**BEAUMARIS FOOTBALL CLUB**

# Club Policies 2027

*One document for all Club policies*

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| **Works with** | The Rules (Constitution) and the Club Code of Conduct |
| **Review** | Yearly |

# Part 1. Purpose

This document brings together Beaumaris Football Club's key policies into one clear framework for how we operate, manage risk and support a safe, inclusive and respectful club environment. It works alongside the Club Constitution, which sets out how the Club is governed, and the Code of Conduct, which defines the behaviours expected of everyone involved.

Grounded in our five values of Belonging, Respect, Commitment, Leadership and Development, these policies turn what we stand for into practical expectations and consistent decision-making, on and off the field.

## 1.2 How it fits with our rules

These policies sit under the Club's Constitution (the Rules of Beaumaris Football Club Inc.). They do not change the Rules, and they do not repeat them. They are Regulations made by the Board under rule 87, and they apply in this order:

| Document | What it does | Order |
|---|---|---|
| Rules (Constitution) | Sets out who is a member, how the Club is run, and how discipline, appeals and grievances work. | 1st. Always applies. |
| Code of Conduct | Sets the standard of behaviour for every role, how incidents are reported and how breaches are handled. | 2nd |
| These policies | Set out what the Club does and what the procedures are for child safety, alcohol, smoking/vaping, social media, player welfare, eligibility, team selection, playing time and complaints. | 3rd |
| League and law | AFL, VAFA, SMJFL and Bayside Council rules, and Victorian law. Where these are stricter than this document, they apply. | Applies alongside |

Regulations must be consistent with the Rules and with any policy directive of the Board (rule 87(1)). They bind the Club and all members (rule 87(3)).

## 1.3 Who it applies to

Everyone covered by the Code of Conduct: players, parents and guardians, coaches, team managers, game day officials, trainers, volunteers, the Board and committees, supporters, sponsors, spectators and guests of members.

Members are bound by these policies because the Rules require members to follow the Code of Conduct and Club Regulations (rules 17 and 87). Non-members are bound as a condition of their role, registration or being at our grounds (Code of Conduct, section 11). Guests attending Club activities or premises as the guest of a member must comply with the Code of Conduct and all applicable Club policies as a condition of entry and participation, and the host member is responsible for their guests in line with the Club Rules.

## 1.4 Who looks after the policies

- The Board is responsible for these policies, for approving changes, and for managing risk (rules 45 and 49(3)).

- The Senior and Junior Committees run the day-to-day football within these policies. They cannot make or change policy (rule 75(2)(b)).
- The Board appoints and removes the coaches for the Senior Section and the Senior and Youth Football Director (rule 45(4)(g)). The Senior and Youth Football Director is responsible for appointing, managing and training coaches (other than the head coach) and coaching directors in the Junior and Senior Sections, but must consult the Senior and Junior Committees and act only with their approval (rule 76). Committees cannot appoint or dismiss coaches without Board approval (rule 75(2)(c)).
- The Board can delegate parts of these policies in writing to a Board member, committee, subcommittee or staff member (rule 47).

## 1.5 If a policy is not followed

We start by explaining the policy and what was missed. If it continues, or is serious, it is handled under the Code of Conduct: section 10 for members, section 11 for non-members and section 12 for outcomes.

Disciplinary action against a member happens only under Division 2 of the Rules (rules 21 to 26). The Club cannot fine anyone.

## 1.6 Where to find things

| If you want to know about… | Go to… |
|---|---|
| How we must behave | Code of Conduct, sections 3 to 5 |
| Keeping children safe | Part 2 of this document, and Code of Conduct section 4 |
| Alcohol and getting home safely | Part 3, and Code of Conduct section 6 |
| smoking/vaping | Part 4, and Code of Conduct section 6 |
| Team groups, WhatsApp and social media | Part 5, and Code of Conduct section 7 |
| Heat, injuries and concussion | Part 6, and Code of Conduct section 8 |
| Age rules and playing up | Part 7 |
| How teams are picked | Part 8 |
| How much game time players get | Part 9 |
| Making a complaint or reporting an incident | Part 10, and Code of Conduct section 10 |

# Part 2. Child safety policy

**Values in action.** Belonging, Respect and Leadership: every child must feel safe, heard, included and valued. We respect each child's voice, identity and boundaries; leaders act promptly on concerns and model safe behaviour. Belonging never means tolerating harmful behaviour, and child safety always takes priority over reputation, results or convenience.

### Where this fits

**Constitution:** Our purposes include providing opportunities for all members of the community to participate (rule 2(d)) and a safe and inclusive environment where everyone belongs (rule 2(f)). The Board must maintain good governance, introduce ethical standards and manage risk (rule 49(3)(b) and (i)). Discipline for members is under rules 21 to 26.

