



# Vermont Vultures Basketball Club

## Child Safety Policy

### Purpose

This document sets out how the Vermont Vultures Basketball Club recognises the importance of child safety and how we work to ensure our Club creates and maintains an environment where all children are safe.

### Scope of this policy

This policy guides how all our staff and volunteers behave with children in our organisation. The policy applies to all people associated with the Vermont Vultures including committee members, management, coaches, team managers, parents of player and players themselves.

The aim of the policy is to promote good practice, provide children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of the Club and to allow staff and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child safety issues.

The words 'child' and 'children' in this policy refer to children and young people up to the age of 18 years. This definition is consistent with the Creating Safe Environments for Children – Organisations, Employees and Volunteers National Framework, the Commission for Children and Young People Act, the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 and the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005. Not utilising the term 'young people' is not intended to diminish any emphasis on, or acknowledgement of, the safety risks to older children or teenagers.

### Child Safety in Victoria

The [Victorian Child Safe Standards](#), introduced in 2016, aim to protect children from abuse in organisations, including physical violence, sexual offences, serious emotional or psychological abuse and serious neglect. The child safe standards require organisations that provide services for children to have a child safe policy and a statement of commitment to child safety. All child based organisations need to work to be compliant with the standards by 1 January 2017.

To create and maintain a child safe organisation, the Vermont Vultures must have:

**Standard 1: Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements.**

**Standard 2: A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety.**

**Standard 3: A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children.**

**Standard 4: Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel.**

**Standard 5: Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse.**

**Standard 6: Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse.**

**Standard 7: Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children.**

In complying with the child safe standards child services organisations such as the Vermont Vultures must include the following principles as part of our response to each standard:



- **promoting the cultural safety of Aboriginal children**
- **promoting the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds promoting the safety of children with a disability.**

## Introduction

Everyone who participates in our Club's activities is entitled to do so in an enjoyable and safe environment. Vermont Vultures Basketball Club has a moral and legal obligation to ensure that, when given responsibility for children and young people, coaches, officials, volunteers, staff members and parents and carers provide them with the highest possible standard of care.

Vermont Vultures Basketball Club is committed to devising and implementing policies so that everyone in our sport accepts their responsibilities to safeguard children from harm and abuse. This means to follow policies and procedures to protect children and report any concerns about their safety and/or welfare to appropriate authorities.

## Child Abuse Definitions

This policy seeks to ensure children in our Club are safe and free from any form of Child Abuse. There are several types of Child Abuse, following are definitions of Forms of Child Abuse:

- **Physical abuse** - Occurs when a person purposefully injures or threatens to injure a child. The abuse can take the form of slapping, punching, shaking, kicking, burning, shoving or grabbing. The injury may take the form of bruises, cuts, burns or fractures. This does not mean reasonable discipline, though it may result from excessive or inappropriate discipline.
- **Emotional abuse** - Occurs when a child is repeatedly rejected or frightened by threats. The abuse can involve name calling, being put down or continual coldness from a parent or caregiver to the extent where the behaviour of the child is disturbed or their emotional development is at serious risk of being impaired.
- **Sexual abuse** - Occurs when a child is used by an adult, another child or adolescent for his or her own sexual stimulation or gratification. These can be contact or non-contact acts, including grooming by perpetrators, inappropriate touching, penetrative abuse, and exposure to pornography and accessing child pornography.
- **Neglect** – Occurs when there is a failure to provide the child with the basic necessities of life, such as food, clothing, shelter, supervision, medical attention or care to the extent that the health safety, or development of the child is significantly impaired or placed at risk.
- **Family Violence** – Occurs when children witness or experience the chronic domination, coercion, intimidation and victimisation of one person by another by physical, sexual or emotional means within a domestic relationship.
- **Grooming** – Occurs when communication or conduct is linked to the intention of facilitating the involvement of a child less than 16 years of age in sexual behaviour with an adult. Indicators include but are not limited to:
  - Developing special relationships with, favouring or giving gifts to a child
  - Inappropriate interactions with children either in person or via forms of media and electronic devices

- Asking a child to keep a secret of any aspect of their relationship
- Testing of or ignoring professional boundaries or rules



We all have a responsibility to protect the children in our community and our Club. If you have a reasonable belief that child is at risk of abuse or is being abused, please refer the section about [Reporting allegations, concerns and complaints](#) in this Policy.

