



Rye Yacht Club.

Child Safe Policy

Our commitment to child safety

Our organisation is committed to child safety.

We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as our instructors and volunteers.

We are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children and young people.

We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

Our organisation pays particular attention to the needs of children and young people with disability, children and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children and young people.

We 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.

We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously.

Our organisation is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks.

Our organisation has robust human resources and recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers.

Our organisation is committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks. To inform all leaders, staff and volunteers of their obligations to act ethically towards children and their roles and responsibilities in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children.

We have specific policies, procedures and training in place that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

Child Safety Standards

The Child Safety Standards are:

- We are committed to establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.
- Child safety and wellbeing is embedded within our organisation; in organisational leadership, governance and culture.
- Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and they are taken seriously.
- Families and communities are kept informed and are actively involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
- Our club makes sure equality is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practise.

- Volunteers and staff working with children and young people are suitable and they are supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
- We ensure processes are in place for complaints and concerns and that they are child focused, accessible and taken seriously. Reporting, privacy and employment law obligations are met.
- Staff and volunteers, through ongoing education and training, are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe.
- The organisation identifies the risks in both online and physical environments and whilst promoting these environments we try to minimise the risk of being harmed.
- We recognise the importance of identifying and managing risks of child harm and abuse in the physical and online environments operated by the Rye Yacht Club.
- Our organisation will regularly review, evaluate and improve this Child Safe policy.
- Our Child Safe policy addresses all the Child Safe Standards and along with all other related policies and procedures is easy to understand. All staff and volunteers understand their obligations outlined in these policies.

Purpose

This Policy outlines how the Rye Yacht Club and the Rye Club Sailing School will prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and what steps we will take to do this.

Scope

This Policy applies to all staff, volunteers, Management Committee members, children and other individuals involved with the club. This policy applies to all activities conducted by Rye Yacht Club and Rye Yacht Club Sailing School.

Definitions

In this Policy the following words have the corresponding meaning:

Child Abuse means:

- a sexual offence committed against a child
- an offence committed against a child under section 49M(1) of the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic), such as grooming
- physical violence against a child
- causing serious emotional or psychological harm to a child
- serious neglect of a child

Bullying means:

- a person or group of people repeatedly and intentionally using words or actions, or the inappropriate use of power, against someone or a group of people to cause distress and risk to their wellbeing

Child or Children means:

- a child or young person, or two or more children or young persons, who is or are under the age of 18 years.

Grooming refers to

- the process by which an adult establishes a trusting relationship with a child and those associated with the child's care and wellbeing, to create an environment in which abuse can occur.

Our children

This policy is intended to empower children who are vital and active participants in our organisation. We involve them when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them. We listen to their views and respect what they have to say.

We promote diversity and tolerance in our organisation, and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome. In particular we:

- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children
- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- ensure that children with a disability are safe and can participate equally
- ensure lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children and young people are safe and can participate equally
- ensure those who are unable to live at home are safe and can participate equally

We regularly communicate with children about what they can do if they feel unsafe.

Recruiting staff and volunteers

We take all reasonable steps to engage skilled people to work with children. We develop selection criteria and advertisements which clearly demonstrate our commitment to child safety and an awareness of our social and legislative responsibilities. Our organisation understands that when engaging instructors 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.

All people engaged in child-related work, including volunteers, are required to hold a Working with Children Check and to provide evidence of this Check. Please see the [Working with Children Check](http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au) website <www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au> for further information

We carry out reference checks and police record checks to ensure that we are engaging the right people. Police record checks are used only for the purposes of recruitment and are discarded after the engagement process is complete. We do retain our own records (but not the actual criminal record) if an applicant's criminal history affected our decision making process. If during the recruitment process a person's records indicate a criminal history then the person will be given the opportunity to provide further information and context.

Our instructors and volunteers

This policy guides our instructors and volunteers on how to behave with children in our organisation.