**Code of Conduct:** Section 4 sets out what everyone must and must not do around children. Section 10 explains how to report a concern.

## 2.1 Our commitment

Every child at the Club has the right to be and feel safe. Their welfare is our first priority and we have zero tolerance of child abuse. We aim to be a child-safe, child-friendly club where children feel safe and have fun, and everything we do is in their best interests. The Child Safe Standards apply to the whole Club, including the Seniors.

## 2.2 Who it applies to

Everyone involved in the Club, paid or volunteer, including administrators, coaches, officials, players, parents and spectators. Everyone is expected to understand the signs and risks of child abuse, act immediately on any concern a child raises, and follow the laws on protecting children.

## 2.3 What child abuse is

A child is anyone under 18. Child abuse is any actual or potential harm to a child. It includes:

- **Physical abuse:** hurting a child, giving them alcohol or drugs, or training that goes beyond their development or maturity.
- **Sexual abuse:** any sexual activity or inappropriate sexual conduct involving a child, by an adult or another child.
- **Emotional abuse:** humiliation, taunting, sarcasm, yelling, name calling, ignoring a child or placing unrealistic expectations on them.
- **Neglect:** failing to provide food, water, shelter or clothing, or to protect a child from danger or foreseeable harm.

## 2.4 The Child Safety Officer

The Board appoints a Child Safety Officer (CSO). Current CSO: Helen Burton, phone, child.safety.officer@beaumarisfc.com.au.

- The CSO receives and acts on every child safety concern, supports the person who reported it and the child, and keeps matters confidential.
- If a child discloses abuse, or there are reasonable grounds to believe it has happened, the CSO reports to Police or the relevant authority.
- Children are told who the CSO is and that they can speak to them.
- If the concern is about the CSO, or about SMJFL staff, it goes to the SMJFL Child Safety Officer. The CSO can also escalate to the SMJFL CSO if unsure how to proceed.

## 2.5 Recruiting, screening and training

- Child safety is part of every appointment for roles involving players under 18.
- We interview, and where possible check referees, for staff and volunteers.
- A Working With Children Check is required for all relevant positions that deal with children under 18. Coaches also need current accreditation.
- Our commitment to child safety is part of our selection processes, and everyone receives training on the Code of Conduct.
- The Board and Committees discuss child safety regularly, and the Club completes a child safety review every year: what we have in place, what is working well and what to improve.

## 2.6 Reducing risk

Adults should avoid direct, unsupervised contact with children and work openly, so other adults know what is happening. Take particular care:

- in change rooms;
- with accommodation or overnight stays;
- when travelling; and
- when physical contact is part of coaching or managing children. Any contact must suit the situation and be explained to the child first.

## 2.7 Children's voice

We encourage children to have a say about things that matter to them, especially their safety, and we teach them what to do if they feel unsafe.

A child can go first to their team manager. If that is not possible or comfortable, they can go to their coach, a parent or a friend's parent, until their concern is heard and acted on.

Whoever hears the concern passes it to the CSO immediately. The CSO acts in the best interests of the child, guided by the law and professionals where needed.

## 2.8 Valuing diversity

We do not tolerate discrimination. We promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children and families, and of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. We welcome children with a disability and their families and act to support their participation.

## 2.9 Reporting and responding

- Report any concern about a child to the CSO immediately. Do not investigate it yourself.
- The CSO reports to Police or the relevant government authority where there is any report of sexual or physical abuse. The CSO also keeps the reporter and the child informed and supported.
- It is a legal obligation for anyone who reasonably suspects a child is being or has been abused to report it to Police or the relevant government agency and the SMJFL CSO. This is never delayed by anything in this document.
- The Club does not investigate, mediate or hold hearings on allegations of child abuse. That is the role of Police and government agencies.
- Other conduct concerns follow Part 10 and the Code of Conduct, section 10.

## 2.10 Online contact with children

The Club follows the AFL Victoria Social Media Guidelines for all communication with children, as well as Part 5 of this document.

## 2.11 Review

This policy is reviewed every two years, and we ask children, parents, carers, staff and volunteers for their views as part of each review.

# Part 3. Alcohol and safe transport policy

**Values in action.** Leadership, Respect and Commitment: we set a responsible example around alcohol, especially when children and young people are present. Respect means protecting people from pressure or unsafe situations; Leadership means following licence conditions and making safe choices; Commitment means planning ahead so everyone can get home safely.

### Where this fits

**Constitution:** The Board must maintain a liquor licence for the Club and comply with liquor laws, and must not permit commission on liquor sales (rule 97(1) and (2)). A visitor may be supplied with liquor only as a member's guest or as a member of a visiting club (rule 97(3)). The Board must manage risk (rule 49(3)(i)).

**Code of Conduct:** Section 6 sets out the conduct we expect around alcohol, and section 10 explains what happens if it is not followed.

