



**CHILD AND YOUTH RISK
MANAGEMENT STRATEGY
2019**

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1 Child Protection Policy

1.1 Purpose

- To prevent foreseeable harm to children and young people in South East Queensland District Golf Association's care
- To ensure that all relevant volunteers who work within South East Queensland District Golf Association are assessed for their suitability to work with children under the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* (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

1.2 Who Must Comply with this Policy

- Workers, including volunteers, employees, contractors and any work experience students and students on placement
- Coaches, officials and management committee members
- Participants, members, parents, guardians, spectators and sponsors
- Children and young people

1.3 Statement of Commitment

South East Queensland District Golf Association is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people who use its services and is dedicated to protecting them from harm.

The association therefore:

- Ensures that all members treat children and young people with respect and understanding at all times
- Ensures that those who deal with children and young people within the organisation undergo blue card screening and hold a blue card (where exemptions do not apply)
- Prohibits any forms of abuse against children
- Carefully selects, screens and monitors people whose roles require them to have contact with children
- Ensures the association's code 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

1.4 Implementing the Policy

This policy will be effective from the date upon which it is adopted by the association's management committee. A copy of this policy will be made available to all management committee members and volunteers who work with children and young people and these personnel are expected to familiarise themselves with it. All members will be made aware of the policy.

1.5 Monitoring Compliance

Compliance with this policy will be monitored by the association's management committee via regular liaison with volunteers and members.

1.6 Breaches

The association will review any allegations of breaches of this policy and will take steps to minimise the risk of further breaches. Non-compliance with the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* will result in penalties imposed under the Act. Refer to the Act for information regarding failure to comply.

1.7 Evaluation and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, in line with the association's review of its entire child and youth risk management strategy. The policy will be reviewed with regard given to any aspects of the document that require changes. The association's management committee will conduct this review.

1.8 Policy

All volunteers within South East Queensland District Golf Association who directly and/or individually deal with children under the age of 18 years will undergo blue card screening and will hold a blue card (where exemptions do not apply). A volunteer, unless exempt, must have a validated blue card before they start working with children and young people.

Those relevant volunteers who do not undergo blue card screening or hold a blue card will not be permitted to deal with children or young people. If a person's application for a blue card is refused and a negative notice is issued by Blue Card Services, South East Queensland District Golf Association will refuse that person's involvement with children and young people registered with the association.

Association volunteers are not required to undergo blue card screening or hold a blue card where exemptions apply (as defined by Blue Card Services).

Where there is evidence, disclosure or reasonable suspicion of harm or abuse to a child or young person within the association, Child Safety Services or the police will be notified immediately. All disclosures and allegations of child abuse will be dealt with promptly, seriously, sensitively and confidentially. A person will not be victimised for reporting an allegation of child abuse and the privacy of all persons concerned will be respected.

2 Code of Conduct for Interacting with Children and Young People

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

3 Recruitment, Training and Management of Volunteers

To assist with effective child protection, South East Queensland District Golf Association will implement appropriate recruitment, selection, screening, induction, monitoring and management of volunteers who work with children and young people within the association.

3.1 Recruitment

Volunteers will come from varied sources. They may be members themselves, past members, people from the local community, friends or relatives. South East Queensland District Golf Association has considered the best ways to recruit workers.

When recruiting, the association should include a clear position description for all vacancies to help potential volunteers identify roles which they could fill, and to assist the association in determining the suitability of the potential volunteer for the available position.

In identifying the methods most suitable for finding volunteers, the association has considered the following:

- Personal contact (i.e. asking potential helpers 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 requirements of the organisation through publicity, promotion and personal interaction
- Some volunteers must be elected or appointed under the association's rules (for example, the committee)

Any person nominated by the association to recruit volunteers will implement this child and youth risk management strategy in all recruiting activities. In particular, applicants for positions dealing with children will be required to demonstrate an ability to comply with child safety requirements and will be informed that it will be mandatory for them to hold and maintain a blue card while working for the association (where an exemption does not apply).

3.2 Selection and Screening

Once identified, volunteers will be screened against the advertised position description to ensure their fit with the association and with the roles to be filled.

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

As an organisation with a responsibility to provide a safe and supportive environment for children and young people, the association understands the importance of questioning inconsistencies in a potential volunteer's work history and in following up with professional and character referees.

