



Victorian Croquet Association Inc
A0001560E ABN 91 903 271 264
trading as Croquet Victoria

CHILD SAFE POLICY

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Croquet Victoria is committed to ensuring that children and young people who participate in its activities have a safe and happy experience. Croquet Victoria supports and respects children, young people, staff, volunteers and participants.
- 1.2 Croquet Victoria's Child Safe Policy aims to protect the safety of children in our care, to prevent abuse from occurring, and in the event that allegations are raised in relation to child abuse, to treat all complaints seriously, to ensure that the allegations are properly addressed, and to expedite a full investigation which is handled with maximum confidentiality and discretion.
- 1.3 Should a person wish to make any enquiries in relation to this Policy, please contact the Secretary, Croquet Victoria.

2 POLICY STATEMENT: DECLARATION

- 2.1 Croquet Victoria is committed to providing the highest level of membership service. This includes protecting members' privacy, promoting positive behaviours and attitudes, protecting the health, safety and wellbeing of members, particularly children, and delivering Croquet Victoria's activities while acting in the best interests of children in the sport.
- 2.2 Specifically, Croquet Victoria is committed to implementing the eleven Child Safe Standards:
 - 2.2.1 Establishing a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.
 - 2.2.2 Child safety and wellbeing are embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.
 - 2.2.3 Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them, and are taken seriously.
 - 2.2.4 Families and communities are informed, and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing
 - 2.2.5 Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice
 - 2.2.6 People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice
 - 2.2.7 Processes for complaints and concerns are child focused
 - 2.2.8 Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training
 - 2.2.9 Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed
 - 2.2.10 Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved
 - 2.2.11 Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.
- 2.3 Croquet Victoria considers that the health, safety and well-being of children take priority over any competing considerations. Croquet Victoria considers that this is necessary to

ensure the health, safety and welfare of all members and protect the image and reputation of the sport, Croquet Victoria and its affiliate members.

- 2.4 Child protection is a shared responsibility between Croquet Victoria, its employees, workers, contractors, associates, parents/guardians, coaches, spectators, volunteers and members of the Croquet Victoria community. Everyone who participates in Croquet Victoria's activities is responsible for the care and protection of children, and reporting information about child abuse.
- 2.5 Croquet Victoria promotes fairness and consideration for all staff, volunteers and participants. For further details please refer to the suite of Croquet Australia Sports Integrity Framework policies.

3 SCOPE

- 3.1 This Policy applies to participants, parents, spectators, contractors, officials, coaches, judges and staff throughout all Croquet Victoria events and activities.
- 3.2 This Policy will continue to apply retrospectively to a person or member following the cessation of their association or employment with Croquet Victoria.
- 3.3 Croquet Victoria is supported by a wide network of affiliated clubs across Victoria. Affiliation with Croquet Victoria is conditional on an affiliated club implementing, and complying with this Policy. Failure to implement and comply with this Policy may cause Croquet Victoria to end its affiliation with a club that is in breach of its obligations.

4 RELATED DOCUMENTS & LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

- 4.1 This Policy must be read in conjunction with:
 - 4.1.1 the law of the Commonwealth and Victoria including but not limited to:
 - 4.1.1.1 Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic);
 - 4.1.1.2 Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Act 2022 (Vic);
 - 4.1.1.3 Crimes Act 1958 (Vic); and
 - 4.1.1.4 Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic)which in case of inconsistency will prevail over this policy.
 - 4.1.2 Croquet Australia policies and procedures as updated from time to time, including but not limited to:
 - 4.1.2.1 Child Safeguarding Policy
 - 4.1.2.2 Other National Integrity Framework policies
 - 4.1.2.3 Other complaints policies and procedureswhich in case of inconsistency will prevail over this policy.
 - 4.1.3 Other Croquet Victoria policies and procedures, including but not limited to:
 - 4.1.3.1 Constitution;
 - 4.1.3.2 Privacy Policy;
 - 4.1.3.3 Electronic Communication Policy
 - 4.1.3.4 Grievance and Discipline procedures

5 DEFINITIONS

- 5.1 **Child** means a person involved in the activities of Croquet Victoria (including athletes) and under the age of 18 years unless otherwise stated under the law applicable to the child.
- 5.2 **Child protection** means any responsibility, measure or activity undertaken to safeguard children from harm.