## 3.1 Purpose

We take a balanced and responsible approach to the service, supply, consumption and promotion of alcohol at games, events, functions and other Club activities. We support the rules of SMJFL, AFL Victoria, VAFA and Bayside Council. The Club holds the liquor licence, which the Board maintains (rule 97(1)), and we comply with liquor licensing laws and respect the conditions of the licence. Where Club activities are held at premises run by the Beaumaris Sporting Club (BSC), we also work with the BSC and respect its responsible service of alcohol rules. We take part in the Alcohol and Drug Foundation's Good Sports program and aim to keep the highest accreditation.

## 3.2 Where alcohol is not allowed

- **The junior football environment:** no alcohol is sold or consumed in the playing arena, the immediate ground-floor surrounds, the car park, the change rooms, the downstairs surrounds of the change rooms or the upstairs balcony.
- **Junior matches:** no one drinks alcohol while junior matches are on at Banksia Reserve, Donald McDonald Reserve and Jack Barker Oval, whatever the BSC is doing.
- **Sundays:** the Club does not advertise, promote, serve or drink alcohol at junior games on a Sunday.
- **Junior activities downstairs:** no alcohol in the downstairs area of the BSC that the Club uses during junior games, junior training or junior functions.

- **Senior matches:** no alcohol during senior matches, except as VAFA rules, the liquor licence and the BSC's responsible service of alcohol (RSA) rules allow. Board or Committee members are present during senior games to discourage drinking around the ground.

## 3.3 Under 18s

- Alcohol is never served to anyone under 18, and under 18s do not serve alcohol.
- The Club does not accept underage drinking or illicit drug use at Club functions, or people arriving affected by alcohol or drugs.
- The Club does not support serving alcohol to under 18s at private functions, such as finals celebrations. Anyone who does so is acting at their own risk.
- Servers and Board or Committee members ask for proof of age when in doubt. Only photo ID is accepted.

## 3.4 Serving alcohol

Where alcohol is served at a Club event, it is served under the Club's liquor licence (rule 97(1)) with safety first.

- Only RSA-trained servers with current qualifications serve alcohol, and servers do not drink while on duty.
- Standard drink measures are used where possible, double spirits are discouraged, and excessive or rapid drinking is not encouraged.
- Food is available when alcohol is available for more than 90 minutes and more than 15 people are present, where possible.
- Non-alcoholic and low-alcohol drinks are available and water is free, where available. We pursue non-alcohol sponsorship and revenue.
- A person is intoxicated if their speech, balance, coordination or behaviour is noticeably affected and there are reasonable grounds to believe alcohol is the cause. The Club is responsible for not serving intoxicated people at Club functions.

## 3.5 Functions and Club trips

- No functions with a minimum liquor sales requirement, no "all you can drink" deals, and no alcohol-only drink vouchers. Raffle and fundraising prizes should not focus on alcohol.
- Functions are planned with the venue (numbers, start and finish times, security, guest lists) and supervised by the Board, a Committee or nominated volunteers, for senior and junior functions alike.
- Members are responsible for their non-member guests, including their behaviour and getting home safely. Guests must follow this policy and the Code of Conduct as a condition of entry and participation. Visitors may be supplied with liquor only as a member's guest or as a member of a visiting club (rule 97(3)).
- Function advertising must not emphasise how much alcohol is available or encourage heavy drinking, must show clear start and finish times, and must include a safe transport message.
- Club trips, especially end-of-season player trips, follow the same standards.

## 3.6 Safe transport

Drink driving is one of the main causes of road deaths in Australia, and mixing alcohol with drugs (including prescription medication) can make driving unsafe.

- Plan how you will get home before you go out: a pre-arranged lift, a designated driver, a taxi or ride share. If in doubt, leave your car.
- Where a Club or community bus is used, it is alcohol-free and used as a single drop-off and pick-up point, not to move people between licensed venues.
- Consider overnight accommodation if needed, and be quiet and considerate of neighbours when leaving a venue.
- We print safe transport messages on invitations and flyers and repeat them before and during functions.

## 3.7 If it is not followed

- A Board or Committee member explains the policy and which part was missed.
- If it continues, at least two Board or Committee members decide what to do, which can include asking the person to leave the facility or function.
- Alcohol-related incidents the Club becomes aware of are recorded confidentially in the Club's incident register.
- Serious or repeated breaches follow Part 10 and the Code of Conduct.

## 3.8 Promoting and reviewing this policy

We publish this policy on the website, in newsletters and on social media, and announce it at events. It is reviewed at least every year, using feedback from members, players and supporters.

# Part 4. Smoke-free policy

**Values in action.** Respect and Belonging: we respect the health and comfort of players, families, volunteers and spectators. Smoke-free spaces help children and people who are sensitive to smoke feel welcome and safe, and everyone is expected to follow the law and the Club's designated-area rules.

