



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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1 INTRODUCTION

Barwon Valley Golf Club is committed to promoting and protecting the interests and safety of children. We have zero tolerance for child abuse in any form.

Everyone working and volunteering including patrons at Barwon Valley Golf Club are responsible for the care and protection of children and reporting information about child abuse or incidents involving a minor.

2 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is:

1. To facilitate the prevention of child abuse occurring within Barwon Valley Golf Club
2. To work towards a culture of child safety.
3. To prevent child abuse within Barwon Valley Golf Club.
4. To ensure that all parties are aware of their responsibilities for identifying possible occasions for child abuse and for establishing controls and procedures for preventing such abuse and/or detecting such abuse when it occurs.
5. To provide guidance to staff/volunteers/contractors/members as to action that should be taken where they suspect any abuse.
6. To provide a clear statement to staff/volunteers/contractors/members forbidding any such abuse.
7. To provide assurance that any and all suspected abuse will be reported and fully investigated.

3 POLICY

Barwon Valley Golf Club is committed to promoting and protecting at all times the best interests of children involved in its programs.

All children, regardless of their gender, race, religious beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation, or family or social background, have equal rights to protection from abuse.

Barwon Valley Golf Club has zero tolerance for child abuse. Everyone working and volunteering at Barwon Valley Golf Club is responsible for the care and protection of the children within our club and reporting information about suspected child abuse.

Child protection is a shared responsibility between the Barwon Valley Golf Club employees, workers, volunteers, contractors, associates, and members of the Barwon Valley Golf Club community.

Barwon Valley Golf Club will consider the opinions of children and use their opinions to develop child protection policies.

Barwon Valley Golf Club supports and respects all children, staff and volunteers Barwon Valley Golf Club is committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, and those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children living with a disability.

If any person believes a child is in immediate risk of abuse, telephone 000.

4 PROCEDURES

4.1 Responsibilities

The **Board** of Barwon Valley Golf Club has ultimate responsibility for:

- The detection and prevention of child abuse and is responsible for ensuring that appropriate and effective control systems are in place;
- For ensuring that appropriate policies and procedures and a Child Protection Code of Conduct are in place.

The **GENERAL MANAGER/BOARD** of Barwon Valley Golf Club is responsible for:

- Dealing with and investigating reports of child abuse;
- Ensuring that all staff, contractors, members and volunteers are aware of relevant laws, organisational policies and procedures, and the organisation's Code of Conduct;
- Ensuring that all adults within the Barwon Valley Golf Club community are aware of their obligation to report suspected sexual abuse of a child in accordance with these policies and procedures;
- Ensuring that all staff, contractors, members and volunteers are aware of their obligation to observe the Code of Conduct (particularly as it relates to child safety);
- Providing support for staff, contractors, members and volunteers in undertaking their child protection responsibilities.

All must ensure that they:

- Promote child safety at all times;
- Assess the risk of child abuse within their area of control and eradicate / minimise any risk to the extent possible;
- Educate employees about the prevention and detection of child abuse; and
- Facilitate the reporting of any inappropriate behaviour or suspected abusive activities.
- Be familiar with the types of abuse that might occur within their area of responsibility and be alert for any indications of such conduct.

All **staff/volunteers/contractors** share in the responsibility for:

- the prevention and detection of child abuse,
- and must familiarise themselves with the relevant laws, the Code of Conduct, Barwon Valley Golf Club policy and procedures in relation to child protection, and comply with all requirements;
- Report any suspicion that a child's safety may be at risk to supervisor (or, if their supervisor is involved in the suspicion, to a responsible person in the organisation); and
- Provide an environment that is supportive of all children's emotional and physical safety.

4.2 Definitions

Child means a person below the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

Child protection means any responsibility, measure or activity undertaken to safeguard children from harm.

Child abuse means all forms of physical abuse, emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse and exploitation, neglect or negligent treatment, commercial (e.g. for financial gain) or other exploitation of a child and includes any actions that results in actual or potential harm to a child.