The process that the association will follow in selecting and screening its volunteers is illustrated below:



3.3 Induction and Training

Once new volunteers have been successfully recruited and screened, the association will ensure their effective induction. Induction will include making volunteers 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 the key people in the association and to whom they 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, people 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 offered to volunteers to outline their responsibilities under the association's codes of conduct and other organisational policies. Training will also be offered that alerts volunteers to the nature of harm which can occur to children and young people, and how to respond to disclosures or suspicions of harm. Training will aim to enhance the skills and knowledge of volunteers, reduce exposure to risks and support friendly environments for children and young people.

The association may use information sheets, training materials and strategies to help volunteers, members and parents identify and manage risks of harm. Training should not only be conducted when a person begins service. Rather, ongoing improvement grows from continuous learning, meaning that regular training opportunities should be made available to volunteers. Training that is properly planned and well-executed will increase confidence, improve the competency of those people the organisation relies upon and will motivate volunteers to achieve organisational objectives.

Training can be either formal or informal. Formal training is that which is provided in a structured manner, such as the training required for accreditation or certification (for example, first aid certificates and TAFE courses).

Informal training is non-structured education that is focused on conveying important information that will assist volunteers to do their jobs and to understand their roles and responsibilities. 'Learning by doing' is well recognised for its effectiveness and can be successfully implemented in volunteer organisations. It is important that adequate supervision is provided by experienced people where 'learning by doing' is being conducted.

When looking to formally train volunteers, the association should remember that it may be able to access government funding to pay for (or to subsidise) the costs of training.

4 Handling Disclosures and Suspicions of Harm

4.1 Receiving a Disclosure

If association volunteers are confronted with disclosures of harm or suspect harm to a child or young person, they will respond professionally and in the best interests of the child or young person subjected to the alleged harm. Complaints will be dealt with promptly, seriously, sensitively and confidentially.

Any person 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
- Explain that 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 them safe
- Ultimately believe the child or young person and assume that they are telling the truth
- Ask only non-leading questions
- Only ask the child or young person enough questions to determine the need to report the matter to the Queensland Police Service or Child Safety Services

4.2 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 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 be immediately reported to the police and/or Child Safety Services
- The association will contact 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 Queensland Police Service and/or Child Safety Services immediately

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

5 Managing Breaches of the Risk Management Strategy

The association will review any allegations of breaches of the child and youth risk management strategy and will take steps to minimise the risk of any further breaches.

Breaches will be managed in a fair, unbiased and supportive manner. The following will occur:

- All people concerned will be advised of the process
- All people concerned will be able to provide their version of events
- The details of the breach, including the versions of all parties and the outcome, will be recorded
- Matters discussed in relation to the breach will be kept confidential
- An appropriate outcome will be decided

Depending on the nature of the breach, outcomes may include:

- Emphasising the relevant component of the child and youth risk management strategy, for example, the code of conduct
- Providing closer supervision
- Further education and training
- Mediating between those involved in the incident (where appropriate)
- Disciplinary procedures if necessary
- Reviewing current policies and procedures and developing new policies and procedures if necessary

Non-compliance with the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* will result in penalties imposed under the Act. Refer to the Act for information regarding failure to comply.

6 Compliance with blue card legislation

South East Queensland District Golf Association will comply with blue card legislation by ensuring that all relevant volunteers within the association undergo blue card screening and obtain a blue card (where exemptions do not apply).

The association's management committee will assist relevant volunteers in seeking approval to work with children from Blue Card Services. Compliance with the child protection policy included within this risk management strategy will help ensure that the association complies with blue card legislation.

6.1 Blue card requirements

The association will respect the confidentiality of information relating to applications by volunteers for blue cards and will maintain appropriate systems to protect the privacy of applicants.

