

Plympton (Junior) Football Club

Member Protection Policy



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1. Introduction

The Plympton (Junior) Football Club is committed to providing a positive environment in which children can learn, enjoy and develop a range of skills playing Australian Rules Football.

As an affiliate member of the Plympton Sports and Recreation Club, the Plympton (Junior) Football Club provides the people of Plympton Park, and its surrounding areas, with an environment which allows everyone to enjoy the many values of sport. We are a community based organisation that provides a friendly and safe environment for all ages and encourage a healthy, professional and successful outcome while enjoying the social aspects of a sporting organisation.

2. Purpose of Our Policy

The main objective of our Member Protection Policy (Policy) is to maintain responsible behaviour and the making of informed decisions by participants in this club. It outlines our commitment to a person's right to be treated with respect and dignity, and to be safe and protected from abuse. Our policy informs everyone involved in our club of his or her legal and ethical rights and responsibilities and the standards of behaviour that are required. It also covers the care and protection of children participating in our club's activities.

3. Who Our Policy Applies To

Our policy applies to everyone involved in the club including committee members, administrators, coaches, officials, players, parents and spectators.

4. Extent of Our Policy

Our policy covers unfair decisions (e.g. team selection) and actions, breaches of our code of conduct and behaviour that occurs at practice, in the club rooms, at social events organised or sanctioned by the club (or our sport), and on away and overnight trips. It also covers private behaviour where that behaviour brings our club or sport into disrepute or there is suspicion of harm towards a child or young person.

5. Club Responsibilities

We will:

- implement and comply with our policy;
- promote our policy to everyone involved in our club;
- promote and model appropriate standards of behaviour at all times;
- respond to breaches or complaints made under our policy promptly, fairly, and confidentially;
- review this policy every 24 months; and
- seek advice from and refer serious issues to South Australian National Football League (SANFL Juniors).

Serious issues include unlawful behaviour that involves or could lead to significant harm and includes criminal behaviour (e.g. physical assault, sexual assault, child abuse) and any other issues that SANFL Juniors request to be referred to them.



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6. Individual Responsibilities

Everyone associated with our club must:

- comply with the standards of behaviour outlined in our policy;
- treat others with respect;
- always place the safety and welfare of children above other considerations;
- be responsible and accountable for their behaviour;
- follow the guidelines outlined in this policy if they wish to make a complaint or report a concern about possible child abuse, discrimination, harassment or other inappropriate behaviour.

7. Protection of Children

7.1 Child Protection

The Plympton (Junior) Football Club is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people accessing our service. We support the rights of the child and will act without hesitation to ensure a child safe environment is maintained at all times. We also support the rights and wellbeing of our staff and volunteers and encourage their active participation in building and maintaining a secure environment for all participants.

Plympton (Junior) Football Club acknowledges that our staff, members and volunteers provide a valuable contribution to the positive experiences of children involved in our sport. Plympton (Junior) Football Club aims to continue this and to take measures to protect the safety and welfare of children participating in our sport by:

7.1.1 Identify and Analyse Risk of Harm

The Plympton (Junior) Football Club will develop and implement a risk management strategy, which includes a review of existing child protection practices, to determine how child-safe and child-friendly the organisation is and to determine what additional strategies are required to minimise and prevent risk of harm to children because of the action of an employee, volunteer or another person.

7.1.2 Develop Codes of Behaviour for Adults and Children

The Plympton (Junior) Football Club will ensure that the organisation has codes of behaviour that specify standards of conduct and care when dealing and interacting with children, particularly those in the organisation's care. The organisation will also implement a code of behaviour to address appropriate behaviour between children.

The code(s) of behaviour will set out professional boundaries, ethical behaviour and unacceptable behaviour. (See Appendix 1)

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7.1.3 Choose Suitable Employees and Volunteers

The Plympton (Junior) Football Club will ensure that the organisation takes all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children (in prescribed positions).

