

Child Protection Policy

Our Commitment

Golf Queensland is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people who use its services, participate in its events, and who are invited to participate in its programs. Our staff, coaches, committees and volunteers will treat them with respect and understanding at all times.

To ensure that children and young people are kept safe from harm, the attached policies and procedures have been implemented.

Purpose

This document has different relevance to different stakeholders. To staff, coaches, squad managers etc. it may serve as a reference document to be used when developing various programs, tournaments or other activities. To young people and their respective parents or guardians, it serves as an assurance that Golf Queensland has the well-being of the individual as its major priority.

It is intended that these documents will support Golf Queensland's Commitment, and ensure that all stakeholders are aware of their respective roles, rights and responsibilities.

Resources & Related Documents

This policy document should be read in conjunction with:

- Travel and Accommodation Policy for Minors
- Junior Sport Codes of Behaviour (published by the Australian Sports Commission and endorsed by Golf Queensland).

Definitions

- *Blue Card* – Positive Notice blue card for Child Related Employment – issued by the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian.
- *Child Protection Officer (CPO)* – The person appointed by Golf Queensland as the liaison between victims and authorities, and the officer appointed to investigate claims in relation to this Policy.
- *Child Protection Disciplinary Committee* – A Committee which will meet to investigate any reported child protection issues, and hear disciplinary proceedings against offenders. This Committee will consist of the Chief Executive Officer, President and Vice-President. Other Board Members or senior staff may be substituted if the alleged offender is one of the members of the Committee, or is a member is unavailable.

Who Must Comply with this Policy

This Policy applies to any person who acts in an official capacity in any Golf Queensland activity in which it could be reasonably expected that persons under the age of 18 years might be involved.

Such persons would include, without being restricted to:

- Committee Members
- Staff
- Contracted coaches and other support service providers
- Squad/Program Managers
- Tournament Support Group Members
- Fellow Competitors
- Team members
- Other young people.

Scope of Policy

This Policy applies to:

- All events, programs and activities organized by Golf Queensland,
- All official Golf Queensland representative team activities (whether or not they be conducted in Queensland).
- All human resource matters (such as filling vacated positions)
- All applications of the organisation's other resources.

Child Abuse

Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and the sporting environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people in order to harm them, whilst others may harm children as a result of poor judgement in an opportunistic manner. A coach, instructor, teacher, official or volunteer will have regular contact with young people and be an important link in identifying cases where they need protection. All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported following the guidelines in this document.

When a child enters a sporting environment having been subjected to child abuse elsewhere, sport can play a crucial role in improving the child's self-esteem. In such instances the Golf Queensland must work with the appropriate agencies to ensure the child receives the required support.

Good Practice Guidelines

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate:

- Always working in an open environment avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication.
- Treating all young people equally with respect and dignity.
- Always putting the welfare of each young person first.
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with players.
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust and empowering children to share in decision making.
- Making sport fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play.
- Ensuring that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly and appropriately. If it is difficult to maintain hand positions when the child is constantly moving, young people should always be consulted and their

agreement gained. Some parents are becoming increasingly sensitive about manual support and their views should always be carefully considered.

- Keeping up to date with technical skills, qualifications and insurance.
- Involving parents/guardians in activities where appropriate.
- Ensuring that at tournaments or residential events, adults should not enter children's rooms or permit children in their rooms.
- Being an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or consuming excessive amounts of alcohol in the company of young people.
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people – avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will.
- Ensuring emergency contact details are maintained for all players.
- Securing parental consent in writing to act in loco parentis, if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.
- Keeping a written record of any injury or illness that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.
- Requesting written parental approval if the need arises to transport the players in a manner not in accordance with Golf Queensland's Travel and Accommodation Policy for Minors.

Practices to be Avoided

The following should be **avoided** except in emergencies. If a case arises where these situations are unavoidable (eg the child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or a parent fails to arrive to pick a child up at the end of a session), it should be with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the club or the child's parents.

- Spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.
- Taking or dropping off a child to an event.

