

# Greenwich Flying Squadron Child Protection and Intervention Policy

## Executive Statement

The issue of Child Abuse is a complex problem that has an impact on all areas of society, including participation in sport and recreation activities.

Protecting children from abuse is a responsibility that we must all undertake. Through the implementation of strategies that assist in preventing Child Abuse from occurring, Greenwich Flying Squadron (GFS) has taken a pro-active role in relation to Child Protection and Intervention. These strategies will help to foster a safe and positive environment for children and young people to participate in physical activities.

In addition, development of Child Protection and Intervention Policy provides the Club with an excellent risk management tool for developing prevention strategies and for the effective management of Child Abuse issues within sport.

Information contained in this document and our [Statement of Commitment to Child Safety](#) creates a framework and provides direction for volunteers, officials, coaches, instructors, members and parents of children and young people involved in GFS, and affiliated Class Associations. It will help deliver a consistent approach to child abuse prevention at all levels of the sport and recreation industry.

John Veale  
Commodore  
November 2024

## Policy Statement

The GFS is committed to ensuring that the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children is maintained at all times during their participation in activities run by Club and those run by the Club on behalf of, or in association with, Class Associations. GFS aims to promote a safe environment for all children and to assist all staff, officials, coaches, members and volunteers to recognise [Child Abuse and Neglect](#) and to follow the appropriate notification procedures when reporting alleged abuse.

### Rationale

The focus of the policy and guidelines is the prevention of child abuse in the sporting environment. This policy promotes the care and protection of children participating in GFS activities and provides information and direction for officials, coaches, volunteers and members of the organisation. This policy and the guidelines will assist GFS in establishing coordinated strategies for dealing with the potential problem of child abuse and neglect in a responsible, effective and consistent manner.

### Definitions

1. **Aboriginal Child/Children** means a person under the age of 18 years who:
  - Is of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background; and
  - Is accepted as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander by an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community.
2. **Child/Children** means a person who is under the age of 18 years.
3. **Child abuse** constitutes any act committed against a Child involving:
  - **Physical abuse:** occurs when a Child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of a physical injury, such as a non-accidental physical injury.
  - **Sexual abuse:** occurs when a Child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of sexual abuse, such as when a Child is exploited, or used by another for his or her sexual gratification or sexual arousal, or for that of others.
  - **Serious emotional or psychological abuse:** occurs when a Child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, emotional or psychological harm of such a kind that the Child's emotional or intellectual development is or is likely to be significantly damaged; and
  - **Serious neglect:** occurs when a Child's physical development or health has been, or is likely to be significantly damaged. It refers to an omission, such as depriving a Child of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, or medical care.
4. **Child protection** means any responsibility, measure or activity undertaken to safeguard Children from harm.
5. **Children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds** means a Child or young person who identifies as having particular cultural or linguistic affiliations by virtue of their place of birth, ancestry or ethnic origin, religion, preferred language or language spoken at home or because of their parent' identification on a similar basis.
6. **Committee** means the governing body of the GFS including the Sailing Committee and any other delegation.

7. **Mandatory Reporter** means a person who is legally required to make a report to the Department of Human Services or the Police if they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a Child is in need of protection. It includes teachers, principals, registered psychologists, nurses, doctors and midwives.
8. **Member Protection Officer** means a 'GFS' representative appointed to the role by GFS members.
9. **Member** means what it does under the Constitution of the GFS and includes Committee members, sailors, staff, coaches, instructors, team managers, umpires, officials, physios, doctors, first aiders, Volunteers and parents of sailors.
10. **Sexual offence** means a criminal offence involving sexual activity or actions of indecency or any act which exposes a Child to, or involves a Child in, sexual activity or matters beyond his or her understanding or contrary to accepted community standards. Sexually offensive 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 includes actions deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a Child (or the Child's carer, family or supervisor) to lower the Child's inhibitions and prepare them for engagement in a sexual offence.
11. **Staff** means any person who is engaged by the GFS to provide a service or supply goods.
12. **Visitor** means any person who is not a member, staff or volunteer but who is, for any reason, visiting the GFS including spectators, family members and friends of sailors, visiting officials and members of other clubs.
13. **Volunteer** means a person who is performing duties on a voluntary basis for the benefit of GFS.

## Objectives

Through the development of this policy GFS objectives are to:

1. Provide information to assist the Club and its volunteers in dealing with all forms of Child Abuse.
2. Provide comprehensive guidelines relating to risk minimisation and reporting/notification procedures.
3. Provide direction to all officials and volunteers regarding their legal responsibilities under Child protection legislation.
4. Promote and adopt sound principles for Child protection and intervention amongst volunteers, coaches, members, parents and supporters of children participating in the Club's programs and competitions.