This may be achieved using a range of screening measures. Such measures will aim to minimise the likelihood of engaging (or retaining) people who are unsuitable to work with children.

The Plympton (Junior) Football Club will ensure that working with children checks/criminal history assessments are conducted for employees and volunteers working with children, where an assessment is required by law.

If a criminal history report is obtained as part of their screening process, the Plympton (Junior) Football Club will ensure that the criminal history information is dealt with in accordance with relevant state requirements.

7.1.4 Support, Train, Supervise and Enhance Performance

The Plympton (Junior) Football Club will ensure that volunteers and employees who work with children or their records have ongoing supervision, support and training such that their performance is developed and enhanced to promote the establishment and maintenance of a child-safe environment.

7.1.5 Empower and Promote the Participation of Children in Decision-Making and Service Development

The Plympton (Junior) Football Club will promote the involvement and participation of children and young people in developing and maintaining child-safe environments.

7.1.6 Report and Respond Appropriately To Suspected Abuse and Neglect

The Plympton (Junior) Football Club will ensure that volunteers and employees are able to identify and respond to children at risk of harm.

The Plympton (Junior) Football Club will make all volunteers and employees aware of their responsibilities under the *Children's Protection Act 1993 to make a report to the Child Abuse Report Line (13 14 78)* if they have suspicion on reasonable grounds that a child has been or is being abused or neglected.

If any person feels another person or organisation bound by this policy is acting inappropriately towards a child or is breaching the code'(s) of practice set out they may make an internal complaint. Please refer to our complaints procedure outlined in Section 10 of this policy. This will explain what to do about the behaviour and how the Plympton (Junior) Football Club will deal with the problem.

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7.2 Supervision

Members under the age of 12 must be supervised at all times by a responsible adult. Our club will provide a level of supervision adequate and relative to the members' age, maturity, capabilities, level of experience, nature of activity and nature of venue. If a member finds a member under the age of 12 is unsupervised, they should assume responsibility for the member's safety until the parent/guardian or supervisor can be found.

Parents must arrive on time to collect their child for reasons of courtesy and safety. If it appears a member will be left alone at the end of a training session with just one child, they will ask another member to stay until the child is collected.

7.3 Transportation

Parents/guardians are responsible for transporting their children to and from club activities (e.g. practice and games). Where our club makes arrangements for the transportation of children (e.g. for away or overnight trips), we will conduct a risk assessment that includes ensuring vehicles are adequately insured, the driver has a current and appropriate licence for the vehicle being used and appropriate safety measures are available (e.g. fitted working seatbelts)

7.4 Taking Images of Children

The Plympton (Junior) Football Club acknowledges that in South Australia under the Summary Offences Act 1953 a person must not engage in indecent filming. Images of children and adults should not be used inappropriately or illegally.

The Plympton (Junior) Football Club is conscious of concerns raised regarding the taking of video footage and or still photographs at games.

Nevertheless we are also conscious that there are genuine and innocent reasons why this may happen, including the recording of family memories and scouting by the SANFL/AFL Clubs.

In setting a policy with regard to the use of cameras during its games and functions, the Plympton (Junior) Football Club has endeavoured to reach a fair and simple compromise between these competing needs. The following shall apply to the use of cameras at all games.

A person is permitted to video and photograph games involving minors provided that they are either:

- a) related to a player involved in the game; or
- b) doing so for scouting purposes; or
- c) doing so on official engagement arranged by the Plympton (Junior) Football Club.

If parents have concerns about people videoing or taking photographs of junior games, they should raise them with the Match Day Official. If the person using a camera is then unable to convince the Match Day Official that they fall into either of the above categories, they will be asked to discontinue taking photos or videoing.

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Any person aggrieved by that decision should raise the matter at the earliest opportunity with Plympton (Junior) Football Club Operations Manager.

No videoing or taking photographs will be permitted under any circumstances in the toilets or changing areas where games or training are being conducted.