- 5.3 **Sexual offence** means a criminal offence involving sexual activity or actions of indecency or any act which exposes a child to, or involves a child in, sexual activity or matters beyond his or her understanding or contrary to accepted community standards. This includes child grooming, which includes actions deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child (or the child's carer, family or supervisor) to lower the child's inhibitions and prepare them for engagement in a sexual offence.
- 5.4 **Contact with children** means directly working with a child as part of a role or responsibility, eg coaching or teaching. It does not include incidental contact with children where this is not part of the person's role - eg a plumber undertaking repair work on club premises.

6 RECOGNISING AND REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

- 6.1 A person may, in the course of participating in the sport or other activities of Croquet Victoria or carrying out their work, form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from child abuse.
- 6.2 Any person who believes on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from any form of child abuse, *may* disclose that information to the Police or DHHS.
- 6.3 If a person is concerned about an immediate risk to a child's safety, the person must phone '000' as soon as practicable.
- 6.4 If a person receives information that leads them to form a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria against a child (under the age of 16 years) by another person (of or over the age of 18 years), the person has a legal obligation to disclose that information to the Police as soon as it is practicable. Individuals who fail to comply with this obligation under the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic) may be subject to imprisonment.
- 6.5 **Child abuse** can be divided into four categories:
- 6.5.1 **Physical abuse:** occurs when a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of a physical injury, such as a non-accidental physical injury.
- 6.5.2 **Sexual abuse:** occurs when a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of sexual abuse, such as when a child is exploited, or used by another for his or her sexual gratification or sexual arousal, or for that of others.
- 6.5.3 **Emotional and psychological abuse:** occurs when a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, emotional or psychological harm of such a kind that the child's emotional or intellectual development is or is likely to be significantly damaged; and
- 6.5.4 **Neglect:** occurs when a child's physical development or health has been, or is likely to be significantly damaged. It refers to an omission, such as depriving a child of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, or medical care.
- 6.6 Child abuse includes any actions that result in actual or potential harm to a child, in circumstances where the child's parents have not protected, or are unlikely to protect, the child.
- 6.7 **Reasonable grounds for belief**
- 6.7.1 A reasonable belief is formed if a reasonable person believes that:
- 6.7.1.1 the child is in need of protection;
- 6.7.1.2 the child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm as a result of physical or sexual injury; and
- 6.7.1.3 the child's parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child.

- 6.7.2 To form a reasonable belief, you should consider and objectively assess all the relevant facts, such as the source of the allegation and how it was communicated, the nature of and details of the allegation, and whether there is any other related matters known regarding the alleged perpetrator.
- 6.7.3 A 'reasonable belief' or a 'belief on reasonable grounds' is not the same as having proof, but is more than mere rumour or speculation.
- 6.7.4 You will have reasonable grounds to notify if:
 - 6.7.4.1 a child states that they have been physically or sexually abused;
 - 6.7.4.2 a child states that they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves);
 - 6.7.4.3 someone who knows a child states that the child has been physically or sexually abused;
 - 6.7.4.4 professional observations of the child's behaviour or development leads a professional to form a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused or is likely to be abused; or
 - 6.7.4.5 signs of abuse lead to a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused.

