

Assumption Netball Club Child Safe Policy

Effective Date: November 2025 Review Date: Every 2 years

Approved By: Assumption Netball Club Committee

1 Purpose

This policy outlines Assumption Netball Club's commitment to the **Victorian Child Safe Standards**, effective from 1 July 2022, to:

- Protect children and young people from abuse in sporting environments.
- Promote a safe, inclusive, and supportive culture for all participants.
- Ensure compliance with legal and ethical obligations.

2 Policy Statement

Assumption Netball Club is committed to providing a child-safe, inclusive and enjoyable environment for children and young people in netball. All children and young people have the right to feel safe and be safe, and the right to take part in sport free from any form of child abuse, neglect or harm. Assumption Netball Club have a zero-tolerance approach to any form of child abuse, neglect or harm; and we promote and maintain a child safe, inclusive and supportive environment for our children and young people to participate in.

3 Scope

This policy applies to all:

- Athletes/Players, coaches, volunteers, and Committee members and other individuals that form part of the Assumption Netball Club.
- Club activities, *netball competition and matches*, training sessions, and online interactions

Assumption Netball Club recognises that child safety is everyone's responsibility, and that all members of the Club have a role to play in the safeguarding and protection of children and young when participating in our Club activities.

Assumption Netball Club follow the child safeguarding principles and benchmarks Netball Victoria has in place. Refer to relevant legislative requirements, reporting obligations and to Netball Victoria's other policies and procedures for keeping children safe.

<https://netball.com.au/integrity-policies>

4 The 11 Child Safe Standards

1. ***Culturally Safe Environment***

- Respect and value Aboriginal children's identities.
- Provide cultural safety training for staff.
- Promote inclusion of Aboriginal children and families.

2. ***Child Safety in Leadership and Governance***

- Publicly commit to child safety.
- Develop and communicate a child safe policy.
- Establish governance structures for implementation.

3. ***Empowerment of Children and Young People***

- Inform children of their rights.
- Encourage participation in decision-making.
- Support peer networks.

4. ***Family and Community Engagement***

- Involve families in child safety decisions.
- Provide accessible safety information.
- Seek feedback from families and communities.
- *Equity and Diverse Needs*

5. ***Support vulnerable children***

- Ensure accessible complaint processes.
- Address the needs of diverse groups, including children with disabilities.

6. ***Suitability of Staff and Volunteers***

- Include child safety in recruitment.
- Require current Working with Children Checks.
- Provide ongoing child safety training.

7. ***Child-Focused Complaint Processes***

- Develop accessible complaint handling procedures.
- Address complaints promptly and seriously.
- Educate children on how to report concerns.

8. ***Ongoing Education and Training***

- Provide regular child safety training.
- Include cultural safety in education programs.
- Foster a culture of child safety awareness.

9. Safe Physical and Online Environments

- Assess risks in physical and online spaces.
- Develop safe online interaction policies.
- Involve children in safety discussions.

10. Regular Review and Improvement

- Conduct annual reviews of child safety practices.
- Analyse incidents to improve safety.
- Communicate findings to stakeholders.

11. Documented Policies and Procedures

- Maintain clear, accessible child safety policies.
- Engage stakeholders in policy development.
- Educate staff and volunteers on policies.

5 Working with Children Checks

All, coaches, team managers and volunteers of the Club must hold a current and valid Working with Children Check (WWCC) from the relevant state authority before commencing any role involving children, unless exempt such as registered teachers with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) or current members of the Victorian Police.

Junior coaches under the age of 18 are not required to apply for a WWCC however and adult must be at all training sessions and games attended to by the junior coach and have education and support in place for the Club's child safety requirements. A parent or guardian of the junior coach must be included on all correspondence.

5.1 Ongoing Compliance

Volunteers are responsible for ensuring their WWCC remains current during their time with the club.

Any change to a WWCC status (suspension, cancellation, etc.) must be reported immediately to the Club President or Child Safety Officer.

WWCC details must be verified and recorded by the Club's Child Safety Officer or Secretary in the WWCC Registration Record Keeping sheet.