Under no circumstances will video footage or photographs taken at Plympton (Junior) Football Club games or functions be posted on line or in any public forum without the written permission of the parents of all minors appearing in the video or photograph.

8. Anti-harassment, Discrimination and Bullying

Our club opposes all forms of harassment, discrimination and bullying. This includes treating or proposing to treat someone less favourably because of a particular characteristic; imposing or intending to impose an unreasonable requirement, condition or practice which has an unequal or disproportionate effect on people with a particular characteristic; or any behaviour that is offensive, abusive, belittling, intimidating or threatening – whether this is face-to-face, indirectly or via communication technologies such as mobile phone and computers. Some forms of harassment, discrimination and bullying are against the law and are based on particular characteristics such as age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy, political or religious beliefs, race, and marital status.

Our club takes all claims of harassment, discrimination, bullying and cyber bullying seriously. We encourage anyone who believes they have been harassed, discriminated against or bullied to raise the issue with the club (see Section 10).

9. Inclusive Practices

Our club is welcoming and we will seek to include members from all areas of our community.

9.1 People with a Disability

Where possible we will include people with a disability in our teams and club. We will make reasonable adaptations (e.g. modifications to equipment and rules) to enable participation.

9.2 People from Diverse Cultures

We will support and respect people from diverse cultures and religions to participate in our club and where possible will accommodate requests for flexibility (e.g. modifications to uniforms).

9.3 Sexual & Gender Identity

All people, regardless of their sexuality, are welcome at our club. We strive to provide a safe environment for participation and will take action over any homophobic behaviour.



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9.4 Girls Playing in Boys Teams

Our club will support girls playing in boys teams up until the age of 12 years (when federal sex discrimination law says if differences in strength, stamina and physique are relevant, then single sex competition is required). After this age our club will consider each request on an individual basis including looking at the nature of our sport and other opportunities to compete.

10. Responding to Complaints

10.1 Complaints

Our club takes all complaints about on and off-field behaviour seriously. Our club will handle complaints based on the principles of procedural fairness (natural justice), that is:

- all complaints will be taken seriously;
- both the person making the complaint (complainant) and the person the complaint is against (respondent) will be given full details of what is being said against them and have the opportunity to respond (give their side of the story);
- irrelevant matters will not be taken into account;
- decisions will be unbiased and fair; and
- any penalties imposed will be fair and reasonable.

More serious complaints may be escalated to the SANFL Juniors.

If the complaint relates to suspected child abuse, sexual assault or other criminal activity, then our club will need to report the behaviour to the police and/or relevant government authority.

10.2 Complaint Handling Process

When a complaint is received by our club, the person receiving the complaint (e.g. President, Member Protection Information Officer) will:

- listen carefully and ask questions to understand the nature and extent of the problem;
- ask what the complainant would like to happen;
- explain the different options available to help resolve the problem;
- take notes; and
- maintain confidentiality but not necessarily anonymity.



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Once the complainant decides on their preferred option for resolution, the club will assist, where appropriate and necessary, with the resolution process. This may involve:

- supporting the person complaining to talk to the person being complained about
- bringing all the people involved in the complaint together to talk objectively through the problem (this could include external mediation);
- gathering more information (e.g. from other people that may have seen the behaviour);
- seeking advice from our district, regional, state and/or national body or from an external agency (e.g. State Department of Sport or anti-discrimination agency);
- referring the complaint to the SANFL Juniors; and/or
- referring the complainant to an external agency such as a community mediation centre, police or anti-discrimination agency.

In situations where a complaint is referred to the SANFL Juniors and an investigation is conducted, the club will:

- co-operate fully;
- ensure the complainant and respondent are not victimised;
- where applicable, ensure the complainant is not placed in an unsupervised situation with the respondent(s); and
- act on the SANFL Juniors' recommendations.

At any stage of the process, a person can seek advice from or lodge a complaint with an anti-discrimination commission or other external agency.

