To give children the opportunity to provide feedback the club will have face to face engagement with junior teams throughout the season, emails requesting feedback will be sent to parents/guardians, newsletters and information sent via DRIBL and open discussions. Monthly meetings held by the committee.

## Definitions of harm and abuse

### General definitions

#### **Psychological abuse (also known as emotional abuse)**

This includes bullying, threatening and abusive language, intimidation, shaming and name calling, ignoring and isolating a child, and exposure to domestic and family violence.

#### **Physical abuse**

This includes physical punishment, such as pushing, shoving, punching, slapping and kicking, resulting in injury, burns, choking or bruising.

**Sexual abuse**

This includes the sexual touching of a child, grooming, and production, distribution or possession of child abuse material.

**Grooming**

This is a process where a person manipulates a child or group of children and sometimes those looking after them, including parents, carers, teachers and leaders. They do this to establish a position of 'trust' so they can then later sexually abuse the child.

**Misconduct**

This is inappropriate behaviour that may not be as severe as abuse, but could indicate that abuse is occurring and would often be in breach of an organisation's Child Safe Code of Conduct. This could include showing a child something inappropriate on a phone, having inappropriate conversations with a child or an adult sitting with a child on their lap.

**Lack of appropriate care**

This includes not providing adequate and proper supervision, nourishment, clothing, shelter, education or medical care.

## What the policy covers

### Pick Up and Drop Off of Children

Parents need to be responsible for the collection of their children from practise and games.

- Have a register of parent/guardian emergency contact numbers and make sure coaches/officials have access to a phone.
- Letting children, parents/guardians know practise and game times, when they can expect to collect their children and that it is not your responsibility to transport children home if parents are delayed.
- Asking the second to last child and their parent/ guardian to wait with the coach/official and the child.
- Getting parents to collect their children from the club room (e.g., if you have a club room where there will be other people).
- If there are other people at the ground or facility, wait for the parent/ guardian closer to those people. Whilst trying to make contact with the parent/ guardian.
- Avoid the risk of being alone with a child by having a parent/guardian or support person assist you with the training. Require that person to wait until all children have left.

### Transporting children

Ideally all players/participants should have their own transportation to and from sporting events.

You should only provide transportation when:

- the driver is properly licensed to carry passengers; and
- other players/ participants/parents/guardians are in the vehicle; and
- the ride has been approved in writing by parents/ guardians; and
- the ride is directly to/from sports or recreational activities; and
- If a child is alone with an adult in a car they must sit on the back seat.
- Every child should be accounted for at the end of a journey.
- Every child needs to be returned to their parent/guardian

Signed authorisation by the parents should be sought at the commencement of the season saying that they agree to their child being transported by the relevant person if they are unavailable to provide transport. You should also call someone and tell them what you are doing, and the exact time you are leaving so that you are accountable for your time.

## Overnight or Away trips

Make sure you have appropriate levels of supervision.

The general rule of thumb is a minimum of two staff with a ratio of 1:8 although this can vary between 1:12 and 1:4 and depends on a number of other factors.

Other considerations include:

- If you're taking a mixed team or all girls' group away, there must be at least one woman accompanying the group.
- If there's only going to be one adult accompanying you, the person must not be a relation or a partner. • At least one adult on the trip should have a current First Aid Certificate.
- Adults should not share rooms with children.
- Ensure emergency procedures are in place to enable supervising adults to be able to respond to any alarm raised by a child. If an alarm is raised by a child, more than one adult should respond. Adults attending overnight or away trips should have police or Working with Children Check (or in Queensland be holders of a current Blue Card)

## Social media use and online communication

Staff and volunteers must never communicate privately with children online or on social media.

Any necessary online communication should include the child's parent or carer in the correspondence.

## Physical contact

Physical contact with children should be kept to a minimum.

Everyone involved in the organisation is expected to have healthy physical boundaries with children.

### **Generally physical contact with players/athletes should be to:**

- develop sport skills
- give sports massage
- treat an injury
- prevent or respond to an injury
- meet the specific requirements of the sport.

### **All physical contact by personnel should fulfil the following criteria:**

- physical contact should be appropriate for the development of a sport skill/s
- permission from the player/participant should always be sought
- player/athletes be congratulated or comforted in public not in an isolated setting.

## Avoid being alone with a child

To protect both yourself and a child from risk:

- Do not isolate yourself and a child and avoid being alone with any particular child.
- If a child approaches you and wants to talk to you privately about a matter, do so in an open area and in the sight of other adults (e.g., other coaches, officials or parents/guardians).

- Before going into change rooms knock or announce that you will be coming in. Try to have at least one adult with you in a change room with children.

## Photography and the use of images

It's important that clubs and coaches understand current advice around acquiring and using images of children.

### Some key points include:

- Do not allow photographers (professional photographers, spectators, fans, coaches or members of the media) unsupervised or individual access to children.
- Ensure you inform the team/athlete and parent(s) if you want to photograph or video the athlete(s) as a tool to analyse and improve performance. (This practice would need to consider any photographing policy in existence for the sport and if on private property)
- Obtain the written consent of parent /guardian and their agreement to be present before approving photo/ video sessions outside the event venue or at the home of a child. Where possible, have the photo taken at the event venue.
- If the photographs/videos are to be used generally, e.g., as teaching tools or for some other purpose such as for promotional reasons, obtain the written consent of the parents that the photographs/videos can be used for those purposes.
- Report any concerns to a responsible person in your club or organisation if concerns or complaints of inappropriate photographic behaviour or content are raised. There are some people who visit sporting events to take inappropriate photographs or video footage of children. You need to be alert to this possibility.

