



WOODVILLE LACROSSE CLUB Inc

Established 1899

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

Effective Date: 18 February 2023

Review Date: 18 February 2024

Step 1: Identify and analyse risk of harm

Risk of harm is the likelihood of inflicting harm to children (either directly or as a consequence of other actions) and the severity of that harm.

In the children protection context, a child would be considered to be at *risk* if they are in a situation where there is a high likelihood that the child's safety and/or wellbeing will be severely compromised.

Harm in the child protection context is defined as the detrimental impact on the physical, psychological, emotional or social safety, wellbeing and development of a child as a result of the actions or inactions of another person.

It is useful if members, or more specifically those involved with children, have a basic understanding of what child development and child abuse is, so that children can be kept safe and promote their wellbeing.

KEY ACTION: Woodville Lacrosse Club to appoint and make training available to a Child Safe Officer (CSO)

Step 2: Adopt and make accessible the Woodville Lacrosse Club Child-Safe Policy

The Woodville Lacrosse Club Child-Safe Policy is our statement of intent that demonstrates our commitment to safeguard children from harm and makes clear to all what is required in relation to the protection of children. It helps to create a safe and positive environment for children to promote children's wellbeing and to show that we are taking our duty of care seriously.

"The Woodville Lacrosse Club is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people accessing our services. We support the rights of the child and will act without hesitation to ensure a child safe environment is maintained at all times. We also support the rights and well being of our staff and volunteers and encourage their active participation in building and maintaining a secure environment for all participants."

KEY ACTION: Woodville Lacrosse Club to have available resources for display around the Club.

Step 3: Adopt and apply to members the Woodville Lacrosse Club Code of Conduct for adults and children.

In addition to the Woodville Lacrosse Club specific Codes of Conduct (refer policy on [Woodville Lacrosse Club website](#)), those involved with lacrosse should adopt the following steps in regard to conduct during any activity held under the auspices of the Woodville Lacrosse Club:

Do:

- Treat everyone with respect and honesty (this includes paid staff, volunteers, students, children, young people and parents).
- Remember to be a positive role model to kids in all your conduct with them.
- Set clear boundaries about appropriate behaviours between yourself and the kids in your care – boundaries help everyone to carry out their roles well.
- Always have another adult present or in sight when conducting one-to-one coaching, instructing, etc.
- Raise any concerns, problems or issues with Club or Association officials as soon as possible.
- Record and act on serious complaints of abuse.

Do Not:

- Engage in rough physical games, including horseplay.
- Develop any “specific” relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism such as the offering of gifts or special treatment.
- Do things of a personal nature a child can do for themselves, such as going to the toilet or changing clothes.

KEY ACTION: Woodville Lacrosse Club to adopt these codes and the standards of conduct and practices set out.

Step 4: Choose suitable volunteers

The Woodville Lacrosse Club are required to take all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children (in *prescribed positions*).

A **prescribed position** is a position in an organisation that requires or involves *prescribed functions*.

Prescribed functions mean:

- Regular contact with children or working in close proximity to children on a regular basis.
- Supervision or management of person in positions requiring or involving regular contact with children or working in close proximity to children on a regular basis.
- Access to records relating to children.

The *Children’s Protection Act 1993* does not include definitions of *regular contact*, *regular basis* or *close proximity*. As a result, the term must be given their ordinary everyday common sense meaning. Generally speaking, the term “*regular contact*” implies contact that has a constant or definite pattern, or which recurs at short uniform intervals or on several occasions during short periods of time such as a week.

KEY ACTION: The Woodville Lacrosse Club to decide whether the contact that an individual will have with children will be “regular contact” or be undertaken in “close proximity on a regular basis”. This will be a question of fact.

Step 5: Screening requirements

The Woodville Lacrosse Club requires to screen people who currently occupy or who apply for any work that:

- involves direct and unsupervised contact with people under the age of 18 years
- involves working with people under the age of 18 years
- involves regular contact with people under the age of 18 years

KEY ACTION: As a minimum all coaches, managers & team officials are to be screened where persons under the age of 18 years are involved.

It is the responsibility of the Woodville Lacrosse Club to ensure members be appropriately screened.

“Identified” people are required to complete the following:

1. Obtain a completed [National Police Certificate](#) from the SA Police*
2. Complete the [Play by the Rules](#) - Child Protection: Coaches and Officials Course

* Because a *National Police Check* summarises an individual’s formal history at a point in time, obtaining regular reports of criminal history is required. The Woodville Lacrosse Club will adopt the Government of South Australia’s position that a National Police Check must be obtained at least **every three years**. National Police Certificates will need to be lodged with Lacrosse SA. The Woodville Lacrosse Club will record screened people on the Club Register and this document will be kept in a secure location.

Step 6: Support, train and enhance performance

The Woodville Lacrosse Club will ensure that volunteers who work with children or their records have ongoing supervision, support and training such that their performance is developed and enhanced to promote the establishment and maintenance of a child-safe environment.

By appointing a CSO as outlined in Step 1, clubs can ensure that children’s safety and wellbeing is prioritised. A designated CSO also provides a single contact for children, parents and volunteers to seek advice and support regarding the safety and wellbeing of children when dealing with the Club.

Step 7: Empower and promote the participation of children in decision-making

The Woodville Lacrosse Club encourages the participation of children in the development of strategy. The Woodville Lacrosse Club encourages the involvement and participation of children and young people in developing and maintaining child-safe environments. The Woodville Lacrosse Club will follow the five steps to promote a child-safe environment.

