

## MelAm Diving Club

<b>CHILD SAFE POLICY</b>		Approval Date:	29/09/2020
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<b>President:</b>	Monica Fly		
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### Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

**Written By:** Moira Moss Simic

**Approved By:** General Committee on 26 November, 2017

#### Commitment to Child Safety

- Our club is committed to child safety.
- We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers.
- We are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children.
- All Sport including Diving should be a fun, safe, friendly and happy.
- All our instructors and leaders have undergone child safety instruction and hold current Working With Children checks.
- We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our robust policies and procedures.
- We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously.
- Our organisation is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks.
- Child protection is a shared responsibility between **the MelAm Diving Club**, all employees, workers, contractors, associates, and members of the **MelAm Diving Club** community.
- Our organisation is committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks.
- We have an open door policy for staff, volunteers and children to be able to report anything they feel to be in breach of our standards and can report this with full confidentiality.

We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

We have specific procedures and training in place that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

If you want to express any concerns then you can go to the **MelAm Diving Club** Child Safety Officers Moira Moss Simic on 0438 25 30 67 and be confident the concerns will be acted upon appropriately.

**If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.**

## GUIDELINES FOR INTERACTING WITH CHILDREN

**Written By:** Moira Moss Simic

**Approved By:** General Committee on 26 November, 2017

These guidelines are for volunteers and other personnel to protect them from risk and to keep children safe.

### **Maintain appropriate boundaries**

Volunteers and other personnel in positions of authority should maintain clear:

#### **Physical boundaries**

- Only use physical contact that is appropriate for the development of a particular skill and has the permission of the child
- Work within sight of others at all times

#### **Emotional boundaries**

- Use positive feedback on performance, not negative feedback about the person
- Be encouraging and avoid put-downs.

#### **Social boundaries**

- Attend Diving related events such as fundraising events, competitions, training days and celebration but do not socialise with children outside these set events
- Adult officers of **MelAm Diving Club** are only to use social media with minors to communicate specific **MelAm Diving Club** or diving related issues or topics and are not to generally socialise with children via social media

#### **Sexual boundaries**

- Do not have sexual relationships with divers you are training or engaging with regardless of age
- Do not touch anyone you are training or engaging with in ways likely to make them feel uncomfortable

#### **Minimise physical contact**

Generally, physical contact with children or participants should be to:

- Develop diving skills
- Treat an injury
- Prevent or respond to an injury
- Meet the specific requirements of diving

#### **All physical contact by personnel should fulfil the following criteria:**

- Physical contact should be appropriate for the development of a diving skill/s
- Permission from the child or participant should always be sought
- Children or participants should be congratulated or comforted in public not in an isolated setting

### **Avoid being alone with a child**

To protect yourself and the child from risk:

- Do not isolate yourself and a child and avoid being alone with any particular child
- If a child approaches you and wants to talk to you privately about a matter, do so in an open area and in sight of other adults (e.g. other member, volunteers, officials or parents/guardians)
- Before going into change rooms knock or announce that you will be coming in. Try to have at least one adult with you in a change room with children present

## **USE OF COMMUNAL CHANGING ROOMS AND SHOWERS**

**Written By:** Moira Moss Simic

**Approved By:** General Committee on 26 November, 2017

**Date for Review: Meeting prior to AGM 2018**

To reduce risk and vulnerability best practice is that adults do not change or shower in communal changing rooms at the same time as children under the age of 17. This generally is not practical at **MelAm Diving Club** as they use a community facility and the following guidelines therefore apply:

- Children should be accompanied by an adult carer when using the changing rooms with adults. If this is not possible the club must have consent from parents or guardian that their child/children can share the changing room with adults without supervision.
- Children not supervised by an adult carer are encouraged to shower at home and only change at the club.
- Children under the age of 8 must be supervised at all times by an adult carer.
- If children are uncomfortable changing or showering at the club no pressure should be put on them to do so. Instead it is suggested they change and shower at home.
- Males are not permitted in the female changing rooms and females are not permitted in the male changing rooms regardless of age
- The use of mobile phones or cameras is strictly prohibited in the changing rooms

## PICKING UP and DROPPING OFF Protocols

**Written By:** Moira Moss Simic

**Approved By:** General Committee on 26 November, 2017

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To reduce risk and vulnerability best practice is that adults ensure that a child is handed over personally to the training staff at training sessions and is also personally handed back to the parent or guardian by the training staff. All children under the age of 12 will need to be handed over to the training staff by a parent or guardian.