## Our Commitment to Child Safety 1) Club Culture and Leadership

The Club and its Leaders are building and maintaining a child safe environment and culture. Our Club culture needs to provide children with the best possible experience and opportunities. In Basketball and at this Club, everyone must operate within our accepted ethical frameworks, these include our Code of Conduct, Member Protection Declaration and this Child Safety Policy.

It is not always easy to distinguish poor practice from abuse. It is not the responsibility of anyone working or volunteering for Vermont Vultures Basketball Club in a paid or unpaid capacity to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility for everyone to act on any reasonable concerns through contact with the appropriate personnel and authorities so that those authorities can then make inquiries and undertake investigations; and take necessary action to protect the child.

This applies to disclosures, allegations and suspicions of abuse occurring within our organisation's activities; and to disclosures, allegations and suspicions of abuse that personnel may become aware of that is taking place elsewhere.

### Club Child Welfare and Safety Officer

The Vultures Basketball Club has appointed a Child Welfare and Safety Officer to oversee matters concerning child safety and abuse. We expect our members and staff to discuss any concerns that they may have about the welfare of a child IMMEDIATELY with the Child Welfare and Safety Officer ([vicepresident@vermontvultures.org.au](mailto:vicepresident@vermontvultures.org.au)). The Child Welfare and Safety Officer will ensure that the concern and/or incident is reported and remains confidential and that the identity of the person reporting the concern or incident is not revealed unless required by the law.

The Club Child Welfare and Safety Officer is required to report all the incidents noted by him/her to both the Club Committee and Basketball Victoria (BV). The Club Welfare Officer in consultation with the Club Committee and BV will then ascertain whether or not the alleged person/s involved in the incident should continue in their role in the organisation or an investigation should take place, and act accordingly. If at any time an adult believes they have a reasonable concern they may report their concerns directly to the Victoria Police and/or the Victorian Child Protection Agency.

The Child Welfare and Safety Officer, the President, Vice President and the Committee will work to ensure all children, families, staff and volunteers know what to do and who to tell if they observe abuse or are a victim, and if they notice inappropriate behaviour.

We all have a responsibility to report an allegation of abuse if we have a reasonable belief that an incident took place (see information about [failure to disclose](#)). If an adult has a reasonable belief that an incident has occurred, then they must report the incident.

## 2) Child Safety Policy Statement

At the Vermont Vultures, we want children to be safe, happy and empowered and we want to work in partnership with parents and children to create a child safe environment. We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. At the Vermont Vultures, we:

- are committed to child safety and the safety and welfare of every child is paramount



- are committed to the participation and empowerment of all children
- have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our robust policies and procedures
- have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously
- are committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks
- have robust recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers and we ensure all employees and volunteers who work with children are screened using a Working with children check
- are committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks. and are provided with guidance and/or training in good Child Safety practice and procedures
- will take all reports of suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse seriously and responded swiftly and appropriately
- take all reasonable steps to protect children from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings
- ensure all children, whatever their age, culture, ability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief, and/or sexual identity will be able to participate in basketball in a fun and safe environment
- have specific policies, procedures and training in place that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments. [Specific Child Safe Policies and Practices](#)

The Club has both a moral and legal duty of care to ensure a child safe environment is maintained at all times. To do this the Club has developed policies and practices that demonstrate our commitment to keeping children in our Club safe.

### **General Policies**

In acknowledging and complying with this Child Safe policy, all Club Management, Staff and Volunteers:

- are prohibited under any circumstance any physical or sexual contact, this includes but is not limited to massaging, pinching, punching, pushing, sitting on laps and any form of assault or any other inappropriate touching, as determined by the child
- are prohibited under any circumstance from verbally or psychologically abusing or denigrating children publicly or privately or from attempts to control or manipulate children through psychological means
- will not use any physical force unless it is to safeguard against immediate physical danger (for example: separating players engaged in a fight is acceptable)
- will not forbid children from sharing conversations or information with parents, other staff or volunteers, nor instruct children to "keep secrets" from their parents or carers
- will not ever display any attributes of Grooming as outlined in this policy
- will not be alone with any child (excluding one's own child) in any secluded area or room, that they cannot be seen or observed by another staff member or adult
- will not display, distribute or share any demeaning, suggestive, objectionable or pornographic material
- will not indirectly or explicitly invite children to engage in inappropriate, suggestive or sexual activities which may or may not include a promise to reward for complying, or a threat of reprisal for not complying
- will refrain from any sexual attention towards others in the form of remarks, jokes or innuendos about a person's body or clothing etc., including threats of such behaviour



- will comply with this policy at all times and ensure all allegations, concerns or complaints relating to child abuse or Child Safety are referred to the correct internal and external authority immediately.

