



# **Gladesville Ryde Magic Football Club**

## **MEMBER PROTECTION POLICY**

**VERSION 9.2**  
**18 August 2017**  
[Replaces V9.1 Dated 14 April 2016]

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Section</i>	<i>Page</i>
1. <i>Introduction</i> .....	3
2. <i>Purpose of Our Member Protection Policy</i> .....	3
3. <i>Who Our Member Protection Policy Applies To</i> .....	3
4. <i>Extent of Our Member Protection Policy</i> .....	3
5. <i>Club Responsibilities</i> .....	4
6. <i>Individual Responsibilities</i> .....	4
7. <i>Protection of Children</i> .....	4
7.1. <i>Child Protection</i> .....	4
7.1.1. <i>Identifying and Analysing Risks of Harm</i> .....	4
7.1.2. <i>Developing Codes of Conduct for Adults and Children</i> .....	5
7.1.3. <i>Choosing Suitable Staff and Volunteers</i> .....	5
7.1.4. <i>Support, Train, Supervise and Enhance Performance</i> .....	5
7.1.5. <i>Empower and Promote the Participation of Children In Decision-Making And Service Development</i> .....	5
7.1.6. <i>Report and Respond Appropriately to Suspected Abuse and Neglect</i> .....	5
7.2. <i>Supervision</i> .....	5
7.3. <i>Transportation</i> .....	6
7.4. <i>Taking Images of Children</i> .....	6
8. <i>Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying</i> .....	6
8.1. <i>Discrimination</i> .....	6
8.2. <i>Harassment</i> .....	7
8.3. <i>Bullying</i> .....	8
9. <i>Inclusive Practices</i> .....	8
9.1. <i>People with a Disability</i> .....	8
9.2. <i>People from Diverse Cultures</i> .....	8
9.3. <i>Sexual and Gender Identity</i> .....	8
9.4. <i>Girls Playing in Boys Teams</i> .....	8
10. <i>Responding to Complaints</i> .....	9
10.1. <i>Complaints</i> .....	9
10.2. <i>Complaint Handling Process</i> .....	9
10.3. <i>Disciplinary Sanctions</i> .....	10
10.4. <i>Appeals</i> .....	10

# MEMBER PROTECTION POLICY

---

## 1. Introduction

The Club philosophy is intended to provide direction and a vision for the future of its members. The philosophy delivers consistency and understanding for administrators, coaches, managers, players and supporters. It allows the Club to set a standard and a style of play across all grades.

Ultimately a young player's enjoyment grows as skill improves and technique is developed. In developing the Club philosophy, the priority is playing football with the right intent and to encourage creativity, perseverance and good judgement.

The Club will promote attractive football that is consistent with playing guidelines issued by Football Federation Australia. The Club endorses continual improvement in the standard of coaching and learning experience provided to its players. Financial stability will allow the Club to provide the infrastructure to support player development with improved facilities, continued professional development of technical staff and proper structures to deliver development pathways.

## 2. Purpose of Our Member Protection Policy

The main objective of the Club ("Our", "Us" or "We") Member Protection Policy ("MPP") is to maintain responsible behaviour and the making of informed decisions by members and other 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 discrimination, harassment and abuse. Our MPP informs everyone involved in our club of his or her legal and ethical rights and responsibilities and the standards of behaviour that are expected of them. It also covers the care and protection of children participating in our Club's activities.

## 3. Who Our Member Protection Policy Applies To

This MPP applies to everyone involved in the activities of our Club whether they are in a paid or unpaid/voluntary capacity and including:

- Club Committee Members, Administrators and other Club Officials;
- Coaches and Assistant Coaches and other personnel participating in events and activities, including camps and training sessions;
- Support personnel, including Managers, Physiotherapists, Psychologists, Masseurs, Sport Trainers and others;
- Referees, Assistants and other Match Officials;
- Players and athletes;
- Members, including any Life Members;
- Parents;
- Spectators; and
- Volunteers

## 4. Extent of Our Member Protection Policy

Our MPP covers all matters directly and indirectly related to the Club and its activities. In particular, the MPP governs unfair selection decisions and actions, breaches of our code of behaviour and behaviour that occurs at training sessions, 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:

- Adopt, implement and comply with this MPP;
- Ensure that this MPP is enforceable;
- Publish, distribute and promote this MPP and the consequences of any breaches of this MPP;
- Promote and model appropriate standards of behaviour at all times;
- Deal with any complaints made under this MPP in an appropriate manner;
- Deal with any breaches of this MPP in an appropriate manner;
- Recognise and enforce any penalty imposed under this MPP;
- Ensure that a copy of this MPP is available or accessible to all people and organisations to whom this MPP applies;
- Review this MPP every 12 to 18 months; and
- Seek advice from and refer serious issues to Football NSW.