Practices Never to be Sanctioned

The following should never be sanctioned. You should never:

- Engage in rough physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Share a room with a child.
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control.
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Do things of a personal nature for children adults that they can do for themselves.
- Invite or allow children to stay with you at your home unsupervised.

Incidents that must be reported/recorded

If any of the following occur you should report this immediately to another colleague and record the incident. You should also ensure the parents of the child are informed:

- if you accidentally hurt a player
- If he/she seems distressed in any manner
- if a player appears to be sexually aroused by your actions
- if a player misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

Use of Photographic/Filming Equipment

There is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young sportspeople in vulnerable positions. All parties should be vigilant and any concerns should be reported to the designated Child Protection Officer.

There is no intention to prevent people using video equipment or cameras as a legitimate coaching aid or for recording events for posterity. However, participants and their parents/guardians should be made aware that such activities may be recorded. Any such films or files should be stored safely.

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Recruitment and Training

Golf Queensland recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children. Contracted coaches, volunteer officials, staff and Board Members involved in programs and events must all possess "Blue Cards" prior to commencing in these roles.

Interview and Induction

All employees (and volunteers) will be required to undergo an interview, and should receive formal or informal induction, during which:

- Their qualifications should be substantiated.
- The job requirements and responsibilities should be clarified.
- The successful applicant must complete Golf Queensland's Child Protection Declaration. This will elicit information about an applicant's past and a self-disclosure about any criminal record.
- Consent must be obtained from an applicant to seek information from Queensland Police.
- Child protection procedures are explained and training needs are identified.

Training

In addition to pre-selection checks, the safeguarding process includes training after recruitment to help staff and volunteers to:

- Analyse their own practice against established good practice, and to ensure their practice is likely to protect them from false allegations.
- Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse.
- Respond to concerns expressed by a child or young person.
- Work safely and effectively with children.

SUSPICIONS, ALLEGATIONS AND COMPLAINTS

Responding to Allegations or Suspicions

It is not the responsibility of anyone working for Golf Queensland (in a paid or unpaid capacity) to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities.

The Golf Queensland assures all staff/volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone who in good faith reports his/her concern that a person is, or may be, abusing a child.

Where There is a Complaint

Where there is a complaint against a member of staff there may be three types of investigation:

- a criminal investigation
- a child protection investigation
- a disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

The results of the police and child protection investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily.

Action in Relation to Complaints

1. Concerns about poor practice:

- If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice, the CPO will deal with it as a misconduct issue.
- If the allegation is about poor practice by the CPO, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the President who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not to initiate disciplinary proceedings.

2. Concerns about suspected abuse:

- Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer should be reported to the CPO, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.
- The CPO will refer the allegation to the relevant social services authority, which may involve the police, or go directly to the police.
- The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department.
- If the CPO is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the President or in his/her absence another Board Member who will refer the allegation to social services.

Confidentiality

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only.

This includes the following people:

- the CPO
- the parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused
- the person making the allegation
- social services/police
- the alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a child).

Advice should be sought from the police or the relevant social services authority on who should approach the alleged abuser.

Information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws (eg that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

INVESTIGATION AND OUTCOMES

Internal Enquiries and Suspension

- Golf Queensland's CPO will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social services inquiries.
- Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries Golf Queensland's Disciplinary Committee will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision, particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, Golf Queensland's Disciplinary Committee must reach a decision based upon the available information, which could suggest that on a balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of the child should remain of paramount importance throughout.

Support to Deal with the Aftermath of Abuse

- Consideration should be given to the kind of support that children, parents and members of staff may need. Use of helplines, support groups and open meetings will maintain an open culture and help the healing process.
- Consideration should be given to what kind of support may be appropriate for the alleged perpetrator.

Allegations of Previous Abuse

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event (eg by an adult who was abused as a child or by a member of staff who is still currently working with children).

Where such an allegation is made, Golf Queensland should follow the procedures as detailed above and report the matter to the relevant social services authority or the police. This is because other children, either within or outside sport, may be at risk from this person. Anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences related to abuse is required by law to advise the body or bodies he/she is associated with, and should be automatically excluded from working with children.

BULLYING AND HARRASSMENT

If bullying or some other form of harassment is suspected, the same procedure should be followed as set out in 'Responding to suspicions or allegations' above.

