



Vasse Soccer Club

SafeGuarding Policy

Vasse Soccer Club (VSC) is committed to providing a safe and enjoyable environment for everyone that participates in football (soccer). Everyone that is involved in the sport should be treated with respect and dignity and be able to participate free of being discriminated against, harassed, bullied or abused. Children and young people are a major stakeholder of football and should be able to enjoy participating in a safe, supportive, and empowering environment.

VSC have a responsibility to safeguard the welfare and wellbeing of children and young people, who should feel comfortable, and be encouraged to, speak up and report any concerns they may have or be aware of in relation to the safeguarding of children and young people.

Scope

The Safeguarding Policy forms part of VSC ongoing commitment to providing a safe and inclusive culture, which safeguards participants from any form of harm or risk of harm. The wellbeing of Children, Young People and Adults is of paramount importance and this policy forms part of the club's Member Protection Framework and should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Football Australia Member Protection Policy
- Football Australia Safeguarding Policy and Framework
- Football Australia Code of Conduct
- Football West Code of Conducts Working with Children Check Policy & Legislation
- VSC - Code of Conduct as in the Clubs By-Laws

Child Safe Environment Compliance Requirements

You can direct complaints to the President, Vice President or Member Protection Information Officer of VSC

Lodge your complaint at the level at which the issue occurs (e.g. if it's a club issue, then it should be dealt with at the local level; if it's a state or national issue direct it to the appropriate authority). If you have an urgent concern about the safety, health or welfare of a child, contact emergency services on 000.

If you are a child or adult who has been the victim of child abuse, or if you have information about someone else being abused, you can contact police anytime on 131 444 and can request to speak to a member of the Child Abuse Squad. If you have concerns for a child's wellbeing, contact the Department of Communities on 1800 271 889 or Central Intake Team on 1800 273 889.

You can also contact either agency at any time during the complaint handling process. If you're not satisfied with the way the complaint's been handled or you're unhappy with the outcome, you may be able to either lodge an appeal or direct the complaint to the next level (e.g. state or national organization).

Working with Children Checks (WWCC)

Working with Children Checks aim to create a child-safe environment and to protect children and young people involved in our sport from physical and sexual harm.

They assess the suitability of people to work with children and young people and can involve:

- criminal history checks;
- signed declarations;
- referee checks;
- and other relevant background checks to assess a person's suitability to work with children and young people.

Football West stipulates that any person that holds a 'Prescribed Position', as outlined below, involving a person Under 18, must have a WWCC:

A prescribed position is:

- All people who have contact with or work in close proximity with children and young people under 18 years of age and are not directly supervised
- Manage or supervise volunteers or paid staff that work with people Under 18 year of age
- Have Access to records in relation to people Under 18 years old

Exemptions

Certain people do not require a WWC Check because they fit within the description of an exemption from child-related work as outlined in the Working with Children (Screening) Act 2004 and the Working with Children (Screening) Regulations 2005.

There are some general exemptions which apply across all categories of child-related work while others are specific to a particular category or circumstance.

If a person's work is covered by an 'exemption', then they are ineligible to apply for a WWC Check. However, it is important to consider all the work a person does when deciding whether they are exempt and do not require a WWC Check.

Exemptions across all categories

- Child volunteers

Applies to work carried out on a 'volunteer' basis by a 'child', under 15 years. If the child is undertaking child related work which is 'paid', then they will require a WWC Check.

- Unpaid students on placement under 18 years of age

Applies to work carried out on an unpaid basis by a 'student' under 18 years of age as part of their educational or vocational course of study with an 'education provider'.

Please note people with a current 'Interim Negative Notice' or 'Negative Notice' are not eligible to access the child volunteer or unpaid students on placement under 18 years of age exemptions.

- Police officers when performing their duties and functions as a member of the WA Police Force, for some categories.
- Short-term visitors to WA

Applies to work carried out by visitors to WA, where the person is not ordinarily resident in WA and: only applies during the two-week period after the person arrives in WA cannot exceed a total of two weeks in any period of 12 months cannot be used in conjunction with the one-off national events and national tours exemption. A person cannot use both exemptions in the same 12-month period.

Football West has already developed a policy relating to the WWCC. This policy clearly outlines who needs to complete a WWCC and the process that needs to be undertaken to obtain such a screening. There are many different roles undertaken within a football club, with some of these roles being performed by volunteer on a rotational basis. Such roles include ground steward and club assistant referee.

If they are undertaking the role regularly, then the club would require the volunteer to get a WWCC. The club may wish to implement a blanket requirement that all volunteers, regardless of their time commitment, provide a WWCC.

All affiliated clubs and associations must implement the Football West WWCC requirements.

Mandated Notifiers

Children and Community Services Act 2004 and Working with Children (Screening) 2004 makes it a legal requirement for certain people to report a reasonable suspicion or incidences of harm or risk of harm.

This obligation is known as mandatory notification and a penalty may stem from an individual's failure to comply. Notifications must be made to the Department for Child Protection and Family Support on 1800 622 258 or Central Intake Team on 1800 273 889.

Definition

Mandated notifiers are an employee of, or volunteer in, a government or non-government organization that provides health, welfare, education, sporting or recreational, childcare or residential services wholly or partly for children.

These people:

- are engaged in the actual delivery of those services to children and young people, or
- hold a management position in the relevant organization the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of those services to children and young people

Based on the above definition, coaches, trainers, managers, any person that is providing services to children and young people, and leaders within the affiliated club and/or association are required by law to report harm or risk of harm to children and young people.