### **Physical Contact**

Physical contact with child is permitted for coaching, wellbeing or medical reasons and only in a manner which is consistent with this policy; and should only be carried out in a public place.

- When comforting a distressed child, the use of a side hug instead of front body embrace is allowed.
- When teaching or coaching a child in a basketball technique the physical contact should be kept to the minimum requirements to demonstrate that technique.
- If a child initiates physical contact it is up to the Adult to ensure it is appropriate and take measures to ensure the child understands the limits of physical contact.

### **Transporting Children**

The Club acknowledges that there may be certain circumstances whereby a child may need to travel alone in a car with a staff member or volunteer. Whilst the Club does not encourage this practice, we are cognisant that as a community this may occur. In these circumstances, staff or volunteers must email or text the child's parent/s and obtain their permission in writing prior to the transportation taking place.

Where this is a regular occurrence, for example, a ride to training each week, the driver must ensure they have written permission from the parents or carers at the commencement of the arrangement and ensure there is an acknowledgment of the ongoing nature of the arrangement.

Where one-to-one travel is undertaken, the child must be seated in the back seat of the car and fitted with a seat belt.

### **Change Room Arrangements**

Staff and volunteers may be required to supervise children in change rooms. This must meet the requirement with a child's right to privacy. To ensure this staff and volunteers:

- provide the level of supervision required for preventing abuse by members of the public, adult service users, peer service users, or general misbehaviour, while also respecting a child's privacy
- must avoid one-to-one situations with a child in a change room area
- are not permitted to use the change room area to undress or change, while children are present
- undertake same gender supervisor. Female staff are not to enter male change rooms and male staff are not to enter female change rooms for any reason.

Where a change of jumpers is required on court, children are allowed to find a private area in which to change, if they want to.

### **Giving Gifts**

Giving of gifts by staff or volunteers to a child is subject to the gift being given as a reward or prize in a public manner whereby there is no secrecy about the gift and why it is being awarded.

### **Use, possession or supply of alcohol or drugs**

Staff and volunteers must not use, possess or be under the influence of an illicit drug or alcohol or supply alcohol or drugs (including tobacco) to children participating in our Club.

### **Child Supervision**

Staff and volunteers are responsible for supervising children at Club games, training, programs and events, to ensure those participating are in a safe environment and are protected from external threats and/or intruders and are supervised at all times. Children are expected behave appropriately toward one another, for example, no bullying or harassing behaviour.

Staff, volunteers and parents must not leave a child unsupervised outside of any stadium where training or a game is about to commence or has just been completed.



### Appropriate language

Language and/or tone of voice used in the presence of children should provide clear direction, boost their confidence, encourage and/or affirm and not be harmful in any way. Adults should avoid language that is discriminatory, racist or sexist, derogatory, belittling or negative or intended to threaten, psychologically abuse or frighten the child.

### Electronic Communication

Use of electronic media and communication must comply with this policy, including:

- Club Staff and volunteers must not initiate social media contact with children nor initiate children becoming their social media 'friend' or 'follower'.
- If a child requests to 'friend' or 'follow' any adult staff or volunteer on social media the child's parent or carer permission must be granted in writing.
- If you are an adult and you are currently 'friends' with children that you know through the Basketball Club you must immediately 'de-friend' or 'unfollow' the child/ren and refer them to this policy when doing so. If and when parental permission in writing is granted the child can 're-friend' you.
- Adults should never use social media private messaging when communicating with children
- All Adults must consistently with this policy at all times when using electronic communication.
- Electronic communication to parents and children can be sent from personal email accounts and must only relate to Vulture Club business (eg: training times, game details etc.) and should be sent as a 'broadcast' emails to all parents.
- All emails from personal emails accounts relating to Vulture Club basketball business must be provided to the Club upon request, if ever required for evidentiary or investigation purposes.
- Text messages relating to Vulture Club basketball must only be sent to children as a matter is urgency and a copy of the text sent to and received from a child should be retained on the staff members or volunteers phone and advised to their Team Manager or the Child Welfare and Safety Officers.

