



Force Elite Academy Pty Ltd

Child Safe Policy 2023

Children and young people have a right to be safe and protected at all times, including when accessing services in the community. Both the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017 (Safety Act) and the Children's Protection Act 1993 requires a broad range of government and non-government organizations to provide child safe environments.

Child safe environments are safe and friendly settings where children and young people are protected. They feel respected, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential.

Force Elite Academy (FEA),

- take a preventative, proactive and participatory stance on child protection issues
- value and embrace the opinions and views of children and young people
- assist children and young people to build skills that will assist them to participate in society
- are focused on the protection of children and young people and take action to protect them from harm.

1. Purpose

- 1.1. FEA is committed to ensuring that children and young people who participate in its activities have a safe and happy experience. FEA supports and respects children, young people, staff, volunteers, parents and visitors.
- 1.2 The aim of FEA's Child Safe Policy (the Policy) is to protect the safety of children in our care and prevent abuse from occurring, and in the event that allegations are raised in relation to child abuse, to ensure that the allegations are properly addressed. All complaints will be treated seriously and fully investigated and handled with maximum confidentiality and discretion
- 1.3 This Policy applies to all FEA members, students, parents, staff, management, contractors and visitors. It is FEAs goal to continually maintain a positive environment throughout all FEA facilities. It is up to all FEA members, students, parents, staff and management to work together to achieve this goal.

2. Commitment to the Safety of Children and Young People.

- 2.1. FEA pride ourselves on creating an environment and a culture that can help girls and boys of all ages flourish in the sport they love. This includes protecting members' privacy, promoting positive behaviours and attitudes, protecting the health safety and wellbeing of members, particularly children while acting in the best interests of children in the sport.
- 2.2. This policy complies with the child safe environments provisions of the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017*

- 2.3. Children and young people are valued, respected and encouraged and the safety and protection of children and young people is always our first priority.
- 2.4. FEA has a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and is committed to promoting and protecting children from abuse and neglect to the greatest extent possible. All children have equal rights to protection from child abuse, regardless of their sex, religion, disability or sexual orientation etc.
- 2.5. Child protection is a shared responsibility between FEA, its employees, workers, contractors, parents/guardians, coaches, spectators, volunteers and FEA members. Everyone that participates in FEA's services, classes, programs or events are responsible for the care and protection of children, and reporting information about child abuse.
- 2.6. FEA supports the active participation from children and young people, it listens to their views and respects their views especially when a decision will directly effect them.
- 2.7. FEA promotes fairness and consideration for all staff, volunteers, athletes and visitors.

3. Scope

- 3.1. This policy applies to all FEA members, students, parents, staff, management, contractors and visitors.
- 3.2. All FEA staff will abide by these policies and sign off in writing to FEA's Child Safe Code of Conduct.
- 3.3. This policy will continue to apply to a person or member following the cessation of there membership or employment with FEA.

4. Definitions

- 4.1. **Child** means a person involved in the activities of FEA (including athletes) and under the age of 18 years unless otherwise stated under the law applicable to the child.
- 4.2. **Child protection** means any responsibility, measure or activity undertaken to safeguard children from harm. 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 offence 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.
- 4.3. **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, coaches, principals, registered psychologists, nurses, doctors and midwives.

5. Code of Conduct

- 5.1. The Code of Conduct aims to protect children and reduce any opportunities for abuse or harm to occur. It also helps staff and volunteers by providing them with guidance on how to best support children and how to avoid or better manage difficult situations. This Code of Conduct applies to all people involved in Force Elite Academy Pty Ltd activities, including staff, athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers and parents.
- 5.2. Force Elite Academy Pty Ltd Child Safe Code of Conduct can be found here → [2022 Child Safe Code of Conduct](#)
- 5.3. If a person is concerned about an immediate risk to a child's safety, the person must phone "000" as soon as practicable.