### Where this fits

**Constitution:** Regulations are made by the Board (rule 87). The Board must manage risk (rule 49(3)(i)).

**Code of Conduct:** Sections 6.7 and 6.8 set out the smoking/vaping rules we expect people to follow.

## 4.1 Why we have it

Second-hand smoke is a health hazard, children copy what adults do, and smoke-free areas support people trying to quit and reduce litter. Victorian law also bans smoking/vaping within 10 metres of an outdoor sporting venue during under-18 competition, training or practice, and any break in them.

## 4.2 What we do

- No tobacco products are sold at or by the Club, including from vending machines.
- Coaches, players, officials and volunteers are encouraged not to smoke while involved in an official capacity for the Club, on and off the field.
- Wherever possible, no images of Club people smoking/vaping at Club activities are posted on social media.

## 4.3 Smoke-free areas

- All indoor change rooms downstairs at Banksia Reserve, Donald McDonald Reserve and Jack Barker Oval.
- All outdoor playing and training areas, where possible.
- All spectator areas related to the downstairs pavilion at those grounds.
- The canteen, catering, and eating and drinking areas at the Banksia Reserve pavilion.

Smoke-free areas are signed where possible. A designated smoking/vaping area is provided by the BSC managers, and the upstairs facility is run by the BSC under its own rules.

## 4.4 Functions

Club functions, fundraisers and meetings, at BSC facilities or elsewhere, are smoke-free wherever possible. If a smoking/vaping area is provided, smokers use only that area and put butts out safely before coming back in. Invitations and advertising promote a smoke-free environment.

## 4.5 If it is not followed

1. A Board or Committee member explains the policy and Victorian tobacco laws, and where smoking/vaping is allowed.
2. If it continues, the relevant Committee (Senior or Junior) decides what to do.
3. Serious or repeated breaches follow Part 10 and the Code of Conduct.

## 4.6 Promoting and reviewing this policy

We publish this policy on the website, promote it to members, put non-smoking/vaping signage in prominent places, and remove ashtrays from areas we control. It is reviewed at least every year.

# Part 5. Social media policy

**Values in action.** Respect, Belonging and Leadership: our online spaces are part of our Club community. We include people, communicate respectfully, protect children’s privacy and ask permission before sharing images. Coaches, team managers and group administrators lead by example and act when online behaviour undermines someone’s safety or sense of belonging.

### Where this fits

**Constitution:** Regulations are made by the Board (rule 87). Committees cannot make or amend policy (rule 75(2)(b)).

**Code of Conduct:** Section 7 sets out what is expected online, and section 10 covers what happens if it is not followed.

## 5.1 Why we have it

Social media is an easy way for our families to stay connected. The Club is bound by child safety regulations, so anything involving children must be appropriate, consensual and respectful. This policy covers Facebook groups, WhatsApp, team apps and any other electronic way of communicating with and between players, parents and supporters.

## 5.2 Rules for Club-managed groups

- Any team or age group that wants to set up a group must tell the Board (or the Committee it delegates to) and say who will run it.
- Every group is a closed group, managed by an adult, being the coach or team manager.
- Invitations are limited to players, parents or guardians, and a Board or Committee member.
- The group's guiding principles are displayed where all members can see them.
- All comments and content must be respectful, appropriate and considerate to everyone in the group and the Club.
- Permission must be sought before sharing images.

## 5.3 Communicating with children

- The Club follows the AFL Victoria Social Media Guidelines for all communication with children, in addition to any cyber safety policies.
- Adults must not swap personal contact details with a child, or have unauthorised contact with a child online or by phone.
- Players should not give or ask for contact details with an adult at the Club unless a parent knows and gives permission.

## 5.4 If something goes wrong

1. The administrator can remove inappropriate comments or content and will tell the person.
2. Further breaches can be escalated to the relevant Committee and then to the Board.
3. The Board can ask for a group to be shut down immediately where there is reasonable cause.
4. Inappropriate use of these groups is a breach of the Code of Conduct and is handled under Part 10. For a member, publicly broadcasting or criticising the Club rather than raising a grievance through the Club Secretary may also be treated as conduct prejudicial to the Club (rule 21(1)(c)).

# Part 6. Player welfare: heat, injury and concussion

**Values in action.** Respect, Commitment and Development: a player's health comes before selection, performance or the result. Respect means listening when someone says they feel unwell or hurt; Commitment means following welfare procedures and medical advice; Development means supporting long-term growth rather than pressuring a player to keep going or return too soon.

### Where this fits

**Constitution:** The Board must manage risk (rule 49(3)(i)). The Senior and Junior Committees manage player welfare activities (rule 73(2)(j)).