Serious issues include unlawful behaviour that involves or could lead to significant harm and includes criminal behaviour (including physical assault, sexual assault and child abuse) and any other issues that our state or national bodies request to be referred to them.

## 6. Individual Responsibilities

Everyone associated with our Club must:

- Make themselves aware of the contents of this MPP;
- Comply with all relevant provisions of this MPP, including the standards of behaviour outlined in this MPP;
- Consent to the screening requirements set out in this MPP and any state or territory **Working with Children** checks if the person holds or applies for a role that involves regular unsupervised contact with a child or young person under the age of 18, or where otherwise required by law;
- Treat other people with respect;
- Always place the safety and welfare of children above other considerations;
- Be responsible and accountable for their personal behaviour; and
- Follow the guidelines outlined in this MPP if they wish to make a complaint or report a concern about possible child abuse, discrimination, harassment, bullying or other inappropriate behaviour; and
- Comply with any decisions and/or disciplinary measures imposed under this MPP.

## 7. Protection of Children

### 7.1. Child Protection

The Club is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people who participate in our Club activities or use our services. We support the rights of the child and will act at all times to ensure that a child safe environment is maintained. We also support the rights and wellbeing of our staff and volunteers and encourage their active participation in building and maintaining a secure and safe environment for all participants.

The Club acknowledges the valuable contribution made by our staff, members and volunteers and we encourage their active participating in providing a safe, fair and inclusive environment for all participants.

#### 7.1.1. Identifying and Analysing Risks of Harm

The Club will develop and implement a risk management strategy including a review of our existing child protection practices to identify any additional steps we can take to

minimise and prevent the risk of harm to children because of the action or inaction of an employee, volunteer or any other person

#### **7.1.2. Developing Codes of Conduct for Adults and Children**

We will develop and promote a code of conduct that specifies standards of conduct and care we expect of adults when they deal and interact with children in our care and generally. We will also implement a code of conduct to promote appropriate behaviour between children.

The **Code of Behaviour** at **Attachment 2** clearly describes professional boundaries, ethical behaviour and unacceptable behaviour.

#### **7.1.3. Choosing Suitable Staff and Volunteers**

The Club will take all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children, especially those in positions that involve regular unsupervised contact with children. This may be achieved using a range of screening measures aimed to minimise the likelihood of engaging (or retaining) people who are unsuitable to work with children.

The Club will ensure that **Working with Children** checks and criminal history assessments are conducted for staff and volunteers working with children, where an assessment is required by law. If a criminal history report is obtained as part of the screening process, the Club will ensure that the criminal history information is dealt with confidentially and in accordance with relevant legal requirements.

#### **7.1.4. Support, Train, Supervise and Enhance Performance**

The Club will ensure that all our staff and volunteers who work with children have ongoing supervision, support and training. Our goal is to develop their skills and capacity and to enhance their performance so we can maintain a child-safe environment in our Club.

#### **7.1.5. Empower and Promote the Participation of Children In Decision-Making And Service Development**

The Club will promote the involvement and participation of children and young people in developing and maintaining a child-safe environment in our Club.

#### **7.1.6. Report and Respond Appropriately to Suspected Abuse and Neglect**

The Club will ensure that staff and volunteers are able to identify and respond appropriately to children at risk of harm and that they are aware of their responsibilities under state laws to report if they suspect on reasonable ground that a child has been, or is being, abused or neglected.

In addition to any legal obligations, if any person believes that another person or organisation bound by this MPP is acting inappropriately towards a child or is in breach of this MPP they may make an internal complaint.

Please refer to our complaints procedure in Section 10 of this MPP.

Any person who believes a child is in immediate danger or in a life-threatening situation, should contact the police immediately.

### **7.2. Supervision**

Children under the age of 18 must be supervised at all times by a responsible adult. We endeavour to provide an appropriate level of supervision at all times. If a member finds a

child under the age of 18 unsupervised, they should assume responsibility for the child's safety until the child's parent/guardian or supervisor is located.

