



Gold Cost Basketball Child Protection Risk Management Strategy

Purpose

To prevent harm to children and young people participating in activities with Gold Coast Basketball, hereafter called the “Association”.

To ensure all those who should comply with this policy within the Association are assessed for their suitability to work with children under the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000 (Qld) (where exemptions do not apply).

To ensure that all people involved with the operations of the Association are aware of their responsibilities in relation to the above.

Who should comply with this policy?

- Volunteers
- Employees
- Casual staff
- Coaches
- Officials
- Referees
- Committee members
- Players
- Members
- Parents
- Guardians
- Spectators
- Sponsors
- Children
- Young people

Statement of Commitment

The Association is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people while involved in its activities and is mindful to protect them from harm.

The Association therefore

- Ensures that all workers treat children and young people with respect and understanding at all times
- Ensures that those who regularly deal with children and young people within the association undergo the Working with Children Check and hold a positive notice Blue Card (where exemptions do not apply)
- Prohibits any form of abuse against children
- Carefully selects, screens and monitors people whose roles require them to have regular contact with children
- Ensures the Association’s codes of conduct for interacting with Children and Young People is promoted, enforced and reviewed

- Provides clear procedures for raising concerns or complaints
- Provides education and/or information on child abuse and child protection

Policy

All classes of individuals who should comply and who directly and/or interact with children under the age of 18 on a regular basis will undergo the Working with Children Check and will hold a positive notice Blue Card. A “regular basis” is defined as at least once a week over the course of a month, at least once a fortnight over the course of 2 months or at least once a month over the course of 6 months.

Those who should comply and who do not undergo a working with Children Check or hold a Blue Card will not be permitted to regularly interact with children or young people. If an individual’s application for a blue card is refused, the Association has the duty to refuse that person’s involvement with children and young people registered with the association.

Any individuals working on a short term or one-off basis are not required to undergo the Working with Children Check or hold a blue card. However, if there are doubts about the length of service, the person in question will be required to undergo the check and hold a Blue Card (where the exemption does not apply).

Individuals are not required to undertake a Working with Children check or hold a blue card where exemptions apply (as defined by the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian), namely, children under the age of 18 years who are volunteers, employees, referees and or casual staff.

An individual unless exempt must have a valid blue card before they start working with children and young people on a regular basis (as defined above). The Management Committee has determined that all adult volunteers regardless of any exceptions that may exist within the Blue Policy must hold a valid blue card.

Where there is evidence, disclosure or reasonable suspicion of harm or abuse to a child or young person within the Association, the Department of Communities, Child Safety Service or the Police will be notified immediately.

All disclosures and allegations of child abuse must be referred to the General Manager or his/her delegate and will be dealt with promptly, seriously, sensitively and confidentially. A person will not be victimised for reporting an allegation of child abuse and their privacy of all persons concerned will be respected.

Implementing the Policy

This policy will be effective from the date that it is accepted and adopted by the association’s Management Committee. All who should comply and who work with children and young people are to receive a copy of the blue card summary

document with details of the website address for this policy and are expected to familiarise themselves with the document.

Breaches

The Association will review any allegation of a breach of this policy and will take steps to minimise the risk of any further breaches. Non-compliance with the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000 (Qld) will result in penalties imposed under the Act. Refer to the Act for information regarding failure to comply.

Evaluation and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, in line with the association's review of its entire Child Protection Risk Management Strategy. This policy will be carried out by the association's management committee and General Manager.

Code of Conduct for Interacting with Children and Young People

Who must comply with this code?

- Volunteers
- Employees
- Casual staff
- Coaches
- Officials
- Referees
- Committee members
- Players
- Members
- Parents
- Guardians
- Spectators
- Sponsors
- Children
- Young people

Code of conduct

- Use appropriate language when dealing with children and young people
- Do not make inappropriate physical contact with any children or young people
- If coaching or officiating, maintain professional relationships with children and young people within the Association and treat them with the same respect you would offer an adult
- Do not tolerate bullying within the association, either amongst children and young people, or from adults towards children and young people
- Place the safety and welfare of children and young people above all else
- Report all violent and illegal acts
- Set a good example for children and young people within the Association by the way your dress, speak and act.