**Code of Conduct:** Section 8 sets out welfare standards, and section 5 sets out what coaches, trainers and parents must do.

## 6.1 Heat policy (junior training)

Heat stress can cause dizziness, headaches, collapse and illness, and in extreme cases can be life-threatening. Player welfare is the absolute priority. This applies to all junior training, pre-season and in-season, run by Club officials.

| Temperature (Weatherzone forecast for Beaumaris) | What happens |
|---|---|
| 36°C or above | Training is cancelled, unless the session is at the beach or a pool. |
| 32°C to 35°C | The Club considers shortening the session and adds cooling, such as more drink breaks, icy poles and cold towels. Common sense applies, with welfare first. |

- Players bring a suitably sized drink bottle and appropriate clothing, wear a hat, and apply and reapply sunscreen. The Club also provides drink bottles.
- A player who has been unwell before training and where heat is an issue should not take part.
- A player who feels unwell (dizziness, headache, heat rash, cramps, fainting, heavy sweating, nausea or vomiting) stops straight away and tells the person supervising.

## 6.2 Injury and illness

- Coaches follow a doctor's advice on when an injured or ill player can return.
- Parents of an injured player do not run onto the ground. The ground medics, trainer and team manager handle it, and parents enter the field only if asked to.
- Trainers act within their qualifications and record injuries treated.

## 6.3 Concussion

A player with a suspected concussion must come off and be managed under the SMJFL Concussion Policy and any AFL and league guidelines that apply. Nobody may pressure a player to keep playing or to return early. The Concussion Officer supports players, coaches and parents with return-to-play requirements and keeps confidential records.

# Part 7. Eligibility: minimum age and age groups

**Values in action.** Belonging, Respect and Development: age-group decisions must protect player welfare and support a positive pathway. We welcome players into the right environment for them, respect league eligibility rules, and consider development without compromising safety or the experience of teammates.

### Where this fits

**Constitution:** The Senior and Junior Committees must make sure the requirements of the league (RSO) are met (rule 73(2)(f)). Coaches and teams are managed within Board policy.

**Code of Conduct:** Section 8.4 and section 9.6 summarise these rules for families.

## 7.1 Minimum age

To protect the welfare of each player, their teammates and opponents, the Club sets a minimum age. To register for Under 8, a player must be at least 7 years old on 30 April of the calendar year of their first season. This follows the SMJFL by-laws. The Club has no discretion to allow a player who does not meet this.

## 7.2 Which age group a player is in

A player's age group is set by their age on 31 December of the season year. For example, a player who turns 9 during the season year is eligible for Under 9.

## 7.3 Playing within age groups

- Players play in their designated age group.
- A player can apply in writing to the Club to vary this. A panel that includes the Junior Section President and the Senior and Youth Football Director.
- The Club may ask a younger player to play up when an older team does not have enough players to field a team, including a four-player interchange bench. This must not hurt the player's regular team.
- As a guide, a player playing up plays no more than 3 quarters in the higher age team, and regular players' game time is maximised.
- If a younger player becomes eligible for finals, players of the right age take priority for those finals games.
- Coaches make every effort to talk to the player's parents before approaching the player about playing up.
- Coaches, with the Senior and Youth Football Director, may also play a player out of their age group if the Senior and Youth Football Director believes it will help the player's development.

# Part 8. Team selection policy

**Values in action.** Belonging, Respect, Commitment and Development: selection should support team balance and player development while treating people with dignity. Belonging means friendship and inclusion matter, particularly for younger players; Respect means communicating decisions appropriately; Commitment includes attendance, effort and coachability; Development means assessing potential and progress, not just outcomes. Selection decisions must follow the published process and league rules.

### Where this fits

**Constitution:** The Board appoints and removes the coaches for the Senior Section and the Senior and Youth Football Director (rule 45(4)(g)). The Senior and Youth Football Director is responsible for appointing, managing and training coaches (other than the head coach) and coaching directors in both Sections, but must consult the Committees and act only with their approval (rule 76). The Senior Committee oversees selection procedures for Senior teams (rule 73A(f)) and the Junior Committee recommends Junior coaches and team officials (rule 73B(c)).

**Code of Conduct:** Section 9 summarises selection for families. Section 10 covers any conduct concern about how selection is handled.

The Senior and Youth Football Director's final say on selection questions (see 8.5) is set by this policy as a Regulation (rule 87). The Senior Committee keeps oversight of selection procedures for Senior teams (rule 73A(f)).

## 8.1 Our approach

We aim to give every player a safe and caring environment, with the best chance to develop and enjoy football. Each age group has different needs, so the approach to training, game day and selection differs by age. From Under 11 to Under 17, SMJFL grades the divisions, and the Club tries to field a team in the highest division of each age group. The Club has absolute discretion over which team a player is placed in.

