

# Bendigo Yacht Club Inc.

## Membership Protection Policy Child Protection and Safety – July 2022

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This policy is an overarching document that provides key elements of our approach to protecting children from abuse. It is designed to be communicated through our public website as well as through other mediums such as newsletters, our annual report and in induction and welcome packs for new club members.

### **Commitment to Child Safety**

All children who are a part of our Club have a right to feel and be safe. The welfare of the children in our care will always be our first priority and the Club has a zero tolerance to child abuse. The Club aims to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and have fun and the Club's activities are always carried out in the best interests of the children.

### **Child Safe Standards**

Child Safe Standards outlines Child Safe Standards that organisations must comply with in relation to keeping children safe. Our Club is committed to developing and implementing policies and practices to ensure compliance with these standards. To create and maintain a child safe organisation, we must:

1. establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued;
2. embed Child safety and wellbeing in our organisational leadership, governance and culture;
3. empower children and young people about their right to participate in decisions affecting them and which are taken seriously;
4. inform families in our community and involve them in promoting child safety and wellbeing;
5. uphold equity and respect for diverse needs by which are evident in policy and practice;
6. ensure members working with children and young people are suitably and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice;
7. ensure that our Processes for complaints and concerns are child focused;
8. ensure all members are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training
9. promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people which minimises the opportunity for them to be harmed in the physical and online environments; and,
10. regularly reviewed and improved our Child Safe Standards;

### **Application of this Policy**

This policy applies to all individuals involved with our club (paid and volunteer), including, but not limited to:

- Members;
- Coaches;
- Instructors;
- Officials;
- Participants; and
- Parents.

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.

### **Child Abuse**

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

### **Children's Rights to Safety and Participation**

The Club encourages children to express their views about their safety. We listen to their suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect them. We actively encourage all children who are involved with the Club to 'have a say' about things that are important to them.

We teach children about what they can do if they feel unsafe. We listen to and act on any concerns children, 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 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 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 regardless of the sexual identity; and
- Welcome children with a disability and their families and act to promote their participation.

### **Recruiting instructors**

The Club takes the following steps to ensure best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of instructors:

- Interview and conduct referee checks for all instructors;
- Require Working with Children Checks for relevant positions; and
- Our commitment to Child Safety and our screening requirements are included in all advertisements and as part of the induction process for instructors.

### **Working with Children Checks**

The following people are required to have a valid Working with Children's Check:

- Adult instructors providing training to children on behalf of the Club;
- Adult members offering to take children for a sail, where the child is not a family member; and
- Members of the General Committee.

Any costs associated with obtaining a working with children check when working in a volunteer capacity for the club will be at the Club's expense.

### **Supporting instructors**

The Club seeks to attract and retain our instructors. We provide support and supervision so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated. We have developed a Code of Conduct to provide guidance to our instructors, all of whom receive training on the requirements of the Code.

**Reporting a child safety concern or complaint**

The Club has appointed a Child Safety Officer with the specific responsibility for responding to any concerns or complaints from members, instructors, parents or children. That person can be contacted by email at *bendigoyc@gmail.com*.

If you have any concern that a child may be experiencing any form of abuse, whether or not you have formed a belief on reasonable grounds that the abuse has occurred, you should immediately raise your concerns with our Child Safety Officer.

The welfare and best interests of the child are paramount. Whenever there are concerns that a child is in immediate danger the Police should be called on 000.

**Risk Management**

We recognise the importance of a 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. To reduce the risk of child abuse occurring, adults to whom this policy applies should avoid direct, unsupervised contact with children. For example, this should be a consideration when:

- Using change room facilities;
- Using accommodation or overnight stays;
- Undertaking travel; or
- Engaging in physical contact to coach or manage children.

**Reviewing this policy**

This policy will be reviewed every two years and we undertake to seek views, comments and suggestions from all members of our Club. The next review date is December 2024