### Overnight Stays/Camps

Overnight stays or camps relating to Vulture Club business may occur from time to time. All overnights arrangements can only be made with the pre-authorization of the Club Committee and the parents/guardians of all children(s) involved. Email submissions should be made to the Club Committee before the event takes place.

Children's accommodation must be safe and secure at all times. Staff or volunteer accommodation should be in close proximity to children accommodation.

Practices and behaviour by staff and volunteers during an overnight stay must be consistent with this Policy, practices and behaviour expected during delivery of any and all Club programs and events.

Standards of conduct that must be met by staff and volunteers during an overnight stay include:

- Under no circumstances will adult staff and volunteers sleep in the same bed, tent or room as a child or young person on their own.
- Providing children with privacy when bathing and dressing.
- Observing appropriate personal standards when children are present. Under no circumstances should children be exposed to adult nudity or any state of undress.
- If medical or emotional circumstances warrant separate sleeping arrangements, two staff members or two children must always be present.
- Not leaving children under the supervision or protection of unauthorised persons such as maintenance staff, stadium staff or friends.
- The right of children to contact their parents, or another trusted adult, if they feel unsafe, uncomfortable or distressed at any time during their time away.

- Ensuring children are not exposed to age inappropriate material of any kind including movies, television, the internet or magazines.



### 3) Codes of Conduct

To provide children with the best possible experience and opportunities in basketball everyone must operate within an accepted ethical framework such as our Codes of Conduct.

Vermont Vultures Basketball Club will ensure that all adults are aware of and adhere to the organisation's Codes of Conduct that specify standards of conduct when dealing and interacting with children, particularly those in the organisation's care. The organisation will also implement a code of conduct to address appropriate behaviour between children.

All staff and volunteers, as well as children and their families, are given the opportunity to contribute to the development or changes to the Codes of Conduct.

### 4) Recruitment, Screening, Training and Supervision

#### Recruitment

The way in which we attract and recruit staff to our Club is important when maintaining a child safe environment. We develop role descriptions, selection criteria and advertisements which clearly demonstrate our commitment to child safety and an awareness of our social and legislative responsibilities. Our Club understands that when recruiting staff and volunteers, we have ethical as well as legislative obligations.

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

To ensure stringent checking of volunteers and employees the Club undertakes the following:

- A check of the application form, including sections on criminal records and disclosures
- A collection of information about the candidate which can include questionnaires and/or interviews to ascertain that the staff member or volunteer is suitable for working with children and understands their role in child safety.
- Confirmation that qualifications are substantiated through contact with educational institutions or sighting of original certifications.
- Confirmation of the detailed role requirements and responsibilities.
- Two documented reference checks about his/her suitability for the role. Reference checks should be undertaken with independent people, not family members of the applicant and preferably independent of the Club environment.

#### Screening

Vermont Vultures Basketball Club ensures that all reasonable steps are taken to engage the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children. This is achieved using a range of screening measures as discussed above. Such measures help us minimise the likelihood of engaging (or retaining) people who are unsuitable to work with children.

As required by the Basketball Victoria Member Protection By-Laws, the screening process for people in our Club who work, volunteer, coach, supervise or have regular contact with people under the age of 18 years are required to hold a Victorian Working with Children Check that is linked to our Club; and to provide evidence of this Check to the Club. As part of our maintenance of this screening our Club will:

- a. Identify positions that involve working, volunteering, coaching, supervising or other regular contact with people under the age of 18 years.
- b. Obtain a completed *Member Protection Declaration (MPD)* from all people who are identified in these roles and keep it in a secure place.



- c. Not allow members to volunteer with the Club if they cannot provide a signed MPD.
- d. If an MPD reveals that the person does not satisfactorily meet any of the clauses in the MPD we will give the person an opportunity to provide an explanation. The Committee will then consider that response and decide on the suitability of the member.
- e. In conjunction with our Child Welfare and Safety Officer, the Club Committee will then make an assessment as to whether the person may be unsuitable to work with people under the age of 18 years. If unsatisfied we will not appoint them to the role/position.
- f. Ensure the person being interviewed and screened has a valid Working with Children Check (WWCC) issued by the Victorian government with the Vermont Vultures Basketball Club registered as an organisation on their WWCC profile. Our organisation recognises two (2) exceptions to the Working with Children Check - police officers and teachers. These personnel are screened and monitored through their professional accreditation and therefore do not need a Victorian WWCC for the positions identified above.

