



**Darebin Chess Club Inc.**  
**Victoria, Australia.**

## **Darebin Chess Club Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy**

Darebin Chess Club Inc. is a community organization whose mission is to improve residents' educational outcomes and social development by introducing them to the game of chess and promoting chess activities in the city of Darebin. These activities range from teaching and coaching programs; fostering participation in chess play both leisurely and competitively; providing the best experience for chess players at all levels and all age groups; and as a means of reducing social isolation and building cross-cultural and cross generation friendships for Darebin residents.

*Darebin Chess Club acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung People, the Traditional Owners of the land on which we operate. We acknowledge and respect their contributions, experience, and knowledge as First Nations people. We pay our respects to their Elders, past and present.*

This Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy was approved by the Executive Committee on 14 August 2023. It demonstrates the strong commitment of club committee and volunteers to child safety and wellbeing, and how our organization keeps children safe from harm, including child abuse.

### **Commitment to child safety**

All children who take part in Darebin Chess Club activities have a right to feel and be safe. The welfare of the children in our care will always be our first priority and we have a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and harm. We aim to create a child safe and child-friendly environment where children feel safe and have fun while enjoying and learning about the game of chess.

### **Purpose**

This Policy outlines how Darebin Chess Club prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children and what steps we will take to do this.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, Executive Committee members, children and other individuals involved in our organization. This policy applies to all activities conducted by the Darebin Chess Club, including but not limited to, weekly chess club sessions in the Preston library and special events such as tournaments.

### **Definitions**

*Executive Committee* means the Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and all other additional members of the management committee as defined in the club's constitution.

*Child abuse* means:

- a sexual offence committed against a child.
- an offence committed against a child under section 49M(1) of the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic), such as grooming
- physical violence against a child
- causing serious emotional or psychological harm to a child
- serious neglect of a child.

*Harm* is damage to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child or young person, including as a result of child abuse by adults or the conduct of other children. It includes physical, emotional, sexual and

psychological harm. Harm can arise from a single act or event and can also be cumulative, that is, arising as a result of a series of acts or events over a period of time.

*Child/Children* means a person who is under the age of 18 years.

### *Concerns and complaints*

A concern refers to any potential issue that could impact negatively on the safety and wellbeing of children.

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction to Darebin Chess Club related to one or more of the following:

- our services or dealings with individuals
- allegations of abuse or misconduct by a staff member, a volunteer or another individual representing Darebin Chess Club
- disclosures of abuse or harm made by a child or young person.
- the conduct of a child or young person at Darebin Chess Club event
- the inadequate handling of a prior concern
- general concerns about the safety of a group of children or activity.

### **Role of the Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee has the role of making sure Darebin Chess Club prioritizes children's safety and that action is taken when anyone raises concerns about children's safety.

The Executive Committee will champion and model a child safe culture at Darebin Chess Club. We encourage anyone involved with the organisation to report a child safety concern. The Executive Committee will work to create a positive culture around reporting so that people feel comfortable to raise concerns.

Everyone involved with the Darebin Chess Club has a role in identifying and managing risks of child abuse and harm. The Executive Committee will make sure that staff and volunteers are conducting risk assessments and taking action to manage risks in accordance with this policy. They will also ensure that appropriate child safety training for staff and volunteers is identified and completed.

The Executive Committee will conduct an annual review of how effectively Darebin Chess Club is fostering child safety and wellbeing. The input of people involved with Darebin Chess Club will be sought as part of this review.

### **Children's empowerment and participation**

Darebin Chess Club is a organisation serving a broad range of age groups including children. We actively seek to include children's views and ideas in our organisational planning, delivery of services including weekly chess club session and tournaments.

We want children to develop new friends and skills through the enjoyment of chess and encourage children to be supportive of each other. We do not tolerate bullying or abusive behaviour between children and take action if this occurs.

We respect the rights of children and values the voices of children and will act on safety concerns raised by children or their families.