6.8 Croquet Victoria's Approach to Reports of Abuse

- 6.8.1 Croquet Victoria supports and encourages a person to make a report to the Police or DHHS if they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection, or they are concerned about the safety, health or wellbeing of a child.
- 6.8.2 Any person that makes a report in good faith in accordance with their reporting obligations (whether mandatory or discretionary) will be supported by Croquet Victoria, and will not be penalised by Croquet Victoria for making the report.
- 6.8.3 If a person is uncertain as to whether they should make a report to an external authority in relation to the safety of a child, they may speak to the Secretary, Croquet Victoria, for guidance and information. If in doubt, ask for assistance.
- 6.8.4 If an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, Croquet Victoria will follow the reporting procedure outlined in the Croquet Australia Child Safeguarding Policy and take all steps to ensure that the safety of the child is paramount.
 - 6.8.4.1 An initial step will involve the withdrawal of the accused person from active duty, which could entail standing down, reassignment to a role without direct contact with children, working under closer supervision during an investigation, working from home, or any other measures deemed appropriate depending on the seriousness of the allegation.
 - 6.8.4.2 Croquet Victoria will investigate allegations of inappropriate conduct against a child in accordance with procedural fairness and will handle the allegations in a confidential manner to the greatest extent possible.
- 6.8.5 Croquet Victoria will cooperate with the directions of the Police and/or DHHS in relation to any investigation conducted by these authorities.
- 6.8.6 Croquet Victoria will keep a register of any allegations regarding inappropriate conduct.

7 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PERSONNEL PROTECTING CHILDREN

Personnel involved in protecting children include the Council, management, staff, members and volunteers within Croquet Victoria. These people have responsibilities in relation to protection of children and are expected to:

- 7.1 understand the rights of children, as appropriate to their role;
- 7.2 respect the cultural and religious practices of families who access Croquet Victoria's services, programs or events;

- 7.3 understand and appropriately respond to the needs of children with developmental delays or disabilities;
- 7.4 appropriately act on any concerns raised by children;
- 7.5 understand the definitions, indicators and impact of child abuse:
- 7.6 know and follow regulations in relation to the care of children;.
- 7.7 co-operate with police and/or other formal investigations to the best of their ability; and
- 7.8 not harm or exploit children who access Croquet Victoria's services.

8 CHILD SAFE AND CHILD FRIENDLY GUIDELINES TO PREVENT AND MANAGE RISKS OF CHILD ABUSE

8.1 Change rooms in use by children

Adult officials, regardless of gender, should only enter change rooms in use by children if accompanied by another adult. Prior to entering change rooms, officials should notify the people in the change room of their intended entrance. For the avoidance of doubt this requirement does not apply to parents/legal guardians when in a room with their child.

8.2 Hotel rooms and other accommodation used by children

No official should be alone in the room of a child athlete without the presence of another adult. The doors should always be open. Should it be necessary for an official to be alone in the room of a child athlete, the Team Manager or other responsible official must be informed. For the avoidance of doubt this requirement does not apply to parents/legal guardians when in a room with their child.

8.3 Travel - General

All team members over 18 years of age retain an overriding responsibility for the welfare of all under 18 athletes they accompany during team travel activities. They have a 'duty of care' for athletes and they must meet that duty and avoid unaccompanied and unobserved activities with persons less than 18 years of age wherever possible. For the avoidance of doubt this requirement does not apply to parents/legal guardians when in a room with their child.

8.4 Sexual Relationships

During team activities (including travel) officials must not, under any circumstances engage in conduct of a sexual nature with an athlete under 18.

Improper conduct of a sexual nature by an official towards a child athlete includes any form of child sexual abuse (defined within the Croquet Australia Child Safeguarding Policy) as well as but not limited to the following:

- 8.4.1 inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature;
- 8.4.2 obscene language of a sexual nature;
- 8.4.3 suggestive remarks or actions;
- 8.4.4 jokes of a sexual nature;
- 8.4.5 obscene gestures;
- 8.4.6 unwarranted and inappropriate touching;
- 8.4.7 sexual exhibitionism;
- 8.4.8 use of any device to show/watch offensive material; and
- 8.4.9 any other action that could lead to an athlete being physically, emotionally or psychologically harmed.

8.5 Adults under investigation

Adults under investigation in relation to a matter involving child abuse, or any matter which has the potential to jeopardise their Working With Children Check (WWCC) (or if

based in another State the equivalent requirement) status may be prohibited, by the Croquet Victoria Council, from participating in Croquet Victoria activities.

8.6 Coach Assistance to players under 18

8.6.1 All coaches must ensure that all physical contact with athletes under 18 which occurs when coaching is appropriate for the situation and necessary for the athlete's safety. It is strongly recommended that:

8.6.1.1 coaches ensure that there are other adults present whenever coaching;

8.6.1.2 coaches take care to explain the procedure to the child prior to beginning any physical contact; and

8.6.1.3 coaches obtain consent from the athlete prior to beginning any physical contact.

