 **PBJFC**

**Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy**

**Commitment to Child Safety**

Peninsula Baxter Junior Football Club (“PBJFC”) is committed to promoting and protecting the safety and wellbeing of all children. We have a zero tolerance for child abuse. PBJFC aims to provide a club where children are safe and feel safe, with the best interest of the children is paramount and at the forefront of all activities and decision making.

PBJFC acknowledges and is committed to the principles of cultural safety, inclusion and wellbeing of children from diverse backgrounds and to the safety, inclusion and wellbeing of all LGBTQIA+, non-binary and gender-diverse children, and children who are unable to live at home. PBJFC recognises that these principles support the safety of all children.

**Purpose**

This Policy sets out the key elements of PBJFC’s approach to child safety and has been developed to create and maintain a child safe club in accordance with Ministerial Order 1359: Victorian Child Safe Standards. The purpose of this policy is to:

* Work towards a strong club culture of child safety;
* Ensure that all persons are aware of their responsibilities for identifying possible occasions for child abuse and for establishing procedures for preventing such abuse and/or detecting such abuse when it occurs;
* Provide guidance on responding where a person suspects any child abuse within all club environments;
* Provide a clear statement to the PBJFC Community forbidding any such abuse;
* Provide assurance that any and all suspected abuse will be investigated.

**Scope**

This policy applies to all individuals involved in our organisation (paid and volunteer) including, but not limited to:

* Committee Members
* Staff
* Coaches
* Officials
* Participants
* Parents
* Spectators.

For the purposes of this policy the above will collectively referred to as “PBJFC Community”.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

*PBJFC Committee*

The PBJFC Committee is responsible for ensuring that a strong child safe culture is created and maintained, and that policies and practices are effectively developed and implemented. This includes reinforcing high standards of respectful behaviour between children and the PBJFC Community. The PBJFC Committee must identify and manage risk in relation to child safety and promote discussions on child safety issues within the PBJFC Community.

*PBJFC Child Safety Officer*

The Child Safety Officer is appointed by the Committee to be the first point of contact raising child safety and wellbeing questions or concerns, including regarding this Policy and the PBJFC Child Safe Code of Conduct.

The PBJFC Child Safety Officer undertakes additional training with respect to child safety and wellbeing issues and assist the Committee to coordinate appropriate responses to child safety and wellbeing incidents.

Details of the PBJFC Child Safety Officer are available on the PBJFC website.

*PBJFC Community*

All members of the PBJFC Community are required to be familiar with the content of the PBJFC Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and the PBJFC Child Safe Code of Conduct, as well as understanding the legal obligations with respect to reporting child abuse.

**Reporting Obligations**

PBJFC Members are required to report to Policy, together with the PJFC Child Safety Officer or any other Committee member, where they form a reasonable belief that:

* A sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child;
* An adult associated with the Club poses a risk of sexual abuse to a child and/or;
* A child is subject to predatory of “grooming” behaviour.

Failure to disclose the information to the Police is a Criminal Offence and applies to all adults in Victoria.

*Child Abuse* includes:

1. Any act committee against a child involving:
	1. A sexual offence; or
	2. An offence under section 498(2) of the *Crimes Act* (grooming); or
2. The infliction, on a child, of:
	1. Physical violence; or
	2. Serious emotional or psychological harm; or
3. Serious neglect of a child.

*Reasonable Belief* is formed if a reasonable person would form the same belief, based on the same information.

**Response to Allegations**

To ensure a clear response process PBJFC adopts, to the extent applicable, the PROTECT: Four Critical Actions, adopted by Victorian Schools.

Further information as to the Four Critical Actions can be found here: <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/protecting-children/guidance/making-report-or-referral-four-critical-actions>

**Support for Affected Persons**

Ensuring a child feels safe and supported following an incident is of paramount importance. PBJFC will work closely with the child & their family to determine any additional support services that may be available to provide appropriate support.

**PBJFC Community Engagement**

PBJFC works to create an inclusive and supportive environment that encourages the PBJFC Community to contribute to our child safety appropriate.

The PBJFC community has an important role in monitoring and promoting children’s safety and wellbeing and helping children to raise any concerns.

**Suitable Staff and Volunteers**

To ensure the suitability of Staff and Volunteers PBJFC includes targeted Child Safety questions at all interviews, requires screening for suitability to work with children, and requires all Staff and Volunteers to undertake Child Safe Training on induction, and annual thereafter.

Where a staff member or volunteer is under investigation for breach of this Policy, or for any reason that would question their suitability to work with children, they will be immediately stood down or prevented from entering the club.

**Complaints**

PBJFC fosters a culture that encourages and expects the PBJFC community to raise concerns and complaints. The club has clear pathways for raising complaints or concerns. This is documented in our club Complaints Resolution Policy (under development), available on our website.

**Record Keeping**

All reports of alleged abuse or harm, or risk thereof, must be recorded by the Child Safety Officer. Reports will be securely stored by the Committee. Access to reports may be restricted in some cases.

**Further Information**

Questions of further information about this Policy should be directed to the PBJFC Child Safety Officer.

**Reviewing this policy**

This policy will be reviewed and approved every two years, as a minimum, by the PBJFC Committee. The review incorporates feedback from the PBJFC Community.

The Committee will undertake a review of the application of the policy in the event of a Child Safe incident. and we undertake to seek views, comments and suggestions from children, parents, carers, staff and volunteers involved in the Club.

Last Review April 2024.

Next Review April 2026.