## 8.2 How teams are selected

| Age group | How teams are selected |
|---|---|
| Under 8 to Under 10 | Mainly friendship groups (usually school), mixed so a team is not all one school. Teams are not graded and players are not chosen on ability. Teams may change from year to year to fit new players. |
| Under 11 | Teams are chosen so each is competitive in its division, but not on ability alone. Each team has a range of abilities, fitness is considered, and new players are mixed in ahead of ability-based grading from Under 12. |
| Under 12 to Under 17 | Ability and team balance: kicking, marking, handball, vision and awareness, clean hands, competitiveness, footy smarts and fitness, plus attitude, training attendance and coachability. |

## 8.3 Selection panel and process

- A Selection Panel is formed for each age group. It includes the Senior and Youth Football Director, the Junior Co-ordinator and team coaches, and can include experienced independent people the Junior Committee brings in.
- Under 11: the panel considers the division, last year's teams, friendship groups and ability.

- Under 12 to Under 17: the panel uses coaches' input on the previous season, observes training sessions, assesses players against the criteria above, looks at performance in practice and intra-club matches, and may use other criteria at the Board's discretion.
- Teams are finalised before Round 1.
- Players and parents are formally told which team they have been selected in.

## 8.4 Moving between teams

Players can be rotated between teams in the same age group under SMJFL's Player Movement Policy. The 2014 version summarised here applies unless SMJFL has changed it.

- Under 8, 9 and 10: free movement.
- Any number of players can move from a lower-division team to a higher-division team. No more than 2 players can move from a higher-division team to a lower one.
- A player can only play in one team per week in the same age group, including finals.
- After 6 matches in a higher-division team, a player cannot play in a lower-division team for the rest of the year, including finals. Byes do not count as a game.
- In finals, a player can qualify for 2 teams but can play only one finals match per week in an age group.

## 8.5 Questions about selection

1. Talk to the relevant Coaching Co-ordinator or age group coordinator.
2. If it is still unresolved, talk to the Senior and Youth Football Director.
3. The Senior and Youth Football Director's decision on selection is final, and the Club will not enter into further discussion on that selection decision.

This does not limit anyone's right to report a conduct or child safety concern under Part 10.

# Part 9. Playing policy: game time

**Values in action.** Belonging, Commitment and Development: every Shark deserves coaching, opportunities to participate and a chance to improve. Coaches should apply game-time targets fairly, plan rotations thoughtfully and support development across the season. Commitment includes attendance and effort, while decisions must still account for safety, eligibility, team needs and the limits stated in this policy.

### Where this fits

**Constitution:** The Senior and Junior Committees run football operations, including team administration, within Board policy and budget (rules 73, 73A, 73B and 75). The Committees liaise with the Senior and Youth Football Director on coaching philosophies and game plans (rules 73A(e) and 73B(f)).

**Code of Conduct:** Section 9.5 summarises game time for families, and section 5.2 sets out what coaches must do.

## 9.1 Game time targets

Coaches make every endeavour to meet these minimums. They are goals, not a legal guarantee, because injuries, numbers and attendance vary.

| Age group | Home and away games | Finals |
|---|---|---|
| Under 8 to Under 10 | No limit on squad size, but we aim for teams of around 18 to 20 for more game time. A roster may be used if a team has more than 24 players. With 24 players, every endeavour for 3 quarters per game (including the Lightning Carnival). With fewer than 24, 4-quarter opportunities are spread evenly over the season. | Not covered by this policy. |
| Under 11 to Under 13 | No limit on squad size. A roster may be used at the coach's discretion if a team has more than 24 players. With 24 or fewer, at least 3 quarters per game. With fewer than 24, 4-quarter opportunities are spread evenly. | Every qualified player with reasonable training attendance is selected, with unlimited numbers. At least 2 quarters each. |
| Under 14 to Under 18 | No limit on squad size. A roster may be used at the coach's discretion if a team has more than 24 players. At least 2 quarters per game. | Every qualified player with reasonable training attendance can be selected, with unlimited numbers. More than 24 on the day is at the coach's discretion. At least 1 quarter each. |

## 9.2 Rules that apply to every age group

- Coaches may take training attendance, attitude, behaviour and willingness to listen and learn into account as an incentive for more or less game time.
- In Under 8 to Under 10, players are rotated through the back line, midfield and forward line over 2 to 3 weeks.
- From Under 11, coaches may use their discretion where a player's physical capability limits the positions they can play in finals.

# Part 10. Complaints and incident reporting

**Values in action.** Respect and Leadership: speaking up is part of keeping our Club safe and strong. We listen without intimidation, respond promptly, protect privacy and apply fair process to everyone involved. Leadership means acting on concerns rather than ignoring them; Respect means no retaliation, gossip or prejudgment. Child safety concerns and legal reporting obligations must never be delayed by informal resolution.