Actions to help the victim and prevent bullying and harassment:

- Take all signs of bullying very seriously.
- Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns (cases of suicide as a result of bullying are not uncommon, so if anyone talks about or threatens suicide, seek professional help immediately). Help the victim to speak out and tell the person in charge or someone in authority.
- Investigate all allegations and take action to ensure the victim is safe. Speak with the victim and the bully(ies) separately.
- Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise to tell no one else.
- Keep records of what is said (what happened, by whom, when).
- Report any concerns to the CPO.

Action towards the bully(ies):

- Talk with the bully(ies), explain the situation, and try to get the bully(ies) to understand the consequences of their behaviour. Seek an apology to the victim(s).
- Inform the bully(ies)'s parents.
- Insist on the return of 'borrowed' items and that the bully(ies) compensate the victim.
- Impose sanctions as necessary.
- Encourage and support the bully(ies) to change behaviour.
- Hold meetings with the families to report on progress.
- Inform all organisation members of action taken.
- Keep a written record of action taken.

Concerns Outside the Immediate Sporting Environment (eg a parent or carer):

- Report your concerns to the CPO, who should contact the relevant social services authority or the police as soon as possible.
- If the CPO is not available, the person being told of or discovering the abuse should contact social services or the police immediately.
- Social services and the CPO will decide how to involve the parents/carers.
- Maintain confidentiality on a "need to know" basis only.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Information for Social Services or the Police about Suspected Abuse:

To ensure that this information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern, which should include the following:

- The child's name, age and date of birth.
- The child's home address and telephone number.
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.
- The nature of the allegation. Include dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information.
- Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Also any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes.
- Details of witnesses to the incidents.
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.
- Have the parents been contacted?
- If so, what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details.
- If the child was not the person who reported the incident, has the child been spoken to? If so, what was said?
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.
- Where possible referral to the police or social services should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours and the name of the contact who took the referral should be recorded.

If you are worried about sharing concerns about abuse with a senior colleague, you can contact social services or the police direct.

Golf Queensland Child Protection Policy – Appendix

STATE JUNIOR SQUAD/TEAM WORKSHEET

Initial Selection

- Forward Travel and Accommodation for Minors Policy, Codes of Behaviour Document, and Child Protection Policy to all families upon initial selection.
- Ensure that the special provisions in the TAMP for any players under the age of 12 years are adhered to.
- Ensure that all coaches and managers have Blue Cards.

Training Sessions

- Follow-up with absentees from training sessions or other activities as soon as practically possible.
- Ensure facilities are safe, and that activities are conducted in a safe manner.
- Always ensure that players are appropriately hydrated, and have sufficient intake of food.
- Do not leave the training venue until all participants have been collected, unless otherwise arranged.

Series Planning

- Ensure all travel arrangements been made in accordance with the GOLF QUEENSLAND's Travel and Accommodation for Minors Policy.
- Ensure that the precise details of the transport arrangements have been communicated to participants and parents/guardians.

During Tournament/Series

- Ensure that one-on-one interviews are conducted in the early stages of the trip.
- Ensure that behavioral issues and problems addressed in the one-on-one interviews are addressed as soon as possible.

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Golf Queensland Child Protection Policy – Appendix
RECORD OF TRANSPORT AND/OR
ACCOMMODATION FOR MINORS

The following transport and/or accommodation has been coordinated in accordance with the GOLF QUEENSLAND's Transport and Accommodation Policy for Minors.

NAME(S) OF MINORS:

PURPOSE OF TRIP:

ACCOMPANYING GOLF QUEENSLAND REPRESENTATIVE:

EMERGENCY GOLF QUEENSLAND CONTACT (not traveling):

TRANSPORT:

(details)

MEETING POINT:

ACCOMMODATION:

VENUE:

DATES: Check-in
 Check-out

ROOM ALLOCATIONS:

GOLF QUEENSLAND Child Protection Policy – Appendix
DESIGNATED CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER (CPO)

CPO: Mr Stephen Pitt

Contact Details: Phone: 07 3854 1105 or 0438 374 757
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