10.3 Disciplinary Measures

Our club will take disciplinary action against anyone found to have breached our policy or made false and malicious allegations. Any disciplinary measure imposed under our policy must:

- Be applied consistent with any contractual and employment rules and requirements;
- Be fair and reasonable;
- Be based on the evidence and information presented and the seriousness of the breach;
- Be determined by our Constitution, By Laws and the rules of the game.

Possible measures that may be taken include:

- verbal and/or written apology;
- counselling to address behaviour;
- withdrawal of any awards, placings, records, achievements bestowed in any tournaments, activities or events held or sanctioned by our club;



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- suspension or termination of membership, participation or engagement in a role or activity;
- de-registration of accreditation for a period of time or permanently;
- a fine; or
- any other form of discipline that our club considers reasonable and appropriate.

10.4 Appeals

The complainant or respondent can lodge one appeal against decisions of or disciplinary measures imposed by our club to the SANFL Juniors. Appeals must be based on either a denial of natural justice, because of unjust or unreasonable disciplinary measure(s) being imposed, or on the grounds that the decision was not supported by the information/evidence presented and available to the decision maker/club.

This document was endorsed by the Plympton (Junior) Football Club committee on 22nd December 2015. It can be amended by the committee at any time, however in the absence of changes it will be reviewed again on 22nd December 2017.

Appendix 1 – Code of Conduct

Refer to the Plympton Football Club website for the latest codes of behaviour:

<http://www.plymptonbulldogs.com.au>



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Appendix 2 – Screening requirements

This section covers Criminal History Assessment/Managing criminal history information of people working with children in South Australia.

A criminal history assessment is a decision about whether a person is suitable to work with children based on the person's criminal history (if any) and the assessed risk to children who access services from the organisation.

The Plympton (Junior) Football Club may conduct a criminal history assessment themselves or apply to a third party (such as the State Body or Screening Unit) for an assessment and letter of clearance.

The Plympton (Junior) Football Club undertakes to follow the Standards issued by the Department for Education and Child Development when conducting criminal history assessments. These Standards are outlined below.

Identifying affected positions

The Plympton (Junior) Football Club will conduct an assessment of the criminal history of every person who is, or will be, engaged to work with children in this organisation, its affiliated associations and clubs. As a first step, the Plympton (Junior) Football Club has identified all individuals and positions within the organisation that involve working with children. These positions are:

- Committee members
- Coaches and assistant coaches
- Team managers
- Runners
- Trainers

Procedures

The Plympton (Junior) Football Club has set out the following policy and supporting procedures for obtaining criminal history reports.

Existing Members and Volunteers:

- All existing members and volunteers holding a prescribed position must obtain a National Police Check by making application to the South Australian Police
- The cost of obtaining this check will be met by using the organisations VOAN
- On receipt of the check the original document must be presented to the Child Safety Officer
- The document will be assessed in accordance with the Standards and returned to the person as soon as practicable
- The criminal history assessment will be repeated every three years or as requested by the Board

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New Members and Volunteers:

- All new members or volunteers selected to fill a prescribed position must obtain National Police Check (or present a document that is less than three years old) by making application to the South Australian Police
- The cost of obtaining this check will be met by using the organisations VOAN
- On receipt of the check the original document must be presented to the Child Safety Officer
- Using a 100-point check, the Child Safety Officer will establish the true identity of the applicant
- The document will be assessed in accordance with the Standards and returned to the person as soon as practicable
- The criminal history assessment will be repeated every three years or as requested by the Board

Accepting "other evidence"

The Plympton (Junior) Football Club will, in lieu of undertaking a criminal history screening check as set out above, accept the following forms of evidence (obtained within the last three years) to assess a person's suitability to work with children.