9 ENGAGING NEW PERSONNEL

9.1 Croquet Victoria will implement current legal requirements for the minimum standard for background checks of its employees, members and volunteers.

9.2 Croquet Victoria will adopt a comprehensive recruitment and screening process for all staff and volunteers in roles which involve contact with children, so as to

9.2.1 promote and protect the safety of all children who participate in the activities of Croquet Victoria;

9.2.2 identify and recruit safe and suitable candidates who share Croquet Victoria's values and commitment to protect children; and

9.2.3 prevent a person from working at Croquet Victoria if they pose an unacceptable risk to children.

9.3 Where a role involves contact with children, Croquet Victoria requires a prospective staff or volunteer appointee to pass the recruitment and screening process prior to commencing their engagement.

9.4 As part of the screening and recruitment process, an applicant for a position involving contact with children must provide appropriate evidence (e.g. WWCC or other state equivalent and/or Police check) to show that they are suitable to work with children and young people.

9.5 Event personnel must have a valid WWCC if they are likely to be in contact with a child as part of their duties. This may include but is not restricted to:

9.5.1 employees

9.5.2 volunteers;

9.5.3 organisers.

9.6 Croquet Victoria will undertake thorough reference checks prior to engaging any personnel.

9.7 Once engaged, staff and volunteers will be provided with access to this policy and asked to review and acknowledge their understanding of it.

10 EXPECTATIONS OF CLUBS AND REGIONS

10.1 All clubs and regions including NSW located clubs are expected to:

10.1.1 Develop, endorse and implement a local Child Safe policy consistent with this policy and with the Child Safe Standards

10.1.2 Annually – optionally at their Annual General Meeting - endorse a Declaration of Commitment consistent with 2.1 and 2.2 of this Policy

10.1.3 Annually appoint a Child Safe Champion

- 10.1.4 Display appropriate materials in their clubroom, including the Child Safe Code of Conduct (Appendix 1).
- 10.2 Croquet Victoria will provide clubs and regions with appropriate documents, templates and advice.
- 10.3 Where an individual member is likely to have contact with children as part of their role at a club or region, the club is expected to require the member to provide detail of a current WWCC.
- 10.4 Clubs which do not comply with their legal obligations will be found to have not complied with the Croquet Victoria affiliation requirements and will be disaffiliated.

11 RISK MANAGEMENT APPROACH

Child safety is a part of Croquet Victoria's overall risk management approach.

12 POLICY BREACHES

It is a breach of this policy for any person or organisation to which this policy applies, to have been found to have done anything contrary to this policy. Any person who may breach this policy is subject to Croquet Victoria's disciplinary processes.

13 POLICY PROMOTION

- 13.1 This policy will be notified to members on approval via *Mallet News* or other appropriate means.
- 13.2 This policy will be communicated to clubs, regions and Council members via email. A current version is maintained on the Croquet Victoria website.
- 13.3 References to this policy will be included in documentation provided to selection committees, team captains and coaches of teams that represent Croquet Victoria.

14 REVIEW PROCESS

- 14.1 This policy will be reviewed by the Croquet Victoria Council within 12 months of initial approval and every two years thereafter.
- 14.2 The implementation of this policy will be reviewed annually in consultation with Child Safe Champions
- 14.3 If you would like to provide Croquet Victoria with any feedback or suggestions to improve this policy, please contact the Secretary.
- 14.4 In addition to the regular review of this policy, recommendations for changes to the policy may be submitted to Council for consideration at any time. In the event that changes are accepted, the policy will be updated, and circulated to all stakeholders via the webpage, *Mallet News* and other appropriate communication channels.

AUTHORISATION



Victorian Croquet Association Inc

Croquet Victoria

CHILD SAFE CODE OF CONDUCT

Our Child Safety Code of Conduct sets out how adults are expected to behave with children and young people in our sport – anyone aged under 18.

Everyone involved in croquet in Croquet Victoria needs to follow the Child Safe Code of Conduct. This includes volunteers, staff, contractors, service providers, croquet players, croquet officials such as referees and coaches and any other adults involved in child-connected activities in croquet.