Verification of WWCC's will be validated through the relevant government service status checker.

5.2 Non-Compliance

Volunteers who do not hold a valid WWCC will not be permitted to engage in child-related activities until compliance is met.

Failure to obtain or maintain a WWCC may result in removal from volunteer duties.

6 Complaints Procedure

Assumption Netball Club encourages everyone who is involved in netball activities to voice their concerns regarding the safety and wellbeing of Members, particularly Children and Young People. Assumption Netball Club commits to adhering to the Complaints Procedure outlined in Part 3 of the Netball Victoria Childs Safety in Netball Policy (<https://kingstonnetball.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/NV-Child-Safety-Policy.pdf>)

6.1 Commitment

Assumption Netball Club is committed to:

- addressing any Complaints brought to its attention regarding the welfare, health and safety of all Children and Young People, Members, Persons in Positions of Responsibility and Authority and/or Participants in Netball;
- dealing with all Complaints in a fair, timely and transparent manner, as appropriate; escalating Complaints as appropriate to ensure that appropriate
- Escalating Complaints as appropriate to ensure that appropriate Persons in Positions of Responsibility and Authority and Senior Persons are involved;
- considering the wishes of the Complainant(s);
- providing communication on a regular basis as to the progress of the Complaint;
- clearly explaining the next steps and options to all parties involved in the Complaint at every step;
- maintaining appropriate confidentiality regarding Complaints, subject always to legal requirements regarding disclosure or if disclosure is necessary to deal with the Complaint;
- reporting any serious issues involving Children and Young People to relevant authorities, in accordance with applicable legislation;
- ensuring that the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are followed when dealing with Complaints;
- and maintaining appropriate records of Complaints in a safe and confidential manner.

6.2 Complaints Principles

The Complaints Procedures is guided by the overarching principles as set out below:

- all matters involving either Child Abuse or Serious Criminal Conduct should immediately be referred to NV or the relevant Affiliate and Police;

- where possible, complaints should be dealt with as soon as practical after they become known and at the most local level possible (i.e. Affiliate level); and
- if there is uncertainty as to how to deal with a Complaint, always escalate it as appropriate or seek guidance from NV.

6.3 Record Keeping

Assumption Netball Club will retain records of reports of child abuse and complaints about child safety.

In maintaining records of reports about child safety, Assumption Netball Club will maintain confidentiality and privacy for children and families in accordance with legislation.

6.4 Complaints regarding Children and Young People

Complaints regarding the safety, health or wellbeing of Children and Young People will be treated by Assumption Netball Club as a high priority. This is because Children and Young People are more vulnerable and need to be safeguarded and protected by all.

6.5 Who can make Complaints?

Complaints may be made by:

- Children participating in an Netball Victoria sanctioned competition or playing at an Netball Victoria Affiliate;
- Members of Assumption Netball Club, including parents, players, coaches and officials;
- Persons in Positions of Responsibility and Authority;
- other organisations; or
- any person in the general community who has concerns about a person or their behaviour or conduct in Netball.

6.6 What can Complaints be about?

Complaints may be about an act, behaviour, conduct, omission, situation or decision that may be in breach of this Policy. It may be about:

- a Child or Young Person or an adult;
- a group or organisation;
- a single incident or a series of incidents;
- a seemingly minor issue or a very serious issue;
- a breach of the Child Protection Commitment Statement; or

- a breach by a Member, player, coach or Person in a Position of Responsibility and Authority of this Policy or code of conduct

7 Roles & Responsibilities of Personnel Protecting Children

Personnel involved in protecting children include the board, management, staff and volunteers within the Organisation. Those people have responsibilities in relation to protection of children and are expected to:

- understand the rights of children, as appropriate to their role;
- respect the cultural and religious practices of families who access the clubs' services, programs or events;
- understand and appropriately respond to the needs of children with developmental delays or disabilities;
- appropriately act on any concerns raised by children;
- understand the definitions, indicators and impact of child abuse; at all times, know and follow regulations in relation to the care of children
- co-operate with police and/or other formal investigations to the best of their ability; and
- not harm or exploit children who access the club's services.