## Scope of the Policy

The Child Protection Intervention Policy of GFS is applicable to all management, volunteers, any coach or other occasional employee or contractor of GFS or Class Association with which the Club is affiliated. The Policy sets out the obligations of GFS and individuals associated with the Club under the Child Protection Legislation in NSW namely the:

- [Child Protection \(Working with Children\) ACT 2012](#)
- [Child Protection \(Working with Children\) Regulation 2013](#)

## **Implementation of Legislation**

In order to implement the Child Protection Legislation GFS will undertake to:

1. Implement strategies and procedures that focus on the best interests of Children and meet the requirements of Child Protection Legislation
2. Promote a safe and supportive environment for all Children and young people participating in activities which come under the umbrella of the Club
3. Increase awareness and emphasise the importance of Child protection issues in a sporting environment to all those involved with the activities of GFS. This includes administrators, coaches, instructors, officials, sailors, parents and their Children.
4. Ensure that all volunteers are aware of their responsibilities arising from recent Child Protection Legislation, in particular, the requirement to inform members of the committee if they have been convicted of a serious sex offence.

## **Expectations**

Administrators, coaches, instructors, officials, members and volunteers often have a high level of contact with Children in the sporting environment and play a major part in the successful operation of sporting activities. Coaches, instructors and officials are often seen as role models. They have significant influence on the Children they come into contact with and therefore have significant responsibilities. GFS expects that all coaches, instructors and officials whether paid or unpaid, who participate in organised sport under the banner of the Club will commit to implementing risk management strategies developed by GFS for Child Protection and Intervention.

## **Responsibilities of the Club Committee**

The GFS Committee will ensure:

1. They take a leadership role in ensuring Child Safety is of paramount importance within GFS;
2. They have read and understand this policy, as it is updated from time to time;
3. That this policy and any updated policy is published at a location that is easily accessible by all GFS members, staff, volunteers and visitors;
4. That the GFS has a process for implementing the requirement for Working with Children Checks as below; and
5. That Child safe risks are adequately identified and managed at Committee level.

## **Policy Review**

Child Protection and Intervention Policy and Guidelines will be reviewed regularly and updated in line with any legislative changes that have significant impact on the manner in which child protection and intervention issues are to be dealt with.

## **Member Protection Officer (MPO)**

To deal appropriately with these issues and to ensure that the confidentiality of all parties involved is maintained, one person within the Club will be designated as the Member Protection Officer. The MPO is the responsible officer to contact if a concern is identified. They will review and report as required.

The MPO must hold a current WWCC (unless exempt under the act) and is responsible for reporting any allegations of child abuse that occur in GFS to the local branch of the Department Family and Community Services, and the NSW Police Service. If the MPO is not available then the most senior Club Official within the Club should be notified.

The MPO is a position what will be appointed by the members of the Club at the Annual General Meeting or if required by the Club Governing Committee.

***Currently the MPO is:***

**Name:** Glenda Cameron-Strange

**Email:** [glenjcs@bigpond.com](mailto:glenjcs@bigpond.com)

**Mobile:** 0419 983 680.

## **Notification Procedures for Allegations of Child Abuse**

GFS acknowledges that issues regarding child abuse and the reporting of allegations of child abuse are highly sensitive, and should be dealt with in a confidential manner.

GFS has developed these notification procedures to ensure that confidentiality is maintained throughout the process and that consistent procedures for reporting are encouraged. GFS will be proactive in its role to protect children and encourage an open environment that allows employees and members to be aware of their rights and responsibilities within the Organisation.

On receipt of a report or allegation of Child Abuse, the GFS MPO will:

1. Refer the report or allegation to the Police where there is a concern about an immediate risk to the Child's safety;
2. Withdraw the accused person from active duty where they are a GFS member, staff or volunteer.
3. Report the allegation in accordance with policy;
4. Deal with the report or allegation in a confidential manner to the greatest extent possible;
5. Cooperate with the Police and/or National Integrity Framework in relation to any investigation conducted by these authorities.

## **Working With Children Check (WWCC)**

The following people must have a valid WWCC;

1. Member Protection Officer;
2. All GFS coaches, instructors, team managers, coordinators and race officials involved in junior teams and in senior team which include Children;
3. Members participating in 'Child related work'
4. Staff and volunteers participating in 'Child related work'; and
5. Anyone else required by GFS to obtain a WWCC due to the nature of the work that they are undertaking for GFS

GFS will provide all members, staff, volunteers and visitors with access to this policy, for example by publishing it on the club's website or displaying in the club house.