### Where this fits

**Constitution:** Disciplinary action against a member is under Division 2 (rules 21 to 26). Disputes between members, or between a member and the Board or the Club, are under Division 3 (rules 27 to 31).

**Code of Conduct:** Section 10 sets out the full incident process for members, section 11 covers non-

members, and section 12 covers outcomes.

## 10.1 Our approach

We deal with complaints sensitively, consistently, fairly and confidentially. A complaint can be about an act, behaviour, omission, situation or decision that someone believes is unfair, unjustified, unlawful or a breach of the Code of Conduct or these policies. It can be raised informally or formally.

## 10.2 Who to tell

- **Emergency:** call 000.
- **Child safety or wellbeing:** the Child Safety Officer, straight away.
- **Anything else:** the Club Secretary, or your team manager or age group coordinator, who must pass it on to the Club Secretary within 2 business days.
- If the complaint is about the CSO, or about SMJFL staff, report it to the SMJFL Child Safety Officer.
- Use the Club's Incident Reporting Form where you can.
- Grievances should go through the Club Secretary rather than being broadcast or criticised publicly. Disputes between members, or with the Board or the Club, follow rules 28 and 29: the parties must first try to resolve the dispute between themselves within 14 days of it coming to the attention of each party. If they cannot, within 10 days they must notify the Board through the Club Secretary, agree to or request a mediator, and try mediation in good faith.

## 10.3 Three ways to resolve a complaint

1. **Self-resolution:** if you feel comfortable, speak directly to the person and ask them to stop. This can work where they did not realise the impact of their behaviour.
2. **Informal help:** if you are not sure how to handle it, or it continues, talk confidentially to the CSO or Club Secretary. They can suggest options, refer you to a mediator, act as a support person, speak privately to the other person for you, or report to authorities where the law requires. Informal resolution is not available for child safety matters or serious misconduct.
3. **Formal complaint:** if informal steps have not worked or are not suitable, lodge a complaint using the Incident Reporting Form.

## 10.4 Everyone's rights

| The person who complained has the right to… | The person complained about has the right to… |
|---|---|
| Have the complaint investigated and, if needed, conciliated | Natural justice |
| Support or representation if requested | Support or representation if requested |
| Speak without intimidation | Not be discriminated against |
| Discontinue the complaint | Not be treated unfairly, harshly or unreasonably |
| Have the situation fixed | Not be the subject of unfounded discussion |
| Privacy | Privacy |

## 10.5 Formal complaints

A formal complaint can include any of these steps:

1. Record the full details and what outcome the complainant wants.
2. Put the complaint to the person it is about and ask for their side.
3. Decide whether there is enough information to decide if it happened.
4. Decide what further action to take, which can include appointing an investigator, referring to mediation, or referring to Police or another authority.

## 10.6 How it connects to the Rules

- Child safety matters go to the CSO first. Any process started by VAFA, SMJFL or Police is followed until it is complete.
- **Disputes (Division 3):** a dispute between a member and another member, the Board or the Club must first be resolved between the parties within 14 days of the dispute coming to the attention of each party (rule 28). If not, within 10 days they must notify the Board (through the Club Secretary), agree to or request a mediator, and try mediation in good faith (rule 29). The mediator does not decide the dispute (rule 30). If mediation fails, the parties may use the Act or the law (rule 31). A grievance cannot be started on a matter that is under a disciplinary procedure until that procedure is finished (rule 27(2)).
- **Discipline (Division 2):** a breach of the Rules by a member, a refusal to support the Club's purposes, or conduct unbecoming of a member or prejudicial to the Club (rule 21) can lead to the Board appointing a disciplinary subcommittee (rule 22). The Club Secretary gives the member written notice 14 to 28 days before the meeting (rule 23), and the member is heard (rule 24). The subcommittee can take no action, reprimand, suspend membership rights or expel, and cannot fine. A suspension or expulsion takes effect immediately.
- **Appeal:** a member who is suspended or expelled can appeal by written notice to the Club Secretary within 7 days of receiving written notice of the decision (rule 25). The suspension or expulsion stays in place unless the Appeal Panel decides otherwise. The Board appoints an Appeal Panel of three unbiased people, none of whom were involved in the original decision, within 21 days of receiving the notice. The appellant and the disciplinary subcommittee are heard, and the panel decides by majority and gives written reasons. Its decision is final, subject to any right of appeal under the rules of the league (rule 26).
- Non-members are dealt with under section 11 of the Code of Conduct. The Rules' disciplinary procedure applies to members only.
- If the internal process does not give a satisfactory outcome, you can go to an outside agency, such as the Equal Opportunity Commission for harassment or discrimination.