Assumption Netball Club will appoint a Child Safety Officer or equivalent role that will be the primary point of contact for all concerns related to child safety.

8 Risk management approach

Assumption Netball Club recognise the importance of identifying and managing risks of child harm and abuse in the physical and online environments.

The club will conduct regular risk assessments and review risks regularly at Committee meetings.

Comprehensive Child Safe Reviews are undertaken every three years, and a Short Child Safe Review is undertaken annually which informs the Club's Risk Management Plan.

9 Non-compliance with this policy and the Child Safe Code of Conduct

Assumption Netball Club will enforce this policy, the Code of Conduct and any other child safety and wellbeing policies (see list below). Potential breaches by anyone will be

investigated and may result in restriction of duties, suspension or termination of volunteer duties or engagement or other corrective action. More information can be found in our disciplinary policy.

10 Review

Assumption Netball Club will review all child safe practices and policies at least every two years or earlier on suggestion by the Club or associated parties.

11 Additional Notes

- Child safety is an ongoing commitment.
- All staff must understand and comply with mandatory reporting obligations.
- Resources for further guidance include:
 - Commission for Children and Young People
 - Sport Integrity Australia E-Learning Hub
 - Netball Victoria Child Safeguarding Hub

12 Definitions

- **Child** means a person involved in the activities of (Organisation) (including athletes) and under the age of 18 years unless otherwise stated under the law applicable to the child (eg, for the purposes of child sexual offences in Victoria, a “child” refers to a person under the age of 16 years).
- **Child Abuse** is the mistreatment of a Child or Young Person that has Harmed, is Harming or is likely to Harm or endanger that Child or Young Person’s physical or emotional health, development or wellbeing and the Child has not, or is not likely to be protected by the parent(s) or guardian(s). For the avoidance of doubt, this includes but is not limited to Emotional or Psychological Abuse, Bullying, Grooming, Sexual Exploitation, Neglect and Harassment.
- **Child protection** means any responsibility, measure or activity undertaken to safeguard children from Harm
- **Grooming** is a term used to describe what happens when a perpetrator of Abuse builds a relationship with a Child with a view to abusing them at some stage. There is

no set pattern in relation to the Grooming of Children. For some perpetrators, there will be a lengthy period of time before the Abuse begins. The Child may be given special attention and what starts as an apparently normal display of affection, such as cuddling, can develop into sexual touching or masturbation and then into more serious sexual behaviour. Other perpetrators may draw a Child in and Abuse them relatively quickly. Some abusers do not groom Children but Abuse them without forming a relationship at all. Grooming can take place in any setting where a relationship is formed, such as leisure, music, sports and religious activities, or in internet chatrooms, in social media or by other technological channels.

- **Harm** means Harm to a person or a Child is any detrimental effect of a significant nature to the person or Child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. It is immaterial how the harm is caused. Harm can be caused by:
 - Physical, Psychological or Emotional Abuse or Neglect;
 - Sexual Abuse or Exploitation;
 - a single act, omission or circumstance; and
 - a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.
- **Sexual offence** (in Victoria) means a criminal offence involving sexual activity or actions of indecency or any act which exposes a child under the age of 16 years to or involves a child under the age of 16 years in, sexual activity or matters beyond their understanding or contrary to accepted community standards. Sexually offence behaviours can include the fondling of genitals, masturbation, oral sex, vaginal or anal penetration by a penis, finger or any other object, fondling of breasts, voyeurism, exhibitionism, and exposing the child to or involving the child in pornography. It includes grooming, which includes actions deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child under the age of 16 years (or their carer, family or supervisor) to lower their inhibitions and prepare them for engagement in a sexual offence.
- **Mandatory reporter** means a person who is legally required to make a report to the Department of Health and Human Services or the Police if they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection. It includes (but is not limited to) teachers, principals, registered psychologists, nurses, doctors and midwives