6. Recruitment Practises

- 6.1. All coaches and volunteers over the age of 14 are required to possess a valid Department of Human Services (DHS) working with children's check to be involved with FEA.
- 6.2. All FEA staff undergo the following recruitment strategies
 - 6.2.1. Clear position descriptions
 - 6.2.2. Face to face interviews
 - 6.2.3. Referee checks
 - 6.2.4. Written applications
 - 6.2.5. On the job observation
 - 6.2.6. Qualification checks
 - 6.2.7. Probationary periods
- 6.3. FEA meets the requirements of Section 8B of the *Children's Protection act 1993* and all employees and volunteers have a relevant history assessment by FEA management.

7. Supervision, Training and support for Employees and Volunteers

- 7.1. FEA has in place strategies to supervise, train and support employees and volunteers. Strategies can include but not limited to
 - 7.1.1. Staff induction which includes this policy
 - 7.1.2. Performance appraisals

7.1.3. Supervision sessions that include a focus on child protection

7.1.4. Appointed child safety officer

7.1.5. Access to resources about issues concerning child protection

7.1.6. Receive professional development to build knowledge and skills regarding the wellbeing and development of children and young people.

8. Recognising and Reporting Child Abuse

8.1. A person may, while participating in the sport or other activities associated with FEA or carrying out their work, form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from child abuse.

8.2. If a person is concerned about an immediate risk to a child's safety, the person must phone "000" as soon as practicable

8.3. Child abuse can be divided into four categories:

8.3.1. **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.

8.3.2. **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.

8.3.3. **Emotional and 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

8.3.4. **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

8.4 Mandatory Reporters

8.4.1 Select classes of people in the community (including teachers, nurses and doctors) are required by law to report to the Department for Child Protection (DCP) where they have formed a belief, on reasonable grounds, that a child is in need of protection because they have suffered (or are likely to suffer) significant harm due to physical or sexual abuse.

8.4.2 This report must be made as soon as practicable, and after each occasion where he or she becomes aware of a further reasonable ground for the belief.

8.5 Reasonable grounds for belief

8.5.1 A reasonable belief is formed if a reasonable person believes that:

- 8.5.1.1 the child is in need of protection;
 - 8.5.1.2 the child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm as a result of physical or sexual injury; and
 - 8.5.1.3 the child's parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child
- 8.5.2 To form a reasonable belief, you should consider and objectively assess all the relevant facts, such as the source of the allegation and how it was communicated, the nature of and details of the allegation, and whether there are any other related matters known regarding the alleged perpetrator.
- 8.5.3 A 'reasonable belief' or a 'belief on reasonable grounds' is not the same as having proof, but is more than mere rumour or speculation.
- 8.5.4 You will have reasonable grounds to notify if:
- 8.5.4.1 a child states that they have been physically or sexually abused;
 - 8.5.4.2 a child states that they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves);
 - 8.5.4.3 someone who knows a child states that the child has been physically or sexually abused;
 - 8.5.4.4 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
 - 8.5.4.5 signs of abuse lead to a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused

8.6 Voluntary Reporters

- 8.6.1 In addition to the mandatory reporting obligations above, any person who believes on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from any form of child abuse, may disclose that information to the Police or DCP.
- 8.6.2 See attached FEA Action Plan on Child Abuse

8.7 Reporting Child Sexual Abuse

- 8.7.1 Reporting and responding to suspicion that a child or young person may be at risk
Child Abuse Report Line 13 14 78
- 8.7.2 Mandated notifiers have a legal obligation to notify CARL as soon as practicable if they suspect on reasonable grounds that a child is, or may be at risk.

- 8.7.3 Child protection is everybody's responsibility and all members of FEA are supported and encouraged to report the suspicion that a child or young person is, or may be at risk regardless of whether they are legally obligated to.

8.8 Responding to complaints about a person involved with FEA

- 8.8.1 FEA will deal with all complaints promptly, sensitively and fairly and reinforcing that the paramount concern is always the safety and protection of children and young people.
- 8.8.2 Everyone involved with FEA must immediately report any concern or complaint relating to the behaviour or conduct of another person towards or affecting a child or young person.