## 10.7 Records

The Club Secretary keeps a confidential incident register and the CSO holds child safety records. Records are kept securely and shared only on a need-to-know basis, or as the law or a league requires.

# Part 11. Roles and responsibilities

**Values in action.** Leadership and Commitment: every role helps shape the Club culture. People entrusted with responsibility must model the standards they expect, follow agreed processes, communicate clearly, escalate risks and support others to do their jobs well. Leadership is shown through consistent actions, not title alone.

### Where this fits

**Constitution:** The Board (rules 45 to 52), the Committees (rules 72 to 75) and the Senior and Youth Football Director (rule 76).

**Code of Conduct:** Section 5 sets out the standards for each role.

| Role | Responsible for under these policies |
|---|---|
| Board | Approving and changing these policies, appointing the CSO, appointing the Senior and Youth Football Director and Senior Section coaches (rule 45(4)(g)), managing risk, and appointing a disciplinary subcommittee for serious breaches by members (rule 22). |
| Club Secretary | Receiving and logging incidents, the incident register, keeping the Club's books and documents, including these policies (rule 51(2)(b)), the Register of Members (rules 12(2), 18(2) and 20), and giving the notices required by the Rules (including rule 23). |
| Senior and Junior Committees | Running football within these policies and the budget, reporting to the Board, and escalating serious matters. They cannot make policy. |
| Senior and Youth Football Director | Appointing, managing and training coaches (other than the head coach) and coaching directors, with Committee approval (rule 76); liaising with the Committees on coaching philosophies and game plans; and the final decision on selection questions (see 8.5). |
| Football Operations Manager | Day-to-day operations within Board policy, and passing incidents and risks up promptly. [CONFIRM: staff role, appointed by the Board under rule 45(3)(a).] |
| Child Safety Officer | Receiving and acting on child safety concerns, and advising the Board. |
| Concussion Officer | Supporting concussion and return-to-play processes and keeping records. |
| Coaches and team managers | Following these policies at training and games, running team groups safely, and reporting concerns. |
| Age group coordinators | First contact for team questions, and passing serious matters up. |

# Part 12. Review and record keeping

**Values in action.** Leadership and Development: we keep these policies relevant by listening, learning from incidents and feedback, and improving how the Club operates. Good records, regular review and transparent governance help us remain accountable and build a stronger Club for current and future Sharks.

The Board reviews this document at least every year. The child safety policy is also reviewed every two years with input from children, parents, carers, staff and volunteers.

- The Club Secretary keeps these policies with the Club's other documents (rule 51(2)(b)). Members can inspect Club documents on request, subject to the Board's limits (rules 51(2)(c) and 84).
- Changes are advised to members by the Board by the means it decides, and the Club takes reasonable steps to distribute them. All changes bind members (rule 87(3) and (4)).
- The current version is published on the Club website and linked from PlayHQ registration.

| Version | Date | Approved by | Summary |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1.0 draft | [date] | Board resolution [date] | Consolidates the Club's earlier separate policies into one document. |
| 1.5 working copy | Nov 2026 | Not yet approved | Aligned to the SGM draft Rules dated 4 November 2026 (rules renumbered; class names, football director title, discipline and appeal updated). |

# Schedule 1. Policies this document replaces

These earlier policies are replaced by this document and by the Code of Conduct once the Board adopts them. Until then they continue as Regulations (rule 98(5)).

| Earlier policy | Where it now sits |
|---|---|
| Behaviour Policy for Players and Parents (April 2018) | Code of Conduct, sections 3 and 5; Part 10 |
| Child Safe Policy (March 2018) | Part 2 |
| Child Safety Code of Conduct (March 2018) | Code of Conduct, sections 4 and 5; Part 2 |
| Coaches Code of Conduct, Juniors (revised February 2018) | Code of Conduct, section 5.2 |
| Club Official Code of Conduct (2017) | Code of Conduct, section 5.4 |
| Alcohol Management Policy (May 2018) | Part 3 |
| Safe Transport Club Policy (May 2018) | Part 3, section 3.6 |
| Smoke Free Policy (May 2018) | Part 4 |
| Social Media Guidelines for Club Managed Groups (June 2020) | Part 5 |
| Heat Policy, Juniors (February 2017) | Part 6, section 6.1 |
| Concussion (SMJFL policy, linked from the Club website) | Part 6, section 6.3 |
| Minimum Age Policy (November 2019) | Part 7, sections 7.1 and 7.2 |
| Playing Within Age Groups Policy | Part 7, section 7.3 |
| Team Selection Policy (revised January 2016) | Part 8 |
| Playing Policy, Juniors (updated August 2024) | Part 9 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Incident Reporting Procedure, Child Safety Standard 5 (2018) | Part 10 |
| Risk Management Policy | Risk approaches appear in Parts 2, 3 and 6. Full text to be confirmed by the Board. |