## Recruitment

The minimum standard for background checks of applicable GFS members, staff and volunteers who work with Children is the law as it applies in New South Wales. GFS may, in its discretion, require additional reference checks, as it thinks fit.

GFS will use best endeavours to undertake a comprehensive recruitment and screening process for staff before their engagement and for volunteers, which aims to:

1. Promote and protect the safety of all Children who participate in the activities of GFS;
2. Identify and recruit the most suitable candidates who share GFS values and commitment to protect Children; and
3. Prevent a person from being engaged by GFS if they pose an unacceptable risk to Children.

As part of the screening and recruitment process, an applicant must provide appropriate evidence, including but not limited to a WWCC NSW, to show that they are suitable to work with Children and young people in a recreational setting.

## What Should be Reported

Some incidents may seem minor, however, they may in fact reveal more serious concerns of misconduct or a pattern of behaviour that requires further scrutiny. All people associated with GFS should be aware of the indicators for Child Abuse and Sexual Abuse so that they may make an informed decision on what to report. If you have reasonable grounds to suspect that a Child participating in any organised activities conducted by the Club is at risk, report the matter to the MPO.

Verbal notification of alleged Child abuse will be followed up by the Club to the local Department of Family and Community Services, in writing, within 24 hours.

## Recognising and Reporting Child Abuse

1. If a person is concerned about an immediate risk to a Child's safety, the person must phone "000" as soon as practicable
2. A person may, in the course of participating in the sport or other events, activities or the day-to-day operations of GFS or in carrying out their work, form a belief on reasonable grounds that a Child is in need of protection from Child Abuse.
3. If a person is a Mandatory Reporter, then he or she must report as soon as practicable, and after each occasion where he or she becomes aware of a further reasonable ground for the belief.
4. If a person forms a reasonable belief or a belief on reasonable grounds that a Child is in need of protection, not falling within the terms in clause above, the person should report the belief to MPO or the club Commodore.
5. A reasonable belief is formed if a responsible 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 or sexual injury; and
  - c. The Child's parents are unable or unwilling to protect the Child.
6. To form a 'reasonable belief' or a 'belief on reasonable grounds', all the relevant facts should be considered objectively.
7. A 'reasonable belief' or a 'belief on reasonable grounds' is not the same as having proof but is more than mere rumour or speculation.
8. Reasonable grounds to notify exist if:
  - a. A Child states that they have been physically or sexually abused; in which case it is not necessary to question the Child further;

- 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; or
  - e. Signs of abuse lead to a belief that the Child has been physically or sexually abused.
9. If a person receives information that leads them to form a reasonable belief that a Sexual Offence has been committed in New South Wales against a child under the age of 16 years by another person (of or over the age of 18 years), the person has a legal obligation to disclose that information to the Police as soon as it is practicable.
  10. GFS supports and encourages a Person to make a report to the Police if they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a Child needs protection, or they are concerned about the safety, health or wellbeing of a Child.
  11. If a person is uncertain as to whether they should make a report to an external authority in relation to the safety of a Child, they should speak to the GFS MPO or the GFS Commodore for guidance and information.

## **Guidance for Members, Parents and Juniors**

### **4. Change Rooms and Toilets.**

Adult members, staff, volunteers and visitors, regardless of gender, should only enter change rooms and toilets with a Child or Children if accompanied by another adult. Prior to entering change rooms or toilets, every such person should notify the people in the change room or toilet of their intended entrance. For the avoidance of doubt this requirement does not apply to parents/legal guardians in a room with their own Child unless other Children are present in the change room at the same time.

### **4. Hotel rooms and other accommodation and General Proximity (if applicable)**

No member, staff, volunteer or visitor should be alone in the room of a Child or should separate the Child from the group by a noticeable distance without the presence of another adult. The doors should always be open and the member, staff, volunteer or visitor within sight. Should it be necessary for a member, staff, Volunteer or visitor to be alone with a Child, the team manager or other responsible adult must be informed. For the avoidance of doubt this requirement does not apply to parents/legal guardians in a room with their own Child unless other Children are present in the change room at the same time.

### **3. Travel**

All persons, including team members, coaches, instructors and officials over 18 years of age retain an overriding responsibility for the safety and welfare of all Children they accompany during team travel activities.

### **4. Sexual Relationships**

It is strictly prohibited for any member staff, volunteer or visitor or any other person over the age of 18 and acting in a position of responsibility, including when they are travelling with a team that includes a Child or Children, to engage in any inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature with any Child. Inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature by any such person includes inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature obscene language of a sexual nature, and/or suggestive remarks or actions.