- A National Police Certificate that does not expressly state that it cannot be used as a clearance to work with children
- A Letter of clearance to work with children from a CrimTrac accredited agency: Such as the DSCI Screening Unit; Teacher Registration Board or Catholic Education Office
- An interstate working with children check, from: Queensland, Victoria or Western Australia
- A letter from the Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide, Police Check Unit granting a police check Clearance

Acceptance of any of these checks is subject to the person completing a 100-point check, to enable the Plympton (Junior) Football Club to establish the true identity of the applicant.¹

The Plympton (Junior) Football Club may also at its discretion seek a statutory declaration for any *employee(s)* or *volunteer(s)* who have been citizens or permanent residents of another country other than Australia since turning 18 years of age.

Assessing criminal history information

In the majority of cases, a person will have no criminal history. In these cases, the assessment will be successfully completed and no further action in respect to an assessment will be required.

¹ A 100-point check should include one primary document such as a Birth Certificate or International Travel Document (e.g. Current Passport) or Citizenship Certificate and must include one secondary document such as a Driver's Licence, employee identification card, Centrelink card or student identification card.

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The Plympton (Junior) Football Club believes the following categories of criminal convictions present a prima-facie *risk of harm* to children. No person will be considered suitable to be employed, contracted, hired, retained, accepted as a volunteer, or allowed to undertake prescribed functions for the Plympton (Junior) Football Club if he or she has been convicted of:

- murder or sexual assault
- violence in relation to a child
- an offence relating to child pornography
- an offence involving child prostitution
- a child abuse offence, for example criminal neglect

The Plympton (Junior) Football Club believes that there can be a presumption that there is a risk of harm to children but further assessment is necessary before a decision to exclude a person can be made for the following types of criminal offences:

- sexually-motivated offences
- violence offences/assault including any form of assault which has resulted in a sentence of imprisonment
- offences relating to cruelty to animals
- any other offences against a child (including drug offences).

In addition, other criminal offences may be relevant to specific, prescribed functions, including: dishonesty offences, serious drug-related matters or serious traffic offences.

None of these offences will automatically preclude an individual from being engaged to undertake prescribed functions.

Any such person will be asked to make further application to the Screening Unit for a more thorough assessment. This cost of this screening check to be met by the individual.

The decision of this process will be deemed to be final and binding on all parties.

Ensuring procedural fairness if a person has a criminal history

Existing staff, members and volunteers:

- All existing staff, members and volunteers will be provided with the opportunity to confirm or dispute the information contained within the National Police Certificate report and to provide contextual information if they wish, before the assessment is conducted.
- Prior to a decision being made, the Plympton (Junior) Football Club will communicate to the applicant a pending decision not to employ or engage them because of their criminal history and the reasons for this decision.
- Staff (who are also members of the Plympton (Junior) Football Club), members and volunteers of may request that the final assessment be referred to the Screening Unit (if it has not already been done). Which decision shall be final and binding.

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New staff, members and volunteers:

- New applicants for employment, membership and volunteers will be provided with the opportunity to confirm or dispute the information contained within the National Police Certificate report and to provide contextual information if they wish before the assessment is conducted.
- The Plympton (Junior) Football Club will communicate to the applicant a decision not to employ or engage them or to accept their application for membership. They will not be provided with the reasons for this decision.
- There will be no appeal to this decision.

Records management

The Plympton (Junior) Football Club will take specific actions to store and record information obtained through conducting a criminal history assessment. This includes taking measures to ensure information is protected and confidentially stored and safeguards to protect against loss, unauthorised access, modification, disclosure or other misuse.

Criminal history information will not be retained once a decision has been made regarding the person's suitability to work with children. No criminal history information will be retained beyond three months.

The Plympton (Junior) Football Club will retain the following information regarding their decision:

- That a criminal history report was obtained
- How the criminal history information affected decision making processes
- Statutory declarations (where applicable)

Process for dealing with members charged with, or under investigations for, a criminal offence

This process sets out the procedure that Plympton (Junior) Football Club will follow in the event that it becomes aware that a member has been charged with, or is being investigated for, a relevant criminal offence.

Guiding Principle: The paramount consideration is the rights, interests and wellbeing of children and their protection from harm.