For reasons of courtesy and safety, parents must collect their children on time. If it appears a member will be left alone with just one child at the end of any Club activity, if possible, they will ask another member to stay until the child is collected.

### 7.3. Transportation

Parents and or guardians are responsible for organising the transportation of their children to and from Club activities. Where we make arrangements for the transportation of children, 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 in place.

### 7.4. Taking Images of Children

Images of children should not be used inappropriately or illegally. We require that members, wherever possible, obtain permission from the Club or a child's parent or guardian before taking an image of a child that is not their own. We will endeavour to confirm that the parent or guardian understands how the image will be used.

To respect people's privacy, we do not allow camera phones, videos and cameras to be used inside dressing rooms, changing areas, showers and toilets that we control or are used in connection with our Club.

When using a photo of a child, we will not name or identify the child or publish personal information, such as residential address, email address or telephone number, without the consent of the child's parent or guardian. We will not provide information about a child's hobbies, interests, school or the like, as this can be used inappropriately.

We will only use images of children that are relevant to our Club activities and we will ensure that they are suitably clothed in a manner that promotes our Club. We will seek consent from a child's parent or guardian before using their images.

## 8. Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying

Our Club is committed to providing an environment where people are treated fairly and equitably and as far as practicable, free from all forms of discrimination, harassment and bullying.

We recognise that people may not be able to enjoy themselves or perform at their best if they are treated unfairly, discriminated against, harassed or bullied.

### 8.1. Discrimination

Unlawful discrimination involves the less favourable treatment of a person on the basis of one or more personal characteristics protected by State or Federal anti-discrimination laws.

Discrimination includes both direct and indirect discrimination:

- **Direct discrimination** occurs if a person treats, or proposes to treat, a person with a protected personal characteristic unfavourably because of that personal characteristic.
- **Indirect discrimination** occurs if a person imposes, or proposes to impose, a requirement, condition or practice that will disadvantage a person with a protected personal characteristic and that requirement, condition or practice is not reasonable.

For the purpose of determining discrimination, the offender's awareness and motive are irrelevant.

## 8.2. Harassment

Harassment is any unwelcome conduct, verbal or physical, that intimidates, offends or humiliates another person and results from a certain personal characteristic protected by State or Federal anti-discrimination legislation.

Any single incident can constitute harassment; offensive behaviour does not have to occur numerous times to constitute harassment.

Sexual harassment is one type of harassment. Sexual harassment involves unwelcome conduct, remarks or innuendo of a sexual nature. It covers a wide range of behaviours and can be verbal, written, visual or physical. Sexual harassment is not limited to members of the opposite sex.

Every person is protected by both State and Federal anti-discrimination legislation. The following is a list of personal characteristics that apply throughout Australia:

- Gender;
- Race, colour, descent, national or ethnic origin, nationality, ethno-religious origin, immigration;
- National extraction or social origin;
- Marital status, relationship status, identity of spouse or domestic partner;
- Pregnancy, potential pregnancy, breastfeeding;
- Family or carer responsibilities, status as a parent or carer;
- Age;
- Religion, religious beliefs or activities;
- Political beliefs or activities;
- Lawful sexual activity;
- Sexual orientation and gender identity;
- Profession, trade, occupation or calling;
- Irrelevant criminal record, spent convictions;
- Irrelevant medical record;
- Member of association or organisation of employees or employers, industrial activity, trade union activity;
- Physical features;
- Disability, mental or physical impairment;
- Defence service; and
- Personal association with someone who has, or is assumed to have, any of these personal characteristics.

Legislation also prohibits:

- Racial, religious, homosexual, transgender and HIV/AIDS vilification; and
- Victimisation resulting from a complaint.

### **8.3. Bullying**

The Club is committed to providing an environment that is free from bullying. We understand that bullying has the potential to result in significant negative consequences for an individual's health and wellbeing, and we regard bullying in all forms as unacceptable.

Bullying is characterised by repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed at a person, or group of persons, that creates a risk to health and safety. Bullying behaviour is that which a reasonable person in the circumstances would expect to victimise, humiliate, undermine, threaten, degrade, offend or intimidate a person. Bullying behaviour can include actions of an individual or a group.