What does this Mean?

Volunteers must advise the Department for Child Protection and Family Support of their suspicions of risk or harm by them by phone 1800 622 258 or Central Intake Team on 1800 273 889.

Types of risk and harm that may be experienced by a child or young person include:

- Domestic or Family Violence
- Physical Harm
- Neglect
- Sexual Abuse and 'grooming'
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Concerns
- Disclosure by a Child or Young person

When is a person required to notify?

A person should make a notification when there are reasonable grounds to form a suspicion that a child or young person may be at risk.

This may include:

- when a child or young person tells you they are at risk or have been harmed
- when your own observations of a particular child or young person's behaviour and/or injuries lead you to suspect they are at risk, or harm is occurring
- when a child or young person tells you that they know of someone who is at risk or has been harmed (they may possibly be referring to themselves)
- when you hear about risk or harm to a child or young person from someone who is in a position to provide reliable information, perhaps a relative or friend, neighbour or sibling of the child or young person.

All affiliated clubs and associations are to inform the relevant people within their organisation of their legal obligation as a mandated notifier. In providing this information it is important for VSC to emphasise, the role of the mandated notifier and that a failure by a mandated notifier to report a suspicion formed on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is or may be at risk may result in a person being prosecuted and a court imposing a fine.

Child Safe Requirements to be implemented

To ensure that VSC is child safe compliant, the following requirements are to be implemented:

- Read and discuss the contents of this document with VSC Executive Committee
- Sign the compliance form agreeing to abide by the Member Protection Framework and the adoption of policies and procedures relating to this framework. The compliance form is only required to be signed once.
- The documents relating to the Member Protection Framework are to be made accessible and promoted to all members of VSC. This can be undertaken by placing the documents on VSC's website or by posting a link direct to the Football West website for access to the information.
- Ensure that the information relating to Working with Children Check's (WWCC) is provided to your volunteers at the time of being appointed and ensure that all appointed volunteers, required to have a WWCC, registers for the WWCC and provides the details to VSC.
- VSC is to nominate a Member Protection Officer and ensure that this person/s undertakes the required training. Once the officers have been appointed their name and how to contact them should be made available to the VSC members. This can be provided as part of the VSC Welcome Email provided to players at the time of registration, or through the VSC digital platforms.

- All volunteers must be registered on the National Registration System and enter their WWCC information during the registration process.
- Provide volunteers with an induction session and information pack relating to their role at VSC
- Football West has developed Code of Conducts for volunteers. Clubs and associations are to provide a copy of the relevant Code of Conduct to the volunteer at the time of appointment.
- Encourage all volunteers to undertake the FREE online Child Protection training available through www.playbytherules.net.au.
- Undertake a risk assessment of VSC's facilities and practices to identify any potential risks to the safety of children. Address any identified risks as soon as possible. Keep a register of VSC actions.
- Engage children and young people so they can have a say on issues that impact their involvement. Ensure that all members are aware of the process to raise a grievance/complaint within the club
- Build and maintain a commitment to provide a child safe environment which is embedded in the culture of VSC. This will ensure that the VSC is a safe and welcoming place for children and young people and will encourage other people to join VSC

Identifying and Analysis of Risk

Football West has identified potential risks to the organisation, the likelihood of their occurrence, the potential impact and how the risks are to be managed.

A Risk Registry includes risks relating to child safe environment. To mitigate risk Football West has developed and implemented policies, that are required to be implemented by all affiliated clubs and associations.

These policies include:

- Healthy Environment Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Member Protection Framework
- Behaviour Management Policy Code of Conduct/s

Football West also requires all affiliated clubs and associations to implement the Football Australia Safeguarding Policy that outlines the roles and responsibilities of volunteers in the areas of:

- Sexual Relationships and Sexual Misconduct
- Giving Gifts to a Child
- Children and Behaviour Management Strategies
- Use of Language and Tone of Voice
- Supervision
- Use of Electronic or Online Communication and Social Media
- Physical Contact with Children
- Overnight Stays and Sleeping Arrangements

- Changeroom and Toilet Supervision and Arrangements
- Transporting Children

Further Information

If VSC or a Member of VSC requires any further assistance in relation to this document or the requirements outlined in this document, please contact the Safeguarding Officer or Welfare Officer at Mandurah City FC.

Further Information can also be gained from the links below:

Department of Communities - Child Protection <https://www.wa.gov.au/organisation/departments-of-communities/child-protection>

Safeguarding - Safeguarding sport in Australia - <https://www.sportintegrity.gov.au/what-we-do/safeguarding>

True Sport - Child Safeguarding Initiative - <https://www.sportwest.com.au/how-we-help/childsafeguarding/>

Football Australia <https://www.footballaustralia.com.au/member-protection-framework>

[Member Protection Framework | Football Australia](https://www.footballaustralia.com.au/member-protection-framework)

Football West - Member Protection Framework: National Complaints Procedure <https://www.footballaustralia.com.au/member-protection/complaints-procedure>

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed annually, in March each year, to ensure it remains relevant to VSC operations and reflects both community expectations and legal requirements.

Created/ Reviewed	Name of Creator/Reviewer	Endorsed By	Updates/ Version
01/2025	B McRae	T Petais, L Webb	End of 2025 season
February 2026	B Mcrae		End of 2028 Season or as required