Procedure

Risk Assessment

In the event that Plympton (Junior) Football Club becomes aware that a member has been charged with, or is being investigated for, a relevant criminal offence, the managing authority of Plympton (Junior) Football Club or senior appointed officers shall make a risk assessment of the risk of harm to children and consider taking protective action.

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The risk assessment will:

- Be conducted in accordance with the guidelines and principles set out under Standard 5 of the Child Safe Environments: Standards for dealing with information obtained about the criminal history of employees and volunteers who work with children;
- Recognise that an investigation or charge does not mean that the person is guilty and that the matter needs to be resolved through proper legal avenues;
- Consider all matters on an individual basis and include an assessment of all relevant circumstances;
- Provide the member an opportunity to make submissions on whether he or she had been charged with an offence warranting some action, and what action should be taken;
- Be made in accordance with the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness. Assessment procedures will be transparent, documented and consistently applied;
- Not compromise any police investigations or evidence.

Outcome

Where the outcome of the risk assessment is that protective action is necessary, the Plympton (Junior) Football Club may:

- Control or supervise contact between the member and children
- Prevent contact between the member and children
- Remove the member from duties until the outcome of the investigation or charge is known;
- Take any other action that is necessary and reasonable in the circumstances.

Voluntary removal of member pending outcome of charge or investigation

Where the risk assessment determines that protective action is necessary against a member to safeguard and protect children, Plympton (Junior) Football Club will give the member the opportunity to voluntarily remove him or herself from activities until the outcome of the charge or investigation is known.

Resolution to suspend or remove member

In the event that the member will not voluntarily remove him or herself from activities until the outcome of the charge or investigation is known, the Plympton (Junior) Football Club will put forward a resolution to the committee to suspend or temporarily remove the member.

The outcome of the resolution will be recorded in the committee's minutes and then implemented.

The outcome recorded in the committee minutes will not contain unnecessary information relating to the investigation or charge or identify (directly or indirectly) any junior members.



Glossary

Relevant criminal offence: means an offence that indicates a prima-facie risk of harm or that potentially indicates unsuitability to work with children.

Natural justice: means observing the following principles:

- people are entitled to be informed of allegations made against them
- all persons affected by a decision should be given the relevant information to enable an informed submission to be made to the decision-maker or person subsequently reviewing a decision
- during the review of a decision, all persons affected by a decision should have an opportunity to put their case, relevant arguments should be heard, and relevant information should be accessible to all parties
- decision-makers act fairly and impartially.

Offence that indicates a prima-facie risk of harm: has the same meaning as described under Standard 5 of the *Child Safe Environments: Standards for dealing with information obtained about the criminal history of employees and volunteers who work with children*.

Offence that potentially indicates unsuitability to work with children: Has the same meaning as described under Standard 5 of the *Child Safe Environments: Standards for dealing with information obtained about the criminal history of employees and volunteers who work with children*.

Member: means a member of the Plympton (Junior) Football Club.

Risk assessment in the context of child protection 'refers to a process of evaluating the information received to reach a decision about the risk of harm a person may pose to children'. (*Child Safe Environments: Standards for dealing with information obtained about the criminal history of employees and volunteers who work with children*).

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<p>Description of alleged issue</p>	
<p>Nature of complaint (category/basis/grounds)</p> <p>Can tick more than one box</p>	<p> <input type="checkbox"/> Harassment or <input type="checkbox"/> Discrimination <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual/sexist <input type="checkbox"/> Selection dispute <input type="checkbox"/> Coaching methods <input type="checkbox"/> Sexuality <input type="checkbox"/> Personality clash <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Race <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bullying <input type="checkbox"/> Physical abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Religion <input type="checkbox"/> Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Victimisation <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy <input type="checkbox"/> Child Abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Unfair decision <input type="checkbox"/> Other </p>
<p>What they want to happen to fix issue</p>	

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Information provided to them	
Resolution and/or action taken	
Follow-up action	