

CHILD SAFE POLICY

REVIEWED BY THE BOARD: 19 MAY 2025

SCHEDULED REVIEW DATE: MAY 2027

INTRODUCTION

All children and young people have the right to feel safe and to be safe all the time. Safety however does not just happen. A child safe organisation takes deliberate steps to protect children from physical, sexual, emotional and psychological abuse, and neglect. This commitment to protecting children and young people must be embodied in an organisation's culture and policies.

A child safe organisation fosters and demonstrates openness in a variety of ways. This directly and indirectly creates a culture in which everyone feels confident, enabled and supported to safely disclose child safety concerns.

School Sport Australia recognises its moral and legislative responsibilities to ensure the organisation promotes the safety of children and young people (students). All students and their families should feel welcome at School Sport Australia programs.

School Sport Australia also recognises that each of its member bodies, the State and Territory Education Departments, have their own child safe policies and protocols. School Sport Australia supports its member bodies with their programs to ensure the safety of students. The School Sport Australia policy is therefore directed at staff, volunteers and other individuals appointed by School Sport Australia such as international tour officials, contractors, all officials or National Sport Advisors. School Sport Australia has a responsibility to ensure that students participate in a safe environment and team officials from its member bodies have a duty of care to students under their supervision.

PURPOSE

This policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of the management, staff, volunteers and others involved in School Sport Australia programs to child safety, and to provide an outline of the procedures and practices the organisation has developed to keep everyone safe from any harm, including abuse.

POLICY

Commitment to child safety

All students who participate in a School Sport Australia program have a right to feel and be safe. The welfare of the students in our care will always be our first priority and we have a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse no matter what form of abuse or who perpetrates the abuse. We aim to create a student safe and student friendly environment with an educational focus whilst having fun.



School Sport Australia is committed to the principles of cultural safety and inclusion of students from diverse backgrounds and to the safety and inclusion of students with a disability. School Sport Australia recognises that these principles support the safety of all students.

Student's rights to safety and participation

School Sport Australia is a student's-centered organisation that values the voices of children and young people and will act on concerns raised by students or their families regarding their safety.

Valuing diversity

School Sport Australia values diversity and does not tolerate any discriminatory practices.

Recruiting staff and volunteers

School Sport Australia will apply merit and equity standards in the recruitment and screening of staff and volunteers.

Supporting staff and volunteers

School Sport Australia is committed to ensuring that all leaders, staff and volunteers receive training to ensure they understand their responsibilities in relation to child safety. School Sport Australia will assist its leaders, staff and volunteers to incorporate child safety considerations into decision-making and to promote a culturally safe environment where students are empowered to speak up about issues that affect them.

Signature of President of School Sport Australia

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stung", is positioned above a horizontal line.

CHILD & YOUNG PEOPLE SAFE PROCEDURES

RESPONSIBILITIES

It shall be the responsibility of the Executive Officer to implement this policy and monitor its effects in consultation with School Sport Australia Committees and Advisory Groups.

PROCEDURES

Commitment to child safety

School Sport Australia will regularly review, this policy with any future development performed in collaboration with School Sport Australia staff and Board of Management, School Sport Australia member body staff and officials, volunteers, the children and young people (students) who participate in our programs and their parents.

Student's rights to safety and participation

School Sport Australia will actively seek to include the voices of students in our organisational planning, delivery and review of our programs by understanding what makes students feel safe in our organisation. We will regularly communicate with students about what they can do if they feel unsafe. This will be done in the following ways:

- regular discussions with children and young people that facilitate student-led conversation on what makes them feel safe;
- communication materials on policies, procedures, staffing and programs are child-friendly and suitable to the relevant age groups and diversity of the students at School Sport Australia.

Valuing diversity

School Sport Australia values diversity and does not tolerate any discriminatory practices. School Sport Australia:

- supports the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children and their families;
- supports the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students from culturally and/ or linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families;
- welcomes students with disability and their families and act to promote their participation;
- welcomes same-sex attracted, intersex and gender diverse students and families;
- has a physical environment that actively celebrates diverse cultures and recognises cultural difference;
- seeks to recruit appropriate staff from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds;

Recruiting staff, specialist positions and volunteers

Recruitment procedures shall comply with the School Sport Australia Recruitment and Selection Policy. The School Sport Australia Recruitment and Selection Policy must ensure that child safety requirements are addressed in the recruitment process through strategies including:

Deciding to recruit

- Assess the level of contact and responsibility the role will have in regard to children;
- When roles have contact or responsibility for students and for roles that have influence or authority over children and young people, such as leadership positions, registered teachers will be given preference to specialist positions such as National Sport Advisors or international tour officials. All other applicants will require Working with Children Checks or equivalent. All applicants will require National Police Checks;
- Assess the qualifications and prerequisites required to ensure the staff are appropriately skilled for the role;
- Assess the training, guidance and supervision required for the position and the current resources available to meet these requirements.

Advertising

- All positions are advertised with the School Sport Australia Statement of Commitment to Child & Young People Safety;
- Positions will clearly state the responsibilities with regard to students;
- Prerequisite criteria will be listed for positions, for example: National Police Check, Working with Children Check, training and qualifications;
- Advertised positions will state that referee checks will be performed for shortlisted candidates.

Selection

- Where a position includes responsibility for students or is a position of leadership, interview questions will address experience and previous engagement with children and young people and will gauge the applicant's attitudes and values toward children;
- Before commencing in their role, successful applicants must sign and acknowledge that they have read, understand and will comply with the School Sport Australia Safeguarding Children & Young People Policy.

Supporting staff and volunteers

For all staff and volunteers who have not received appropriate and current training from within their Member Body or their workplace will need to attend approved training. SSA training requirements for School Sport Australia leaders, staff and volunteers are as follows:

- Induction: Safeguarding Children & Young People and Child Safe Policy;
- Identifying indicators of child abuse;
- How to respond to disclosures of child abuse;
- Complaint, Code of Conduct breach and child safety incident reporting procedures.

As these training courses are essential to support School Sport Australia' zero tolerance of child abuse approach, leaders, staff and volunteers are required to undertake all these components before being allowed to work in a student-related role.

Other training provided to School Sport Australia leaders, staff and volunteers should include (but is not limited to):

- Risk management practices in relation to child safety;
- Creating cultural safety for Aboriginal and culturally and/or linguistically diverse children;

- Investigating child abuse concerns and allegations.

Reporting procedures

The School Sport Australia Incident Reporting Policy and Framework includes how to respond to an allegation or incident of child abuse.

The Incident Reporting Policy and Framework includes the following elements:

- Acknowledgement that officials appointed by member bodies must adhere to their State or Territory's reporting procedures.
- If a staff member, volunteer or other person involved in a School Sport Australia program becomes aware of an incident or allegation of abuse, the first responsibility is to ensure that the student or students are safe and the risks of further abuse or harm are mitigated. If the incident or allegation of abuse could involve criminal conduct, the matter must be immediately reported to the State or Territory Police. If there is any ongoing risk to a student or students, then the person should immediately call 000.
- All reports of child abuse will be treated as serious, whether they are made by an adult or a student.
- When an allegation of child abuse is received, all mandatory reporting requirements must be met, including reporting to:
 - Police;
 - Relevant Education Department of the student;
 - other government departments or regulators as appropriate.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Safeguarding Children & Young People Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy



Signature of Executive Officer