### **Families and communities**

Darebin Chess Club recognises the important role of families and encourages the participation parents and carers in all club events. Parents, families and communities are welcome to provide

feedback at any time through our contact email address ([dcc@darebinchessclub.org.au](mailto:dcc@darebinchessclub.org.au)) and are encouraged to raise any concerns they have with us.

At the annual general meeting each year all club members are invited to share their thoughts on the direction of Darebin Chess Club for the next year.

Darebin Chess Club provides information to families and community about our child safe policies and practices including by publishing this Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Code of Conduct on our website.

### **Valuing diversity**

We value diversity and equity for all children. To achieve this, we:

- welcome and support participation of all children, including children with disability, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home, LGBTIQ children and Aboriginal children and their families.
- have zero tolerance of racism and other forms of discrimination and take action when discrimination or exclusion is identified.
- deliver programming that reflects the diversity of our students, their skill levels and ability.

### **Recruiting staff and volunteers**

Darebin Chess Club puts child safety and wellbeing at the center of recruitment and screening processes for staff and volunteers. We only engage staff and volunteers who are appropriate to engage with children.

We require a Working with Children Check, for all staff, chess coaches, Executive Committee and volunteers who have a role with children or have access to children's personal information.

### **Complaints and reporting**

All reports of child abuse and child safety concerns will be treated seriously, whether they are made by an adult or a child and whether they are about the conduct of an adult or a child. All complaints and child safety concerns will be responded to promptly and thoroughly.

If a complaint includes an allegation or incident of child abuse or harm, then staff and volunteers at Darebin Chess Club must report it. Darebin Chess Club staff and volunteers are required to prioritize children's safety in any response and to report all potentially criminal conduct to Victoria Police.

Complaints can be emailed to [dcc@darebinchessclub.org.au](mailto:dcc@darebinchessclub.org.au) or you can speak with a member of the Executive Committee.

*If there is concern for the immediate safety of a child, immediately call 000.*

### **Record keeping**

Darebin Chess Club is committed to making and keeping full and accurate records about all child-related complaints or safety concerns.

All child safety complaints, concerns, incidents and near misses will be recorded in an incident reporting system.

Records which may assist with the investigation of a complaint or safety concern will be identified and kept as part of the record of an investigation. Records will be kept even if an investigation does not substantiate a complaint.

We will record and keep the outcome of any investigations, and the resolution of any complaints. This includes findings made, reasons for decisions and actions taken.

Records will be stored securely and kept by Darebin Chess Club for at least 10 years.

### **Information sharing**

Darebin Chess Club may share relevant information to promote the safety and wellbeing of children, where it is appropriate and in their best interests. Darebin Chess Club will keep information about complaints confidential, except where it is necessary to share information to respond properly to a complaint or to prioritize child safety. We may also need to share information about incidents or complaints with external authorities to comply with the law or to prioritize safety.

### **Risk management**

We recognize the importance of identifying and managing risks of child harm and abuse in the physical and online environments which may be used by Darebin Chess Club.

Any contractors or other providers of services will always be supervised by a member of the Executive Committee while working with us to ensure child safety.

### **Non-compliance with this policy**

Darebin Chess Club will enforce this policy. Potential breaches by anyone will be investigated and may result in restriction of duties, suspension or termination of employment or engagement or other corrective action.

### **Review**

Darebin Chess Club will review all child safe practices and policies at least every two years. We also review relevant practices and policies in response to a child safety incident or 'near miss'. Findings from reviews will be reported to the people involved in our organization and also inform our approach to continuous improvement of our child safety practices. Reviews are overseen by the Executive Committee and will be informed by consultation with children, families and staff.

### **Supporting legislation**

- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)* (including Child Safe Standards)
- *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)* (including reporting to Child Protection)
- *Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)* (including Failure to Protect and Failure to Disclose offences)
- *Wrongs Act 1958 (Vic)* (including Part XIII – Organisational liability for child abuse)