8.9 FEA Approach to Reports of Abuse

- 8.9.1 FEA supports and encourages a person to make a report to the Police, DCP or Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) 131 478, if they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection, or they are concerned about the safety, health or wellbeing of a child.
- 8.9.2 Any person that makes a report in good faith in accordance with their reporting obligations (whether mandatory or discretionary) will be supported by FEA, and will not be penalised by FEA for making the report.
- 8.9.3 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 may speak to the FEA Directors for guidance and information. If in doubt, ask for assistance
- 8.9.4 If an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, FEA will follow the reporting procedure and take all steps to ensure that the safety of the child is paramount. An initial step will involve the withdrawal of the accused person from active duty, which could entail standing down, reassignment to a role without direct contact with children, working under closer supervision during an investigation, working from home, or any other measures deemed appropriate depending on the seriousness of the allegation.
- 8.9.5 FEA will investigate allegations of inappropriate conduct against a child in accordance with procedural fairness and will handle the allegations in a confidential manner to the greatest extent possible.
- 8.9.6 FEA will cooperate with the directions of the Police and/or DCP in relation to any investigation conducted by these authorities.
- 8.9.7 FEA will keep a register of any allegations regarding inappropriate conduct.

9 Roles and Responsibilities of Personnel Protecting Children

9.1 Personnel involved in protecting children include the Directors, staff and volunteers within FEA. Those people have responsibilities in relation to protection of children and are expected to:

- 9.1.1 understand the rights of children, as appropriate to their role;
- 9.1.2 respect the cultural and religious practices of families who access FEA's services, programs or events;
- 9.1.3 understand and appropriately respond to the needs of children with developmental delays or disabilities
- 9.1.4 appropriately act on any concerns raised by children;
- 9.1.5 understand the definitions, indicators and impact of child abuse:
- 9.1.6 know and follow regulations in relation to the care of children;
- 9.1.7 co-operate with police and/or other formal investigations to the best of their ability;
and
- 9.1.8 not harm or exploit children who access FEA's services, programs or events

10 Risk management

10.1 Travel – General

10.1.1. All team members over 18 years of age retain an overriding responsibility for the welfare of all athletes they accompany during team travel activities. They have a 'duty of care' for athletes and they must meet that duty and avoid unaccompanied and unobserved activities with persons less than 18 years of age wherever possible. For the avoidance of doubt this requirement does not apply to parents/legal guardians when in a room with their child.

10.2. Sexual Relationships while on tour.

10.2.1. During all team travel activities officials must not, under any circumstances engage in conduct of a sexual nature with an athlete.

10.2.2. Improper conduct of a sexual nature by an official towards an athlete includes any form of child sexual abuse as well as but not limited to the following:

- 10.2.2.1. inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature;
- 10.2.2.2. obscene language of a sexual nature;
- 10.2.2.3. suggestive remarks or actions;
- 10.2.2.4. jokes of a sexual nature;
- 10.2.2.5. obscene gestures;

- 10.2.2.6. unwarranted and inappropriate touching;
- 10.2.2.7. sexual exhibitionism;
- 10.2.2.8. use of any device to show/watch offensive material; and
- 10.2.2.9. any other action that could lead to an athlete being physically, emotionally or psychologically harmed

10.3. Adults under investigation

- 10.3.1. Adults under investigation in relation to a matter involving child abuse, or any matter which has the potential to jeopardise their Working with Children Check (WWCC) status may be prohibited, by FEA Management, from participating in all FEA services ,programs or events.

10.4. Coach Assistance

- 10.4.1. All coaches must ensure that all physical contact with athletes which occurs when coaching is appropriate for the situation and necessary for the athlete's safety. It is strongly recommended that:

- 10.4.1.1. coaches ensure that there are other adults, staff member or supervisor present whenever coaching in a group or individual;
- 10.4.1.2. coaches take care to explain the procedure to the child prior to beginning any physical contact; and
- 10.4.1.3 coaches obtain consent from the athlete prior to beginning any physical contact.

11. Policy Breaches

- 11.1. It is a breach of this policy for any person or FEA to which this policy applies, to have been found to have done anything contrary to this policy. Any person who may breach this policy is subject to instant dismissal

12. Policy Communication

- 12.1. This policy will be emailed to all FEA members, safe and volunteers and can be requested at anytime.
- 12.2. This policy will be communicated to all staff, via staff meeting and hard copy stored in coaches folders.

13. Review Process

- 13.1. This Policy will be reviewed by FEA on an annual basis