If anyone within the Association is faced with an ethical dilemma, they should ask themselves:

- Is this action legal
- Will the decision be in the best interest of the child or young person?
- Do I have all relevant information to make an informed responsible decision?
- Is it consistent with the association and its policies?

- Do I think it is the right thing to do?
- Would other people think it was the right thing to do? If not, why not?
- What will the consequences be for our association, for my colleagues and for me?
- Can I justify my actions?
- What will happen if the matter becomes public, for example, in the media.

Recruitment Training and Management of Volunteers, employees and casual staff

To assist with effective child protection, the association will implement appropriate recruitment, selection screening, induction, monitoring and management of volunteers, employees and casual staff who work with children and young people within the association.

Recruitment

Volunteers, employees and casual staff will come from varied sources. They may be members themselves, past members, people from the local community, friends or relatives. The association has considered the best ways to recruit volunteers, employees and casual staff.

When recruiting volunteers, employees and casual staff the association is selling itself to potential helpers. Talking about the benefits of being associated with the organisation is very important when communication with potential volunteers, employees and casual staff.

In identifying the methods most suitable for finding volunteers, employees and casual staff the organisation has considered the following points;

- Personal contact (i.e. asking potential volunteers, employees and casual staff for assistance)
- Face-to-face is usually most successful
- It is necessary to create an awareness of the Association's volunteer opportunities by effectively communicating the volunteer requirement of the Association through publicity, promotion and personal interaction
- Some volunteers, employees and casual staff must be selected or appointed under the organisation's consultation (for example the Management Committee)
- Any person nominated by the Management Committee to recruit volunteers will implement the child protection risk management strategy in all recruiting activities. In particular applicant for position regularly dealing with children will be required to demonstrate an ability to comply with child safety requirements and will be mandatory for them to hold and maintain a Blue Card while working for the association (where an exemption does not apply).

Selection and Screening

Once found, volunteers, employees, and casual staff will be screened to ensure that they fit the association and with the position to be filled.

In screening volunteers, employees and casual staff the Association recognises the importance of assessing the skills, experience and availability of potential volunteers, employees and casual staff or their commitment to gathering the necessary skills and experience to match them to the volunteer needs of the association.

Making workers aware of the following

- The Association's commitment to an environment which is safe and friendly to children and young people
- The Association's child and youth friendly policies. Codes of conduct and procedures
- Procedures to follow when harm is disclosed or suspected
- Their rights and responsibilities
- What is expected of them?
- What they can and can't do – the boundaries of their roles
- The roles of key people in the Association and to whom the volunteer should report or go to for help
- What to expect if there is an allegation of harm made against them or to them
- Reporting and grievance procedures

Once selected volunteers, employees and casual staff regularly working with children and young people will be required to obtain a Blue Card (where an exemption does not apply). The association's blue card register will be used to monitor who within the association holds a current blue card, as well as Blue Card numbers and expiry dates.

Training will be provided to volunteers, employees and casual staff to outline their responsibilities under the association's policies. Training will also be provided that alerts workers to the nature of harm which can occur to children and young people and how to respond to disclosures or suspicions of harm.

Handling Disclosures and Suspicions of Harm

Receiving a disclosure

When those who should comply are confronted with disclosures of harm or suspect harm to children and young people they will respond professionally and in the best interest of the child or young person subjected to the alleged harm. Complaints are to be immediately referred to the General Manager or his/her delegate and will be dealt with promptly, seriously, sensitively and confidentially.