Child sexual assault is any act which exposes a child to, or involves a child in, sexual processes beyond his or her understanding or contrary to accepted community standards. Sexually abusive 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 child grooming, which refers to actions deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child to lower the child's inhibitions in preparation for sexual activity with the child.

Reasonable grounds for belief is a belief based on reasonable grounds that child abuse has occurred when all known considerations or facts relevant to the formation of a belief are taken into account and these are objectively assessed. Circumstances or considerations may include the source of the allegation and how it was communicated, the nature of and details of the allegation, and whether there are any other related matters known regarding the alleged perpetrator.

4.3 Employment of New Staff and Volunteers

Barwon Valley Golf Club undertakes a comprehensive recruitment and screening process for all workers and volunteers which aims to:

- Promote and protect the safety of all children under the care of the organisation;
- Identify the safest and most suitable people who share Barwon Valley Golf Club's values and commitment to protect children; and
- Prevent a person from working at Barwon Valley Golf Club if they pose a risk to children.

Barwon Valley Golf Club requires all workers/volunteers to pass through the organisation's recruitment and screening processes prior to commencing their engagement with Barwon Valley Golf Club.

Barwon Valley Golf Club may require applicants to provide a police check in accordance with the law and as appropriate, before they commence working at Barwon Valley Golf Club and during their time with Barwon Valley Golf Club at regular intervals.

Barwon Valley Golf Club will undertake thorough reference checks as per the approved internal procedure.

Once engaged, workers/volunteers must review and acknowledge their understanding of this Policy.

4.4 Risk Management

Barwon Valley Golf Club will ensure that child safety is a part of its overall risk management approach.

Barwon Valley Golf Club's Board is committed to identifying and managing risks at Barwon Valley Golf Club. Board and staff members will receive regular training in relation to child safety.

4.5 Responding

Any staff member, volunteer or contractor who has grounds to suspect abusive activity must immediately notify the appropriate General Manager and Board member.

In situations where the supervisor is suspected of involvement in the activity, or if the person having the suspicion does not believe that the matter is being appropriately addressed or dealt with, the matter should/ must be reported to the next highest level of supervision or personally contact Victoria Police -000 or Child Protection Services West Division - 1800075599

4.5.1 Responding TO Allegation of Sexual Assault occurring during an Incident

If an allegation of abuse is made against an attendee at the Incident the following steps are to be followed.

The **General Manager/Board** will conduct an investigation to determine if child safety has been breached.

The **General Manager** with the **Board** contact the parent or guardian of the alleged victim if appropriate.

The **General Manager** completes and Incident Report and submits to the **Board** within 24 hours of the incident.

4.5.2 Disclosure of Abuse at a Barwon Valley Golf Club Incident

If a disclosure of child abuse is received by a staff or volunteer at an Incident, the person receiving the disclosure is required to notify the **General Manager/Board** of the Incident.

The **General Manager/Board** will meet to clarify details of the disclosure. The purpose is to ascertain the level risk to the young person when leaving the incident; what reporting is required by Barwon Valley Golf Club; and what support and follow-up will be required following the report.

4.5.3 Allegation of Abuse Perpetrated by a Barwon Valley Golf Club Staff, Member or GM

If it is alleged that a member of staff, contractor or a volunteer may have committed an offence or have breached the organisation's policies or its Code of Conduct the person concerned may be stood down (with pay, where applicable) while an investigation is conducted.

If a staff member or volunteer becomes aware of allegations of reportable conduct or a reportable conviction against themselves, or another Barwon Valley Golf Club staff member or volunteer, must advise the **General Manager**. The **General Manager** must record the details of the allegation, conduct or conviction and advise the **GENERAL MANAGER/BOARD**.

Once Barwon Valley Golf Club has been informed, the staff/volunteer will be told of the allegation and that they are to be present for a meeting to be held within the next 48 hours. The staff/volunteer is encouraged also to seek independent support and advice.

The meeting/teleconference will be held with the **General Manager** and another representative of Barwon Valley Golf Club, the staff/volunteer and a of their choice present.

The staff/volunteer is to have no involvement with Barwon Valley Golf Club activities involving children until the child protection investigation has been finalised.