SUMMARY

In croquet, everyone involved in activities connected with children and young people is responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children.

We must:

- Uphold policy
- Communicate respectfully
- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children and young people with particular needs
- Avoid potentially problematic situations
- Be careful when taking videos or photography
- Deal promptly, constructively and sympathetically with any allegations related to child safety or child abuse

We must not:

- Discipline children or young people inappropriately
- Engage with children and young people inappropriately
- Ignore inappropriate behaviour by others.

Acceptable behaviours

What we must do

In croquet, everyone involved in activities connected with children and young people is responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children.

WE MUST:

- **Uphold policy**
 - Follow through on our commitment to child safety at all times
 - Adhere to Croquet Victoria's Child Safe Policy and Croquet Australia's Child Safeguarding policy

- **Communicate respectfully, for example**
 - Treat children, young people and families who connect with the croquet community with respect, and ensure children and young people are treated fairly at all times.
 - Provide clear easy to understand directions, be positive, encourage and affirm children and young people and boost their confidence.
 - Respond to and redirect any misbehaviour in a positive way.
 - Listen and respond to the views and concerns of children and young people, particularly if they disclose that they or someone else has been abused or if they are worried about their safety or the safety of another child or young person

- **Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children and young people with particular needs, including:**
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people
 - Children and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
 - Children and young people with diverse genders, sexualities, and sex characteristics
 - Children and young people with a disability.

- **Avoid potentially problematic situations - for example**
 - Ensure you are in view of others when you are with a child or young person. Avoid being alone with children in a changing room or sleeping accommodation.
 - Keep to your professional role – avoid social contact (including online) outside of croquet
 - Do not provide transport unless specifically authorised (see consent form)
 - Only message children and young people about croquet-related matters
 - Ensure that all communications, including emails, texts and other messaging are copied to a responsible adult – parent or guardian.
 - Avoid physical contact.

- **Be careful when taking videos or photography. We must**
 - Get written permission in advance for videos or photography, using the permission form provided
 - Ensure photos or film are croquet related, individuals are appropriately dressed and posed, and other people are present
 - Distribute only as agreed in the permission statement
 - Unless specifically authorised, de-identify children in any online imaging

Acceptable behaviours

What we must do

- **Deal promptly, constructively and sympathetically with any allegations related to child safety or child abuse. Meaning that we must**
 - Call out any racist comments or behaviour, and report it to an appropriate senior person in croquet as soon as possible.
 - Report any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns
 - Understand and comply with all reporting and disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) in line with our child safe policy and procedures
 - If child abuse is suspected, ensure as quickly as possible that the individual/s affected are safe and protected from harm.

Unacceptable behaviours

What we must not do

As volunteers, staff, contractors, service providers, croquet players, croquet officials such as referees and coaches and any other adults involved in child-connected activities in croquet –

WE MUST NOT

- **Discipline children or young people inappropriately**
 - Under no circumstances is physical punishment to be used, nor any other treatment that could be considered as degrading, cruel, frightening, humiliating or discriminatory.
- **Engage with children and young people inappropriately. Meaning we must not:**
 - Develop a relationship with any child or young person that could be seen as favouritism or amount to 'grooming' behaviour (for example, by offering gifts)
 - Display behaviours or engage with children and young people in ways that are not justified by the croquet context – including sexual behaviour – even if the person is above the legal age of consent (16 years). This includes contact and non-contact behaviour (eg flirting, sexual innuendo, electronic messaging or photography)
 - Discuss intimate topics or use sexualised language
 - Treat a child or young person unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity
 - Communicate directly with a child or young person through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, instant messaging, texting etc) except where that communication is reasonable in all the circumstances, where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter
 - Consume alcohol irresponsibly or take illicit drugs in the presence of children or young people
 - Have contact with any child or young person outside the croquet context, except when parental permission has been sought.
- **Ignore inappropriate behaviour by others. We do not:**
 - Ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse or harm
 - ignore an adult's overly familiar or inappropriate behaviour towards a child or young person.