If a child is not going to attend a training session when they are expected then the parent or guardian should notify the training staff.

Training staff are not to leave any child under at any training facility, competition, social event or celebration until they ensure all the participants and members of the Club have been collected by their parent or guardian, or another person they have received authorization to hand the child to, from the parent or guardian, or left them with facilities staff for example MSAC reception and notified the parent.

## CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

### RESPONSIBILITIES

The **Board of MelAm Diving Club** has ultimate responsibility for the detection and prevention of child abuse and is responsible for ensuring that appropriate and effective internal control systems are in place. The Board is also responsible for ensuring that appropriate policies and procedures and a Child Protection Code of Conduct are in place.

The **President of MelAm Diving Club** is responsible for:

- Dealing with and investigating reports of child abuse;
- Ensuring that all staff, contractors, and volunteers are aware of relevant laws, organisational policies and procedures, and the organisation's Code of Conduct;
- Ensuring that all adults within the **MelAm Diving Club** community are aware of their obligation to report suspected sexual abuse of a child in accordance with these policies and procedures;
- Ensuring that all staff, contractors and volunteers are aware of their obligation to observe the Code of Conduct (particularly as it relates to child safety);
- Providing support for staff, contractors and volunteers in undertaking their child protection responsibilities.

All **managers** must ensure that they:

- Promote child safety at all times;

- Assess the risk of child abuse within their area of control and eradicate / minimise any risk to the extent possible;
- Educate employees about the prevention and detection of child abuse; and
- Facilitate the reporting of any inappropriate behaviour or suspected abusive activities.

Management should be familiar with the types of abuse that might occur within their area of responsibility and be alert for any indications of such conduct.

All **staff/volunteers/contractors** share in the responsibility for the prevention and detection of child abuse, and must:

- Familiarise themselves with the relevant laws, the Code of Conduct, and **MelAm Diving Club's** policy and procedures in relation to child protection, and comply with all requirements;
- Report any reasonable belief that a child's safety is at risk to the relevant authorities (such as the police and / or the state-based child protection service) and fulfil their obligations as mandatory reporters;
- Report any suspicion that a child's safety may be at risk to their supervisor (or, if their supervisor is involved in the suspicion, to a responsible person in the organisation); and
- Provide an environment that is supportive of all children's emotional and physical safety.

## **DEFINITIONS**

**Child** means a person below the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

**Child protection** means any responsibility, measure or activity undertaken to safeguard children from harm.

**Child abuse** means all forms of physical abuse, emotional ill-treatment, verbal abuse, sexual abuse and exploitation, neglect or negligent treatment, commercial (e.g. for financial gain) or other exploitation of a child and includes any actions that results in actual or potential harm to a child.

**Child sexual assault** is any act which exposes a child to, or involves a child in, sexual processes beyond his or her understanding or contrary to accepted community standards. Sexually abusive behaviours can include the fondling of genitals, masturbation, oral sex, vaginal or anal penetration by a penis, finger or any other object, fondling of breasts, voyeurism, exhibitionism, and exposing the child to or involving the child in pornography. It includes child grooming, which refers to actions deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child to lower the child's inhibitions in preparation for sexual activity with the child.

**Reasonable grounds for belief** is a belief based on reasonable grounds that child abuse has occurred when all known considerations or facts relevant to the formation of a belief are taken into account and these are objectively assessed. Circumstances or considerations may include the source of the allegation and how it was communicated, the nature of and details of the allegation, and

whether there are any other related matters known regarding the alleged perpetrator.

A reasonable belief is formed if a reasonable person believes that:

- (a) The child is in need of protection,
- (b) The child has suffered or is likely to suffer “significant harm as a result of physical injury”,
- (c) The parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child.

A ‘reasonable belief’ or a ‘belief on reasonable grounds’ is not the same as having proof but is more than mere rumour or speculation.

A ‘reasonable belief’ is formed if a reasonable person in the same position would have formed the belief on the same grounds. For example, a ‘reasonable belief’ might be formed if:

- a) A child states that they have been physically or sexually abused;
- b) A child states that they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves);
- c) Someone who knows a child states that the child has been physically or sexually abused;
- d) Professional observations of the child’s behaviour or development leads a professional to form a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused or is likely to be abused; and/or
- e) Signs of abuse lead to a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused.