#### *Obtaining and recording a Victorian Working with Children Check*

[Victorian Working with Children Check](#) must be obtained and maintained by every committee member, and all adult coaches, assistant coaches, team managers or trainers and any other volunteers that participate in child basketball teams. If you are currently performing one of these roles on a paid or voluntary basis you must immediately obtain a valid working with children check.

By accessing the online [WWCC system](#) you will be asked to nominate an occupational code and the contact details for the Vermont Vultures Club. Please use the **“Clubs and Associations Occupational Code 42”** and note the **Vermont Vultures, Nunawading Basketball Stadium, East Burwood Reserve, Burwood Highway East Burwood Vic 3151, Phone 0408 380 630** when prompted.

Please forward a copy of all existing and new WWCC to the Club Secretary for our records ([secretary@vermontvultures.org.au](mailto:secretary@vermontvultures.org.au)).

You will be prompted to renew when your WWCC expires and you will not be able to participant in your allocated role or as a volunteer until you have a valid WWCC that has been linked to and provided to the Club.

#### **Training and education**

Training and education is important to ensure that everyone in our organisation understands that child safety is everyone’s responsibility. The Club will continue to develop specific policies, procedures and training that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve the commitments set out in the Child Safe standards.

Our organisational culture aims for all staff and volunteers (in addition to parents/carers and children) to feel confident and safe 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. In addition to pre-selection checks, the safeguarding process includes training after recruitment to help staff and volunteers to:

- Work safely and effectively with children
- Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice and/or abuse
- Respond to concerns expressed by a child in a supportive and safe way



- Analyse their own practice against what is deemed good practice, and to ensure their practice is likely to protect them from false allegations



### **Induction**

All employees and volunteers will receive induction during which:

- The job requirements and responsibilities will be clarified
- They will sign up to the organisation's Codes of Conduct, Child Safety Policy and the Member Protection Declaration
- Child Safety Policy will be explained and training needs will be identified e.g. basic child safety awareness.

### **Staff and Volunteer Supervision**

We support our staff and volunteers through ongoing supervision to develop their skills to protect children from abuse. New employees and volunteers will be regularly engaged in supervision to ensure they understand our organisation's commitment to child safety and know that everyone has a role to play in protecting children from abuse. Staff and volunteers' will be held accountable for their approach to their role and their behaviour towards children to ensure it is safe and appropriate at all times. This will occur through regular communication with the Club and observations by its members.

Any inappropriate behaviour that is observed or identified will be reported through the Club Child Safety and Welfare Officer and any other appropriate channels which may include the Department of Health and Human Services and/or Victoria Police, depending on the type of abuse or behaviour, severity and urgency of the matter. Please refer to this organisation's code of conduct to understand appropriate behaviour further.



## 5) Allegations, Concerns and Complaints

Vermont Vultures takes all allegations seriously and has practices in place to investigate thoroughly and quickly. We have staff and volunteers who are trained to deal appropriately with allegations.

We take our legal responsibilities seriously and we abide by all existing and new laws relating to child safety in Victoria and Australia. The following sets out the Victorian laws that apply to every adult person who is a staff member or volunteer of the Vermont Vultures Club and include:

- **Failure to disclose:** Reporting child sexual abuse is a community-wide responsibility. All adults in Victoria who have a reasonable belief that an adult has committed a sexual offence against a child under 16 have an obligation to report that information to the police.
- **Failure to protect:** People of authority in our organisation will commit an offence if they know of a substantial risk of child sexual abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so.
- **Mandatory reporters:** In Australia doctors, nurses, midwives, teachers including early childhood teachers, principals and police are all mandatory reporters. They must report to [child protection](#) if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from physical injury or sexual abuse. Any personnel who are mandatory reporters whether at work or not, must comply with their duties.

### Reporting

We work to ensure all children, families, staff and volunteers know what to do and who to tell if they observe abuse or are a victim of abuse, or if they notice inappropriate behaviour. We all have a responsibility to report an allegation of abuse if we have a reasonable belief that an incident took place (see information about failure to disclose above).