1. Listen to children.
2. Believe children.
3. Learn about child abuse and protective behaviour for children.
4. Teach children about their rights and protective behaviour strategies
5. Instil a culture of safety and awareness.
6. Actively promote how children and parents can access help and advice, both within the organisation and beyond (e.g **Kids Help Line – 1800 55 18 00; Lifeline – 131 114; Youth Help Line – 1300 13 17 19**)

Step 8: Report and respond appropriately to suspected abuse and neglect

It is the responsibility of all affiliated clubs that volunteers and members are able to identify and respond to children at risk of harm.

All clubs need to make volunteers and members aware of their responsibilities under the Children Protection Act 1993 (outlined in this policy) if they have suspicion on reasonable grounds that a child has been or is being abused or neglected.

Failure to notify suspected abuse and neglect is an offence under the *Children's Protection Act 1993* and carries a maximum penalty of a \$10 000 fine.

The Woodville Lacrosse Club has in place clear procedures with step-by-step guidance on what to do in different circumstances including reporting and reacting to witnessed, suspected or alleged child abuse and/or a breach of the Child-Safe Policy. The Woodville Lacrosse Club procedures are designed to ensure:

- A relationship of trust is established.
- The trauma experience by the child is minimised in disclosing of the abuse.
- The incident is reported with the greatest possible factual accuracy.
- The child understands that the issue may need to be taken further.

Reviewed 18 February 2023 - Sue Hogan Board Member

Investigation Procedure – Child Abuse

An allegation of child abuse is a very serious matter and must be handled with a high degree of sensitivity. The initial response to a complaint that a child has allegedly been abused should be immediate if the incident/s are serious or criminal in nature while less serious/urgent allegations should be actioned as soon as possible, preferably within 24 hours.

The following is a basic outline of the key processes to follow:

Step 1 – Clarify basic details of the allegation

- Any complaints, concerns or allegations of child abuse should be made or referred to a member of the management committee.
- The initial response of the person that receives the complaint from the child (or person on behalf of the child) is crucial to the well-being of the child. It is important for the person receiving the information to:
 - Listen to, be supportive and do not dispute what the child says;
 - Reassure the child that what has occurred is not the fault of the child;
 - Ensure the child is safe;
 - Be honest with the child and explain that other people may need to be told in order to stop what is happening; and
 - Ensure that what the child says is quite clear but do not elicit detailed information about the abuse. You should avoid suggestive or leading questions.
- The person receiving the complaint should obtain and clarify basic details (if possible) such as:
 - Child's name, age and address;
 - Person's reason for suspecting abuse (observation, injury or other); and
 - Names and contact details of all people involved, including witnesses.

Step 2 – Report allegations of a serious or criminal nature

- Any individual or organisation to which this policy applies, should immediately report any incident of a serious or a criminal nature to the police and other appropriate authority.
- If the allegation involves a child at risk of harm, the incident should immediately be reported to the police or other appropriate government agency. You may need to report to both the police and the relevant government agency.
- The relevant State or Territory authority should be contacted for advice if there is any doubt about whether the complaint should be reported.
- If the child's parent/s or guardian/s are suspected of committing the abuse, report the allegation to the relevant government agency.

Step 3 – Protect the child

- Delegate of the management committee should assess the risks and take interim action to ensure the child's/children's safety. Some options could include redeployment of the alleged offender to a non-child related position, supervision of the alleged offender or removal/suspension from their duties until the allegations are finally determined.
- Delegate of the management committee should also address the support needs of the person against whom the complaint is made. Supervision of the person should ideally occur with the knowledge of the person. If stood down, it should be made clear to all parties that are aware of the incident that this does not mean the person is guilty and a proper investigation still needs to be undertaken.

Step 4 – Further clarify and investigate allegation

For allegations of a serious or criminal nature (for example, sexual abuse):

- Seek advice from the police and relevant government agency as to whether the Woodville Lacrosse Club should carry out its own internal investigation (in addition to any police or relevant government agency investigation).
- If the police and/or relevant government agency advises that it is appropriate, then appoint an independent person (where possible) with appropriate expertise to conduct an investigation. The investigator should:
 - Contact the parents/carers of the child at an appropriate time and as directed by the police or relevant government agency.
 - If appropriate, meet with parents/carers and the child to clarify the incident and offer support on behalf of Woodville Lacrosse Club if required (example, professional counselling).
 - Meet with the person against whom the allegation refers at an appropriate time and as directed by the relevant authority and give the person an opportunity to explain or respond to the allegation and identify any witnesses

and supporting evidence. The person should have an opportunity to invite a support person/adviser to attend at a meeting and should be offered support (example, professional counselling) if necessary.

- Obtain a signed statement and record of interview from the person.
- Make contact with any witnesses and obtain written and signed statements outlining details of the allegation (what happened, when, how). This should only occur following advice from the relevant authority.
- Obtain other information that could assist in making a decision on the allegation.
- The information collected during the investigation should be made available to the relevant authorities.
- Strict confidentiality, impartiality, fairness and due process must be maintained at all times.

For allegations of a less serious nature (e.g. verbal abuse):

- Where possible, appoint an independent person with appropriate expertise to make contact and meet with each of the people involved to obtain details of the allegation.
- Strict confidentiality, impartiality, fairness and due process must be maintained at all times.

Step 5 – Record and analyse all information

- If an internal investigation was conducted under Step 4, the investigator will provide a report to the Chairman of the Management Committee.
- The decision-maker/s will be the management team of Woodville Lacrosse Club and will remain separate and at arm's length from the investigator.
- The management team will consider all the information and determine a finding. It will also recommend action and its rationale for the action.