## **EMPLOYMENT OF NEW PERSONNEL**

**MelAm Diving Club** undertakes a comprehensive recruitment and screening process for all workers and volunteers which aims to:

- Promote and protect the safety of all children under the care of the organisation;
- Identify the safest and most suitable people who share **MelAm Diving Club’s** values and commitment to protect children; and
- Prevent a person from working at **MelAm Diving Club** if they pose a risk to children.

**MelAm Diving Club** requires all workers/volunteers to pass through the organisation’s recruitment and screening processes prior to commencing their engagement with **MelAm Diving Club**.

**MelAm Diving Club** may require applicants to provide a **Working With Children’s** check in accordance with the law and as appropriate, before they commence working at **MelAm Diving Club** and during their time with **MelAm Diving Club** at regular intervals.

**MelAm Diving Club** will undertake thorough reference checks as per the approved internal procedure.

Once engaged, workers/volunteers must review and acknowledge their understanding of this Policy.

Robust recruitment processes help ensure the best applicants are employed.

**MelAm Diving Club** will do the following:

- As part of the selection criteria in job descriptions the ability to demonstrate an understanding of appropriate behaviours when engaging with children
- there will be face-to-face interviews including behavioural-based questions and questions about motives for wanting to work with children
- all employees must have a current Working with Children card
- a minimum of two reference checks will be made over the telephone
- 3 month probation periods for all new employees.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT**

**MelAm Diving Club** will ensure that child safety is a part of its overall risk management approach.

**MelAm Diving Club** will have a risk and compliance sub-committee committed to identifying and managing risks at **MelAm Diving Club**. Risk and compliance sub-committee members will receive regular training in relation to child safety.

**MelAm Diving Club** will appoint two Child Safety Officers after receiving expressions of interest from the **MelAm Diving Club** Community members. This is a voluntary position.

If a Child Safety Officer resigns there will be a new appointee by expression of interest.

## **REPORTING**

Any staff member, volunteer or contractor who has grounds to suspect abusive activity must immediately notify the appropriate child protection service or the police. They should also advise their supervisor about their concern.

In situations where the supervisor is suspected of involvement in the activity, or if the person having the suspicion does not believe that the matter is being appropriately addressed or dealt with, the matter should be reported to the next highest level of supervision.

Supervisors must report complaints of suspected abusive behaviour or misconduct to the CEO and also to any external regulatory body such as the police.

## **INVESTIGATING**

If the appropriate child protection service or the police decide to conduct an investigation of this report, all employees, contractors or volunteers must co-operate fully with the investigation.

Whether or not the authorities decide to conduct an investigation, the CEO will consult with the authorities to determine whether an internal investigation is appropriate. If it is decided that such an investigation will not conflict with any proceeding of the authorities, the CEO may decide to conduct such an investigation. All employees, contractors and volunteers must co-operate fully with the investigation.

Any such investigation will be conducted according to the rules of natural justice.

The CEO will make every effort to keep any such investigation confidential; however, from time to time other members of staff may need to be consulted in conjunction with the investigation.

After an initial review and a determination that the suspected abuse warrants additional investigation, the CEO shall coordinate the investigation with the appropriate investigators and / or law enforcement officials. Internal or external legal representatives will be involved in the process, as deemed appropriate.

## **RESPONDING**

If it is alleged that a member of staff, contractor or a volunteer may have committed an offence or have breached the organisation's policies or its Code of Conduct the person concerned may be stood down (with pay, where applicable) while an investigation is conducted.

If the investigation concludes that on the balance of probabilities an offence (or a breach of the organisation's policies or Code of Conduct) has occurred then disciplinary action may follow, up to and including dismissal or cessation of involvement with the organisation. The findings of the investigation will also be reported to any external body as required.

## **PRIVACY**

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved unless there is a risk to someone's safety. **MelAm Diving Club** will have safeguards and practices in place to ensure any personal information is protected.

Everyone is entitled to know how the personal information is recorded, what will be done with it, and who will be able to access it.

## **REVIEWING**

Every year at the annual AGM, and following every reportable incident, a review shall be conducted to assess whether the organisation's child protection policies or procedures require modification to better protect the children under the organisation's care.



At each AGM there will be a call for expressions of interest for the two Child Safety Officers positions.

- This policy must be read in conjunction with:
  - The law of the Commonwealth or of the relevant state or territory;
  - The organisation's Code of Conduct;
  - Termination of Employment Policy and Misconduct Procedures.