### **5. Phone calls, email, text & social media including private social media groups**

coaches, instructors and team managers must not communicate directly with sailors without inclusion of the relevant parent/ guardian, this includes phone calls, text messages, emails, social media (public and private groups). This includes messages

that may be deemed positive and harmless (eg wishing a player happy birthday or congratulations for making a rep team).

- a) **Email:** All communication with junior sailors must be directed to the parent / guardian, unless explicit consent is sought from the parents for a junior player's email address to be added to email distribution lists and the parent / guardian email address must also be included in all communication.
  - b) **Text messages:** All communication with junior sailors must be directed to the parent / guardian unless explicit consent is sought from the parents for a junior player's mobile number to be added to mobile text distribution lists and the parent / guardian mobile number must also be included in all communication.
  - c) **Social media groups:** Parents / guardians must be included in any private social media groups (for example Facebook messenger, Facebook private groups, WhatsApp groups and any other such group). If sailors wish to have a group amongst themselves (with no adults including coaches, instructors / team managers) this group must abide by the Club's social media, code of conduct and all other policies.
  - d) **Phone calls:** Adults must not contact junior sailors directly by phone unless a parent or guardian is also present for the phone call.
4. **Coaches, Instructors and Team Managers:**  
All coaches, instructors and team managers must ensure that any physical contact with Children that occurs in relation to coaching or team management is appropriate for the situation. It is strongly recommended that:
- a) Coaches, Instructors and team managers ensure that there are other adults present whenever coaching;
  - b) Coaches, Instructors and team managers take care to explain the procedure to the Child prior to beginning any physical contact; and
  - c) Coaches, Instructors and team managers obtain consent from the athlete prior to beginning any physical contact.

## Investigation

If an incident of Child abuse occurs at GFS it is not the responsibility of persons within the Club to take it upon themselves to determine whether the allegation is true or false. This responsibility belongs with the NSW Department of Family and Community Service and the Judiciary. The incident should be reported to the MPO who will provide guidance on next steps.

Depending on the nature of the allegations and the extent of the situation, the NSW Department of Family and Community Service will determine the manner in which the matter will be investigated. This may involve the NSW Police Service.

## Confidentiality

All matters regarding allegations of Child Abuse are to be treated as confidential. The person designated as the Member Protection Officer is the contact person for any incident involving allegations of Child Abuse. This is essential for confidentiality. Confidentiality protects all individuals involved:

- The alleged victim
- The alleged offender, and
- The person making the notification

Under the [Children and Young Persons \(care and protection\) Act 1998](#) GFS is required to:



1. Notify the Commission for Children and Young People of the name and other identifying details of any employee/volunteer against whom relevant disciplinary proceedings have been completed, irrespective of the findings (except where the allegation has been proven to be vexatious, mischievous or false).
2. Provide details of Child Abuse allegations or convictions against employees to the Commission.
3. Notify the Commission of any applicants for child-related employment, rejected as a result of risks identified through employment/volunteering screening processes.
4. Ensure that records of all information required to be submitted to the Commission for Children and Young People are retained by the Club.

Under the [Child Protection \(Working with Children\) Act 2012](#) GFS **Must ensure that a worker** does not engage in child-related work unless:

1. Worker holds a working with Children check clearance of a class applicable to the work, or
2. There is a current application by the worker to the Commission for a clearance of a class applicable to that work

## APPENDICES

### Related Documents and Requirements

1. [Sailing Australia Child Safe Scheme](#) which includes the following helpful resources
  - [Training and resources | Office of the Children's Guardian \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)
    - [Child Safe Scheme](#)
    - [Working with Children Check](#)
    - [Organisations & agencies](#)
    - [Employees & volunteers](#)
    - [Parents & carers](#)
    - [Training & resources](#)
  - [Child Safe Sport eLearning | Office of the Children's Guardian \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)
  - [Training events | Office of Sport NSW \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)

#### Additional Notes

Employers operating within a Child-related industry are required to register online with the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian and to subsequently conduct online verification of new paid employees and volunteer's clearance. Existing paid workers and all volunteers (new and current) also need to have clearance validated online as they are phased in to the new check system. The check is valid for 5 years and subject to ongoing monitoring.

The Working with Children Check is free for volunteers - [Working with Children check and verification](#)

#### Reporting Template – WWCC verification

Employee full name	Date of Birth	WWC number	Start date	Verification date	Verification outcome	Expiry date	Paid or volunteer work