Any individual confronted with disclosures of harm will

- Not react in a shocked or critical way
- Reassure the child or young person that they have done the right thing in telling
- Say they need to tell someone else who can help the child or young person
- Reassure the child or young person that they will only tell someone who will make safe
- Ultimately believe the child or young person and assume they are telling the truth

Dealing with a disclosure

Following a disclosure of harm from a child or young person the Association will investigate whether the allegation should be reported to the Queensland Police Service or the Department of Communities, Child Safety services. If the incident(s) are serious or criminal in nature, the association's response should be immediate. All other allegations should be actioned as soon as possible, preferably within 24 hours. For allegations of a serious or criminal nature, the association will follow these guidelines:

- If the allegation involves a child at risk of harm, the incident should immediately be reported to the police and/or the Department of Communities, Child Safety Services
- The association will contact the Department of Communities, Child safety Services for advice if there is any doubt whether the complaint should be reported
- If the child's parent(s) or guardian are suspected of committing the abuse, the Association will report the allegation to the Police or the department of Communities, Child Safety services immediately.

Strict confidentiality, impartiality, fairness and due process must be maintained at all times. Under no circumstances will the Association conduct its own investigations into any serious allegations or allegations of a criminal nature.

Managing Breaches of the Risk Management Strategy

The Association will review any allegations of breaches of the Child Protection Risk Management strategy and will take steps to minimise the risk of any further breaches.

Non-compliance with the commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000 (Qld) will result in penalties imposed under the Act. Refer to the Act for information regarding failure to comply.

Compliance with Blue Card Legislation

The Association will comply with Blue Card legislation by ensuring that all relevant individuals (volunteers, employees, casual staff and others) within the association undergo Working with Children Blue Card check and obtain a positive notice Blue Card (where AGE exemptions do not apply).

The Association's office staff will assist relevant workers in seeking approval to work with children from the Commission for Children and Young people and Child Guardian. Compliance with the child protection policy included within this risk management strategy will help ensure that the association complied with the Blue Card legislation. The association will respect the confidentiality of information relating to applications by volunteers, employees and casual staff for Blue Cards and will maintain appropriate systems to protect the privacy of applicants.

High Risk Activities and Special Events

Volunteers, employees, casual staff and others have less control over events and activities which are conducted away from the associations home grounds. The association and interested others (Volunteers, employees and casual staff) must therefore ensure that participating in away events or activities will not compromise the association's commitment to providing a safe environment for children and young people by

- Ensuring that enough information has been provided to parents or carers so they can make an informed decision about whether they want their children to attend
- Evaluating any risks involved with attending the event and developing procedures to minimise those risks
- Ensuring that event organisers are committed to an environment which is safe and friendly for children and young people and that they have developed policies and procedures supporting such an environment

Rights and Expectations of Parents and Guardians

Parents and guardians often turn to sport as a safe place for children to build character, develop skills, and learn valuable lessons and to have fun. While involvement in sport remains a positive experience for most participants, parents are now aware that children can face the risk of being harassed and abused in sport.

In addition to the association's volunteers, employees, casual staff and parents can play a key role in creating a safe environment for children in sport.

The following actions will help parents contribute to providing a safe environment:

- Get involved and get to know your child's coach
- Maintain open and frank communication
- If things occur that disturb you, talk to the coach about them
- Speak out when you hear language or attitudes that contribute to a negative or unsafe environment. You may wish to peruse your issues formally

- Be careful not to put coaches on pedestals
- Tell your children it is ok to say No if the coach is doing something that makes them feel uncomfortable
- Make an effort to attend training and games whenever you can
- Be wary of private, closed training sessions, if they occur on a regular basis ask the coach for an explanation
- Be wary of any increases in the amount of time the coach spends with your children beyond the training session
- If you volunteer in sport and are asked to take part in screening, accept this as a positive step to keep children safe
- Make sure you are not part of the problem
- Don't engage in verbal abuse of officials, umpires, coaches or others
- Know and abide by the association's codes of conduct and encourage others to do the same
- Encourage your child to play by the rules
- Never ridicule a child for making mistakes

Strategies for Communication and Support

This child protection risk management policy will be made available through the association's website. This will allow all individuals easy access to clarify what is expected of them with regard to providing a safe and friendly environment for children and young people.