All instructors, staff and volunteers must agree to abide by our Code of Conduct which specifies the standards of conduct required when working with children. All instructors and volunteers, as well as children and their families, are given the opportunity to contribute to the development of the code of conduct.

Supporting staff and volunteers

Rye Yacht club is committed to ensuring that all leaders, staff and volunteers receive training to ensure they understand their responsibilities in relation to child safety and to support their engagement with children.

Our organisational culture aims for all instructors and volunteers (in addition to parents/carers and children) to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns. We

train our instructors and volunteers to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse.

We also support our instructors and volunteers through ongoing supervision to: develop their skills to protect children from abuse; and promote the needs and equality of all children. This will include; the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds and the safety of children with a disability.

New instructors and volunteers will be supervised regularly to ensure they understand our organisation's commitment to child safety and that everyone has a role to play in protecting children from abuse, as well as checking that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate (please refer to this organisation's code of conduct to understand appropriate behaviour further).

Any inappropriate behaviour will be reported through appropriate channels, including the Department of Health and Human Services and Victoria Police, depending on the severity and urgency of the matter.

Child Safety Officer/s

Rye Yacht Club through the Executive Committee will appoint a Child Safety Officer/s. This person/s will respond to any concerns expressed by staff, volunteers, parents, carers or children regarding known or suspected abuse of a child connected with the Club.

The Child Safety Person/s are introduced to children so they know and understand who the appointed officers are.

The Child Safety Officer will:

- provide support to the child/parent/carer/person who made the report
- clarify the nature of the complaint and refer in accordance with legal requirements and duty of care to police or Child Protection
- initiate processes to ensure the safety of the child and other children
- if necessary make the report and/or support the complainant also provide support to the accused if they are a club volunteer or staff member
- work with the Executive Committee, Club Officials regarding behavior and/or disciplinary action if it is deemed not to be a Child Protection or police matter.
- Review club policies and practices to minimise the risk of future similar events/behaviour

Fair procedures for personnel

The safety and wellbeing of children is our primary concern. We are also fair and just to 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 using our incident reporting form, including investigation updates. All records are 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.

Risk Management

In Victoria, organisations are required to protect children when a risk is identified (see information about failure to protect above). In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children.

We recognise the importance of identifying and managing risk of child harm and abuse in the physical and online environments. Any risks will be identified within the Risk Management Policy of the Club. The Risk Management Policy will be approved by the Rye Yacht Club Executive Committee. We will ensure that any risk controls put in place balance the need to manage harm with the benefits of participating at Rye Yacht Club.

We have risk management strategies in place to identify, assess, and take steps to minimise child abuse risks, which include risks posed by physical environments (for example, any doors that can lock), and online environments (for example, no staff or volunteer is to have contact with a child in organisations on social media).

Non-compliance with this policy and the Code of Conduct

Rye Yacht Club will enforce this policy, the Code of Conduct and any other child safety and wellbeing policies.

Potential breaches by anyone will be investigated and may result in restriction of duties, suspension or termination of employment or engagement or other corrective action.

Any breach of this policy or the Code of Conduct must be reported to the Rye Yacht Club Safety Officers; Jean Cooper/Bob Cooper on Jean's mobile 0402325663 or Bob's mobile 0432270167, or via the email childsafetyperson@ryeyachtclub.org.au

Review

Rye Yacht Club will regularly review all child safe practices and policies. We will also review relevant practices and policies in response to a child safety incident or "near miss". Findings from these reviews will be reported to the Executive Committee and will form the basis for us to continue to improve our child safety practices.

Legislative responsibilities

Our organisation takes our legal responsibilities seriously, including:

- **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.
- Any personnel who are **mandatory reporters** must comply with their duties.

Supporting Legislation

- **Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005** (Vic) (including Child Safe Standards)
- **Children, Youth and Families Act 2005** (Vic) (including reporting to Child Protection)
- **Crimes Act 1958** (Vic) (including Failure to Protect and Failure to Disclose offences)
- **Wrongs Act 1958** (Vic) (including Part XIII – Organisational liability for child abuse)

Allegations, concerns and complaints

Our organisation takes all allegations, whether by an adult or a child, seriously and has practices in place to investigate thoroughly and quickly. Our staff and volunteers are trained to deal appropriately with allegations.