To comply with the child protection policy, the association will:

- Appoint a 'contact person', who will be responsible for managing blue cards within the organisation
- Develop policies and procedures about deciding who requires a blue card and who is exempt, as per the Act
- Ensure that all information in relation to blue card applications is kept confidential
- Maintain a blue card register of all volunteers

The association's blue card register will include:

- The name and date of birth of every volunteer and staff member who deals with children and young people within the association
- Whether or not each person requires a blue card (if not, why not; e.g. if an exemption applies)
- The type of employment (e.g. paid or volunteer)
- When the person applied and/or the date of issue of the blue card and the blue card number
- The expiry date of the blue card
- The renewal date (at least 30 days before expiry date to allow volunteers to continue working in child-related employment)
- Confirmation of a valid blue card (for volunteers who have existing blue cards from other volunteer roles)
- Any change in status to a blue card (e.g. a change in police information or the blue card is cancelled or suspended)
- When a volunteer leaves the organisation and the date Blue Card Services was informed
- Any change of personal information of a volunteer, including the date they informed Blue Card Services

At the initial application stage, the association should:

- Notify all applicants that by signing the application form they are consenting to the screening process under the Act
- Certify that the 'contact person' has sighted documents to confirm a volunteer's identity as prescribed under the Act
- Carefully check through the application form to ensure all sections have been appropriately completed
- Be aware that while paid personnel can commence employment after an application form has been submitted to Blue Card Services, volunteers and trainee students must not commence regulated employment until they hold a valid blue card
- Explicitly warn all potential staff (employees, volunteers and students) that it is an offence for a 'disqualified person' to sign a blue card application form or a renewal form. It is an offence for an employer not to provide this warning
- Inform prospective volunteers who may be 'disqualified persons', that in certain circumstances, they may be able to apply for an 'Eligibility Declaration' under the Act
- Send a completed 'Authorisation to confirm a valid blue card' form to Blue Card Services to register the association as the applicant's current employer if a new volunteer has a current blue card

To immediately check the validity of a prospective volunteer's existing blue card, the appointed contact person responsible for managing blue cards for the association will enter the potential volunteer's blue card information into the validation tool available on the Blue Card Services website (www.bluecard.qld.gov.au). The contact person will also submit the 'Authorisation to confirm a valid blue card' form to Blue Card Services.

While a blue card application is being processed, the association will not:

- Employ volunteers or students until they have received their blue cards, nor
- Employ any person in regulated employment:
 - Who withdraws their consent to employment screening
 - Whose application has been withdrawn for any other reason
 - Who is issued with a negative notice or whose blue card is cancelled or suspended

If a volunteer has had a blue card cancelled or suspended or receives a negative notice after a change in police information, the association will:

- Ensure the volunteer does not continue to undertake child related work (work that is regulated by the Act), and if the volunteer does continue employment in work that is not child-related, ensure that appropriate policies and procedures are in place to manage any risks of harm to children and young people that may arise as a result of the person's ongoing employment within the association

If an applicant or blue card holder stops working for the association or if the contact person for the association changes, the association will notify Blue Card Services of the change.

7 High Risk Activities and Special Events

Volunteers have less control over special events and activities that are conducted by other organisations. The association must therefore ensure that participating in special or 'away' events or activities will not compromise South East Queensland District Golf Association's commitment to providing a safe environment for children and young people by:

- Establishing the context of the activity
- Identifying and analysing the risks
- Evaluating the level of risk and developing procedures to manage any risks
- 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 participate
- 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

8 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, learn valuable lessons and to have fun. While involvement in sport remains a positive experience for most participants, parents should be aware that children can face the risk of being harassed or abused in sport. In addition to the association's volunteers, 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:

- Maintain open and frank communication with association personnel. If things occur that disturb you, talk to someone about them
- Speak out when you hear language or attitudes that contribute to a negative or unsafe environment. You may wish to pursue your issues with the management committee
- Make an effort to attend events and activities whenever you can
- If you volunteer and are asked to take part in screening, accept this as a positive step to keep children and young people safe
- Make sure you are not part of the problem; don't engage in verbal abuse of officials or coaches
- 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 a mistake

9 Strategies for Communication and Support

Copies of this child and youth risk management strategy will be made available to all volunteers who deal with children and young people within South East Queensland District Golf Association. This will ensure that all of the association's workers understand what is expected of them with regard to providing a safe and friendly environment for children and young people.

This strategy will also be discussed with children and young people participating with the association, particularly focusing on how they can help keep themselves safe and what they can do if they feel at risk.

10 Further Information and Assistance

For more information regarding the protection of children and young people, contact:

Blue Card Services

1800 113 611

www.bluecard.qld.gov.au

Queensland Police Service

Policelink: 13 14 44

www.police.qld.gov.au

Child Safety Services

www.csyw.qld.gov.au/child-family

In an emergency, dial '000