Report first to Manager and Coach and any Ground officials present. This should then be reported to the MPO, Secretary and President for further investigation and possible escalation to the appropriate authorities.

### As per current communications filming in a public space:

- Anyone can film anyone as long as it is not inappropriate. E.g. People getting changed or upskirts, filming in changerooms etc.
- Important to understand that the police can be called but they will ask what the person was filming and if they were just filming two teams of kids playing football it's not an offence.
- Club officials may ask any person at the ground what they are filming, but be mindful that there is no law against filming or taking photos in a public place unless the images are inappropriate.
- If a Club or Team has a particular concern as to an individual within that team, e.g. child protection court order; participation of an undercover law enforcement officer, such approaches to the opposing club/team via the team officials should be done respectfully. Clubs/teams are to be considerate and of others at all times any matters to be raised with the Club Officials.

Parents and carers must also approve any images used on our social media channels. It is unacceptable for staff or volunteers to take photos or videos of children, other than their own, on personal devices, or to share images without permission.

## **Support Participants with Disabilities**

It is important that participants with disabilities have the same opportunities to be involved in sport and recreation activities as able-bodied participants.

This may require, where reasonable, the modification of games, equipment and rules.

Provision of specialist support, appropriate transport and training for those assisting with matters such as lifting and toileting may also be required.

Because participants with disabilities may be more vulnerable to abuse or neglect, clubs and organisation may need to take additional steps to ensure their safety.

Advice can be obtained from the relevant disabled sporting association.

## **Gifts and benefits**

Staff and volunteers must never give gifts to children, or bestow benefits of any kind to a child, unless they have direct permission from the child's parents or carers.

With the exception of end of season award presentations by the club and any other significant celebrations during the season.

Clubs may at its discretion introduce player of the week awards or any other special awards.

Teams may introduce their own awards or end of season awards/celebrations but this must be in keeping with club policies and applying child safe protocols.

Award celebrations are conducted in public spaces or venues.

Presenting awards in view of the whole team and parents.

All teams' members are awarded and included.

## **Secondary employment**

Staff members must declare any secondary employment and make sure there are no conflicts of interest associated with the employment.

Staff and volunteers are not allowed to babysit children under the age of 12 years in our care unless they know the family or carer outside the organisation. If this is the case; they must let the organisation know that this arrangement is in place so it can be documented.

## **Out of hours contact with children**

Staff and volunteers must let us know about any out-of-hours contact they have with children in our care.

It is unacceptable for staff or volunteers to participate in the lives of children outside the organisation without a valid reason.

Professional boundaries with the children in our care must be maintained at all times.

## **Illness and injury management**

Injuries must be reported to the first aid officer on duty if one is available, if no first aid officer, then all injuries need to be reported to the coach and manager and first aid administered in a safe space within lines of sight of other adults.

Only personnel who are qualified in administering first aid or treating sports injuries should attempt to treat an injury.

Personnel should avoid treating injuries out of sight of others.

Other considerations include:

- The comfort level and dignity of the player/participant should always be the priority.
- Only uncover the injured area, or drape private parts of the player/participant's body.
- Always report injuries and any treatment provided to parents and document an incident.

Clubs should keep an injuries register that will contain basic information about the time and date of the injury, where it occurred, what it was, the treatment provided and by whom, and whether further medical attention was required or recommended. This information needs to be collected by a team official and emailed to the MPO and Secretary.

- If necessary, seek medical attention as soon as possible or recommend that parents seek medical attention.
- It is important to have a "blood rules" policy.

The blood rules policy is to ensure coaches and officials know to remove any child that is bleeding from a game and to stop the flow of blood before being allowed to again join in the activity.

It is important to clean any areas of the body that are covered with blood and change clothing that is deemed too unsanitary to be used.

## **Reporting requirements for different types of concerns or incidents**

### **Child Safe Reporting Policy**

Our Child Safe Reporting Policy sets out requirements and procedures for complaints, allegations, disclosures and reports, and external reporting obligations. It can be accessed at <https://strathfieldfc.com.au/>.

## **Other related child safe documents**

Strathfield Strikers FC has a range of other key documents that relate to child safety. These can be accessed at <https://strathfieldfc.com.au/>, and include:

### **Statement of Commitment to Child Safety**

Our public commitment to prioritising child safety across our organisation.

### **Child Safe Code of Conduct**

Guides the day-to-day behaviours of adults interacting with children at the organisation.

### **Child Safe Recruitment, Induction and Training Policy**

Sets out what is involved in the recruitment process and the procedures to be followed before a person is considered for a role at the organisation. This includes the verification of their Working with Children Check. It also outlines what is involved in the induction process for all coaches and managers and any further training requirements.

### **Child Safe Risk Management Plan**

Describes the specific risks at the service that could affect children's safety and identifies the protective strategies used to lower each risk.

## **Publication, communication and engagement**

Our Child Safe Policy and other child safe documents can be found on our website at <https://strathfieldfc.com.au/>. We also send out a printed copy with all new registrations. Anyone involved in our community can request a copy via email at any time. We send out regular email reminders to our community about our child safe documents and invite feedback whenever one of our organisation's child safe documents is up for review.

## Related legislation, regulations and standards

Strathfield Strikers FC has to understand and comply with a number of NSW child protection laws and schemes. These include:

- NSW Child Safe Scheme
- *Children's Guardian Act 2019*
- *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012*
- Child Protection (Working with Children) Regulation 2013
- *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*

## Next review date

11/02/2028, or earlier if there are any critical incidents or changes to the legislation or documentation.

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For more free child safe resources, visit [ocg.nsw.gov.au/our-resources](http://ocg.nsw.gov.au/our-resources).

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