Barwon Valley Golf Club will maintain regular communication during the child protection investigation, in relation to any changes in the volunteer's situation regarding involvement in Barwon Valley Golf Club activities.

4.6 Investigating

After an initial review and a determination that the suspected abuse warrants additional investigation, the **GENERAL MANAGER/BOARD** shall do one or each of the following: -

- Contact Victorian Police --- 000
- Contact Child Protection Services – West Division 1800075599
- Coordinate the investigation with the appropriate parties, as deemed appropriate.

If the appropriate child protection service or the police decide to conduct an investigation of this report, all employees, contractors or volunteers must co-operate fully with the investigation.

Any such investigation will be conducted according to the rules of natural justice.

The **GENERAL MANAGER/BOARD** will make every effort to keep any such investigation confidential; however, from time-to-time other members of staff may need to be consulted in conjunction with the investigation.

4.7 Outcome Of Investigation

If the investigation concludes that on the balance of probabilities an offence (or a breach of the Barwon Valley Golf Club's policies or Child Safety Code of Conduct) has occurred then disciplinary action may follow, up to and including dismissal or cessation of involvement with the organisation. The findings of the investigation will also be reported to any external body as required. This also includes any member of the club which may result in a suspension or resignation of membership and period of ban – non club use.

4.8 Privacy

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved unless there is a risk to someone's safety. Barwon Valley Golf Club will have safeguards and practices in place to ensure any personal information is protected.

Everyone is entitled to know how the personal information is recorded, what will be done with it, and who will be able to access it.

4.9 Reviewing

Every two years, and following every reportable incident, a review shall be conducted to assess whether the organisation's child protection policies or procedures require modification to better protect the children under the organisation's care.

APPENDIX 1 - CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT

Management, staff, volunteers, members and contractors at Barwon Valley Golf Club are required to abide by this Code.

Under the GENERAL MANAGER/BOARD, management will:

1. Be responsible for the overall welfare and wellbeing of staff and volunteers;
2. Be accountable for managing and maintaining a duty of care towards staff and volunteers; and
3. Nominate a Child Protection Officer to provide information and support to all staff, volunteers, children, young people and their carers regarding child protection matters.

All people involved in the care of children on behalf of Barwon Valley Golf Club will:

1. Work towards the achievement of the aims and purposes of the organisation;
2. Be responsible for relevant administration of programs and activities in their area;
3. Maintain a duty of care towards others involved in these programs and activities;
4. Establish and maintain a child-safe environment in the course of their work;
5. Be fair, considerate and honest with others;
6. Treat children and young people with respect and value their ideas and opinions;
7. Act as positive role models in their conduct with children and young people;
8. Be professional in their actions;
9. Maintain strict impartiality;
10. Comply with specific organisational guidelines on physical contact with children;
11. Respect the privacy of children, their families and teachers/carers, and only disclose information to people who have a need to know;
12. Maintain a child-safe environment for children and young people;
13. Operate within the policies and guidelines of Barwon Valley Golf Club and
14. Contact the police if a child is at immediate risk of abuse (telephone 000).

No person shall:

1. Shame, humiliate, oppress, belittle or degrade children or young people;
2. Unlawfully discriminate against any child;
3. Engage in any activity with a child or young person that is likely to physically or emotionally harm them;
4. Initiate unnecessary physical contact with a child or young person, or do things of a personal nature for them that they can do for themselves;
5. Be alone with a child or young person unnecessarily and for more than a very short time;

6. Develop a 'special' relationship with a specific child or young person for their own needs;
7. Show favouritism through the provision of gifts or inappropriate attention;
8. Arrange contact, including online contact, with children or young people outside of the organisation's programs and activities;
9. Photograph or video a child or young person without the consent of the child and his/her parents or guardians;
10. Work with children or young people while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs;
11. Engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children;
12. Use inappropriate language in the presence of children; or
13. Do anything in contravention of the organisation's policies, procedures or this Child Safety Code of Conduct.

What happens if you breach this Child Safety Code of Conduct?

If you breach this Code of Conduct you will face disciplinary action, including and up to termination of employment or cessation of engagement with the organisation.