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, 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.

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
- someone else has raised a suspicion of abuse but is unwilling to report it
- observing suspicious behaviour.

Staff and volunteers may be subject to actions to support child safety including:

- being stood down during an investigation or terminated following an investigation
- not allowing unsupervised contact
- removing their access to our IT system and facilities

If there is concern for the immediate safety of a child, immediately phone 000.

Responding to Child Abuse Allegations

You must ACT.

As a person involved in Sailing you play a crucial role in protecting Children. You must follow the four actions set out below when responding to any Child Abuse allegations.

Action 1 - Responding

If a Child is at risk of immediate harm you must ensure their safety by:

- Calling 000 for medical and/or police assistance to respond to urgent health or safety concerns;
- Administering first aid, if required;
- Separating at-risk Child and others involved;
- Identifying an appropriate contact person for any on-going liaison with the Police.

If there is no immediate harm go to Action 2 below.

Action 2 – Reporting

If you suspect, on reasonable grounds that a Child was, or is at risk of being abused and/or neglected, you must report it to the police and/or the relevant State/Territory child protection agency.

If the alleged Child Abuse is occurring in a Relevant Organisation, it must be documented on the Club's Report Form

Action 3 – Contact

You must contact the police and/or the relevant child protection agency to determine the information that may be shared with parents/guardians, and who should lead this contact (i.e. police, child protection department or Relevant Organisation representative). This could include advice:

- not to contact the parents or guardians in circumstances where they are alleged to have engaged in the abuse.
- to contact the parents/guardians and provide agreed information as soon as possible.

Action 4 - Support

- support should be provided to any Child that has experienced abuse.
- it is important that the person providing support to the Child does not attempt to provide support which is outside of the scope of their role.
- support should include maintaining a calm open manner when listening to any allegations and disclosures, while avoiding seeking detailed information or asking leading questions.
- this information needs to be well documented and shared with Sailing's designated contact.
- further support for the Child, relevant adults and others involved may be required, including a referral to wellbeing or healthcare professionals and or the development of a safety plan.

If there is concern for the immediate safety of a child, immediately phone 000.

Privacy

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, whether they be instructors, volunteers, 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.

All information will be kept confidential except where it is necessary to share information to respond properly to a complaint or prioritise child safety. Information about incidents or complaints with external authorities to comply with the law or to prioritise safety.

Relevant legislation and standards and responsibilities.

Reference and links to relevant legislation, regulations, external policies and standards on child safety and wellbeing, as relevant to the organisation and the services it provides to children. This may include:

- The [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#).
- Relevant Commonwealth or Victorian legislation — for example the [Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 \(Vic\)](#) — or regulations, including legislative requirements for Working with Children Checks, mandatory reporting, the [Reportable Conduct Scheme](#) for in scope organisations and criminal offences.
- Relevant policies or standards, for example the [Child Safe Standards](#)

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- Relevant policies or standards, for example the [Child Safe Standards](#)

Related organisational policies and procedures

Reference and links to other internal policies and procedures related to child safety and wellbeing in the organization can be found on the Rye Yacht Club's website. Examples include:

- Code of Conduct
- complaint handling policy
- RYC Risk Management Plan
- RYC Sailing School Procedures Manual
- human resources, recruitment and screening policy
- disciplinary policy

- policies or procedures on record keeping, information sharing and external reporting.

RYE YACHT CLUB CHILD SAFETY POLICY

DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version:	Implemented by:	Date:	Approved by:	Date:	Reason:
1.0	Peter Kinsman		Executive Committee		Child Safety Policy, Victorian Standards.
2.0	Jean & Bob Cooper	4/11/2022	Executive Committee	21/11/2022	Child Safety Policy following the Commission for Children and Young People's template.