If an adult has a **reasonable belief** that an incident has occurred, then they must report the incident. Factors contributing to reasonable belief may be:

- a child states they or someone they know has been abused (noting that sometimes the child may in fact be referring to themselves)
- behaviour consistent with that of an abuse victim is observed<sup>1</sup>
- someone else has raised a suspicion of abuse but is unwilling to report it
- observing suspicious behaviour.

The Vermont Vulture Committee has appointed a Child Welfare and Safety Officer to support the club in our child safety endeavours. Our Child Welfare and Safety Officer is trained to deal appropriately with allegations any disclosure, allegation or observations relating to child safety and child abuse.

If you have received an allegation, have concerns or a complaint about child safety you should direct your calls to Child Welfare and Safety Officer, Alix Lamb on 0414 461 899 or via email at [vicepresident@vermontvultures.org.au](mailto:vicepresident@vermontvultures.org.au)

**If you want to make a report about a child that is in immediate risk or danger of an offence, please call Triple Zero (000).**

All other reports can be made by contacting your local police station or the Victorian Child Protection Agency on 13 12 78 or Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

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<sup>1</sup> For examples of behaviour, please see [An Overview of the Victorian child safe standards](#)



### **Victimisation**

Disciplinary measures can be imposed on anyone who harasses or victimises another person for making a complaint or supporting another person's complaint.

### **Improper and Vexatious Complaints**

If at any point in the complaint handling process, the Club considers that the person(s) making the complaint has knowingly made an untrue or vexatious complaint, and the complaint is malicious, frivolous or intended to cause distress to the person who is the subject of the complaint, disciplinary action may also be taken against the person(s) who made the complaint.

## **6) Identify and Analyse Risk of Harm**

Vermont Vultures Basketball Club will develop and implement a risk management strategy, which includes a review of existing child safety practices, to determine how child safe and child friendly the organisation is and to determine what additional policies and strategies are required to minimise and prevent risk of harm to children because of the action of an employee, volunteer, official, parent, player or another person.

This will include the development of risk management strategies to identify, assess, and take steps to minimise child abuse risks, which include risks posed by physical environments and online environments.

All participants in the club are encouraged to raise issues that they feel create risks for children in our club.

## **7) Children Empowerment and Right to Safety and Participation**

Vermont Vultures Basketball Club promotes the involvement and participation of children and young people in developing and maintaining child safe environments. We support the rights of the child and will act without hesitation to ensure a child safe environment is maintained at all times.

We involve children when making decisions and encourage children to speak up if they feel unsafe. We listen to their views and respect what they have to say. We promote diversity and tolerance in our Club, and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome., we will:

- develop ways to empower children who are vital and active participants in our organisation. We want to involve them when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them.
- develop a child friendly reporting process that records all allegations of abuse and safety concerns using an incident reporting form or method that is legislatively compliant.

### **Fair and Just Procedures for Personnel**

The safety and wellbeing of children is our primary concern. We are also fair and just with all club personnel. The decisions we make when recruiting, assessing incidents, and undertaking disciplinary action will always be thorough, transparent, and based on evidence. We record all allegations of abuse and safety concerns, including investigation and outcomes and all records will be securely stored.

If an allegation of abuse or a safety concern is raised, we provide updates to children and families on progress and any actions we as an organisation take.

### **Privacy**

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, whether they be staff, volunteers, officials, 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 will ensure we have systems where all records are securely stored and safeguards and practices are in place to ensure any personal meet their obligation and their information is protected. We will meet all our obligations relating to the Commonwealth Privacy Act and Information Privacy Principles; and the Victorian Privacy and Data Protection Act.

## Regular Review

This policy will be reviewed by the committee every two years and/or following changes to the legislation or if a significant incident occurs.

Refer to the Vermont Vultures [Website](#) for further information or contact the Child Welfare and Safety Officer on [vicepresident@vermontvultures.org.au](mailto:vicepresident@vermontvultures.org.au).

## Acknowledgement

*I acknowledge that I have read this policy and understand its contents and Club's commitment to Child Safety. I understand my legal responsibilities around Child Safety and I will ensure I uphold all elements of this policy and any subsequent child safety policies to ensure we maintain a child safe environment at all times. If I am ever unsure about how to enact any components of this policy I will gain advice from the Club Committee or the Child Welfare and Safety Officer immediately.*

**Name**

**Name of Witness**

**Signed**

**Signed by Witness**

**Date**

**Date**