



100 YEARS STRONG

# SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN IN DIGITAL SPACES POLICY

Canterbury Lions Football Club (CLFC) is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all children and young people participating in our activities, both on and off the field. With the increasing role of digital spaces in children's lives, we recognise the importance of safeguarding children in these environments, including online communication, social media, and digital content.

This policy outlines CLFC's steps to minimise online risks and ensure that all digital interactions involving children are safe, appropriate, and in line with current NSW laws and regulations.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Protect children and young people from harm or exploitation in digital environments
- Promote responsible digital citizenship for children, committee members, volunteers, and parents.
- Establish clear guidelines for using digital tools and platforms safely in CLFC activities.

Ensure compliance with applicable NSW child protection laws and guidelines, primarily online.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- All CLFC committee members, volunteers, coaches, and team leaders involved in club activities, including online communication, social media, and digital platforms.
- Children and young people participating in CLFC activities, including players and members under the age of 18.
- Parents, guardians, and family members who may interact with children online as part of CLFC activities.
- Any digital content or media shared in connection with CLFC activities, including social media posts, website content, videos, and online meetings.

## PRINCIPLES

CLFC is committed to:

### Child Protection

Ensuring that all children and young people are safe from harm, abuse, and exploitation when interacting in digital environments.

### Respect for Privacy

Upholding the privacy and confidentiality of children in digital spaces, including protecting personal information from being shared without consent.

### Empowerment

Promoting digital literacy and equipping children, committee members, and parents with the knowledge and skills to identify risks, protect themselves, and safely navigate online environments.

### Zero Tolerance for Abuse

Any online abuse, bullying, or inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated and will be reported and managed according to the club's Child Protection Policy.



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## RESPONSIBILITIES

### CLFC Committee and Management

- Ensure that this policy is implemented and followed across all club activities.
- Provide regular training and resources for committee members, volunteers, and parents on safe practices in digital spaces.
- Monitor digital interactions (such as social media posts, emails, and online meetings) for compliance with safeguarding standards.
- Ensure that any concerns or incidents related to online safety are reported promptly to the Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO) or appropriate authorities.

### Coaches and Team Leaders

- When interacting with children online, including through social media and messaging platforms, follow the guidelines in this policy and the club's Code of Conduct.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries and ensure that online interactions are respectful, professional, and in line with safeguarding expectations.
- Provide clear, age-appropriate guidance to children on how to stay safe online, including recognising inappropriate content or behaviour.

### Committee members and Volunteers

- Ensure that all online communication with children is appropriate and professional.
- Report any concerns regarding digital safety, cyberbullying, inappropriate content, or online abuse to the designated child protection officer.
- Adhere to the Code of Conduct regarding interactions in digital spaces.

### Parents / Guardians

- Be informed of CLFC's digital safeguarding practices and support their children in navigating digital spaces safely.
- Encourage children to report any inappropriate online interactions and to follow online safety guidelines provided by CLFC.

### Children and Young People

- Engage with digital platforms and content responsibly, respectfully, and safely.
- Report any inappropriate behaviour, online harassment, or safety concerns to their coaches, parents, or CLFC committee members.

### Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO)

- Serve as the point of contact for any reports related to digital safety concerns or child protection issues.
- Ensure that any reports of online abuse, grooming, or cyberbullying are handled appropriately and reported to the relevant authorities.



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## SAFE DIGITAL PRACTICES

### ONLINE COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

#### Appropriate Platforms

CLFC will use child-safe digital communication platforms that ensure privacy and security, such as closed groups on messaging platforms (e.g., WhatsApp), private social media groups, or email lists with limited access.

#### Clear Boundaries

Coaches, committee members, and volunteers will maintain professional boundaries when interacting with children and young people online. Private one-on-one messaging or phone calls should be avoided unless necessary and should always be documented.

#### Monitoring of Online Content

CLFC will regularly monitor digital content associated with club activities, including social media posts and online interactions, to ensure compliance with safeguarding practices.

### SOCIAL MEDIA AND DIGITAL CONTENT

#### Parental Consent

CLFC will obtain consent from their parents or guardians before posting any photos or videos of children online. Children must not be identifiable by name or personal details without explicit consent.

#### Respecting Privacy

CLFC will not share children's or parents' personal information (such as addresses, school names, or contact details) on any public platform.

#### Appropriate Content

Any content shared online, including that on CLFC's website and social media, must be respectful, age-appropriate, and in line with the club's safeguarding policies and Code of Conduct.

### EDUCATION AND TRAINING

CLFC will offer regular digital safety training for committee members, volunteers, and children. The training will cover online etiquette, privacy settings, recognising online abuse, and steps to take if they feel unsafe online.

#### Parent Engagement

Parents and guardians will be invited to attend information sessions on keeping their children safe in digital environments. These sessions will advise monitoring online activities and encouraging safe digital habits at home.

### REPORTING ONLINE SAFETY CONCERNS

If you have any concerns about online safety, such as inappropriate content, cyberbullying, grooming, or suspected online abuse, it is essential to report them immediately to the Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO) or the club's designated child protection officer.

Following CLFC's Incident Reporting and Management Policy, all incidents will be documented and investigated.

### COMPLIANCE

CLFC will adhere to the following relevant legislation and guidelines to ensure that we meet our legal obligations in safeguarding children in digital spaces:

- NSW Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012
- NSW Work Health and Safety Act 2011



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- Confidentiality and Privacy
- NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977
- Australian eSafety Commissioner Guidelines
- NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) Child Protection Standards

## REVIEW AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENTS

CLFC is dedicated to enhancing its digital safeguarding practices. This policy will be reviewed at least once a year or sooner if there are changes in legislation or best practices related to online child protection. We will actively seek feedback from children, parents, committee members, and volunteers to improve our digital safety measures.

## RESOURCES

[NSW Child Protection \(Working with Children\) Act 2012:](#)

[NSW Work Health and Safety Act 2011:](#)

[NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977](#)

[eSafety Commissioner – Online Safety](#)

[Australian Federal Police – Child Protection:](#)

[NSW Department of Education Child Protection Guidelines:](#)