Whilst generally characterised by repeated behaviours, individual instances can amount to bullying. The following types of behaviour, where repeated or occurring as part of a pattern of behaviour, would be considered bullying:

- Verbal abuse including shouting, swearing, teasing, making belittling remarks or persistent unjustified criticism;
- Excluding or isolating a group or person;
- Spreading malicious rumours; or
- Psychological harassment such as intimidation.

Bullying includes cyber-bullying that occurs through the use of technology. New technologies and communication tools such as smart phones and social networking websites have greatly increased the potential for people to be bullied through unwanted and inappropriate comments. We will not tolerate abusive, discriminatory, intimidating or offensive statements being made online.

If any person believes they are being, or have been, bullied by another person or entity bound by this MPP, they may make a complaint in accordance with Section 10 of this MPP.

## **9. Inclusive Practices**

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

The following are examples of some of our inclusive practices.

### **9.1. People with a Disability**

The Club will not discriminate against any person because of a disability. Where it is necessary, we will make reasonable adjustments to enable participation.

### **9.2. People from Diverse Cultures**

We will support, respect and encourage people from diverse cultures and religions to participate in our Club and where possible we will accommodate requests for flexibility.

### **9.3. Sexual and Gender Identity**

All people, regardless of their sexuality or gender identity, are welcome at our Club. We strive to provide a safe environment for participation and will not tolerate any form of discrimination or harassment because of a person's sexuality or gender identity.

### **9.4. Girls Playing in Boys Teams**

The Club competes in a not separate sex competition however the Club will support girls playing in boys teams up until the age of 12 years.



We note that Federal anti-discrimination laws provide that it is not unlawful to discriminate on grounds of sex by excluding persons from participation in any competitive sporting activity in which the strength, stamina or physique of competitors is relevant.

If a child is over the age of 12 years our club will consider each request on an individual basis by considering the nature of our sport and other available 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 and ensure:

- All complaints will be taken seriously;
- The person against whom the complaint is made will be given full details of what is being alleged against them and have the opportunity to respond to those allegations;
- Irrelevant matters will not be taken into account;
- Decisions will be unbiased; and
- Any penalties imposed will be reasonable.

More serious complaints may be escalated to our governing body Football NSW.

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

### **10.2. Complaint Handling Process**

All complaints must be communicated to a properly authorised person appointed by the Club. Properly authorised people include the President, Secretary, Board Member, Member Protection Information Officer or anyone delegated by the Board. On receiving the complaint, they will:

- Listen carefully and ask questions to understand the nature and extent of the concern;
- Ask the complainant how they would like their concern to be resolved and if they need any support;
- Explain the different options available to help resolve the complainant's concern;
- Inform the relevant government authorities and/or police, if required by law to do so; and
- Where possible and appropriate, maintain confidentiality but not necessarily anonymity.

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 Football NSW; 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 Football NSW and an investigation is conducted, the Club will:

- Co-operate fully with the investigation;
- Where applicable, ensure the complainant is not placed in an unsupervised situation with the respondent(s); and
- Act on recommendations provided by Football NSW.

At any stage of the process, a person can seek advice from an anti-discrimination commission or other external agency and if the matter is within their jurisdiction may lodge a complaint with the anti-discrimination commission or other external agency.

### **10.3. Disciplinary Sanctions**

Our Club may take disciplinary action against anyone found to have breached our MPP or made false and malicious allegations. Any disciplinary measure imposed under our MPP 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; and
- Be determined by our constituent documents, By Laws and the Rules and Regulations of the sport.

Possible sanctions that may be taken include:

- Direction that the individual make verbal and/or written apology;
- Counselling of the individual to address behaviour;
- Withdrawal of any awards, records, achievements bestowed in any tournaments, activities or events held or sanctioned by our Club;
- Suspension or termination of membership, participation or engagement in a role or activity;
- De-registration of accreditation for a period of time or permanently;
- Fine; or
- Any other form of discipline that our Club considers reasonable and appropriate.

### **10.4. Appeals**

The complainant or respondent may be entitled to lodge an appeal against a decision made in relation to a complaint (including a decision where disciplinary sanctions are imposed by our Club) to Football NSW. Appeals must be based on any right of appeal provided for in the relevant Constituent Documents, Competition Rules and Regulations or By Laws of the Club and Football NSW.