

# **BOWLS TARANAKI CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

## **TITLE:**

Child Protection Policy

## **POLICY RATIONALE:**

- The welfare of children is the primary concern.
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, socioeconomic status, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from all forms of harm and abuse.
- Children have the right to express views on all matters which affect them, should they wish to do so.
- Bowls Taranaki will work in partnership together with children, staff, volunteers and representatives to promote the welfare, health and development of children.

## **SCOPE:**

- All Staff, Volunteers and Representatives of Bowls Taranaki must abide by this policy.

## **KEY DEFINITIONS FOR THIS POLICY:**

- A child is defined as a person under the age of 18.
- Abuse is any action which can cause harm or is likely to cause harm to a child and can be physical or emotional.
- Staff are those employed by Bowls Taranaki.
- Volunteers are those that undertake specific roles or duties for Bowls Taranaki programmes or sessions.
- Representatives are players or administrators of Bowls Taranaki (and for the purposes of this policy includes any child representatives' parents).

## **POLICY:**

### **Aims of the Policy:**

- Bowls Taranaki will promote the health and welfare of children by providing opportunities for them to take part in the sport of lawn bowls safely.
- Respecting and promoting the rights, wishes and feelings of children.
- Promoting and implementing appropriate procedures to safeguard the well-being of children and protect them from abuse.
- Recruiting, training, supporting and supervising Staff and Volunteers to adopt safe working practice to safeguard and protect children from abuse and to reduce risk to themselves.
- Requiring Staff, Representatives and Volunteers to adopt and abide by this Child Protection Policy and these procedures.
- Responding to any allegations of misconduct or abuse of children in line with this Policy and these procedures.
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating the implementation of this Policy and these procedures.

### **Safe Working Practice**

Bowls Taranaki expect all Staff, Volunteers and Representatives to demonstrate exemplary behaviour when working with children in order to protect children from abuse and themselves from being put in a compromising situation.

Bowls Taranaki requires Staff and Volunteers to adopt a safe working practice, which includes:

- Work in an open environment avoiding private or unobserved situations.
- Staff and Volunteers are to, where possible; keep their personal lives separate from their professional lives at Bowls Taranaki.
- No Staff or Volunteer or Member to have an intimate relationship with a child.
- Be an excellent role model and treat children with respect at all times.
- Attend relevant training courses that are provided.
- Representatives are to inform Bowls Taranaki in a confidential manner of any existing relationships or situations or potential relationships or situations that could constitute a conflict of interest, or place the Staff, Volunteers, Representatives and/or Bowls Taranaki in a position of compromise.
- All information is to be shared in a discreet and appropriate manner to protect the information and interests of the child.
- No Representative of Bowls Taranaki is to consume drugs or alcohol, or be under the influence of drugs or alcohol while coaching, assisting, working, or supervising a child or children
- Appropriate clothing is to be worn at all times.

### **Bowls Taranaki will:**

- Require Representatives of Bowls Taranaki to undertake an alcohol or drug test if there is reasonable cause to believe that person is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Take immediate action in respect to any breach of this Policy by Representatives and this may include disciplinary action or termination of a Staff's employment or a Volunteer's service if necessary.

### **RESPONSE TO A DISCLOSURE**

If a child makes disclosure of abuse then Representatives should:

- Tell the child that s/he is right to share what has happened; and that s/he is not responsible for what has happened.
- Take what the child says seriously.
- Keep questions to a minimum and never interrogate.
- Not interrupt the child when they are recalling significant events.
- Reassure the child that the problem can be dealt with.
- Not give assurances of confidentiality, which cannot be kept but reassure the child that the information will only be passed on to those people who need to know.
- Make a full record of what is said and done, BUT do not delay in reporting the problem.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

- Representatives are expected to keep all information obtained through their role at Bowls Taranaki about children and their families in confidence.

## **PROCEDURES:**

### **Employment/Recruitment:**

Prior to commencement of employment with Bowls Taranaki:

- Bowls Taranaki to undertake a referee check of at least two referees. Such references to be confirmed through telephone contact.
- Be required to produce evidence of identity.
- Bowls Taranaki will undertake a police background check of all representatives before placing them in a position where they are, or may be, responsible for the care of a child.
- Bowls Taranaki will ensure an adequate induction process is undertaken for all representatives of the Bowls Taranaki and such induction will include providing copies of this Policy

During service:

- Bowls Taranaki will ensure that the police background check is updated every 3 years for all representatives.
- Bowls Taranaki will provide supervision and training via Bowls New Zealand coaching registration, qualifications and courses whenever possible.

### **Reporting Procedures**

If Representatives observe or hear anything of concern in relation to the welfare of a child then the following process must be followed:

- make a written record of the concerning disclosure/event which should include dates, times and accurate information and factual concerns or observations.
- report the concerning event/disclosure immediately to the Chair of Bowls Taranaki who will take appropriate action, which may include liaising with Oranga Tamariki or the NZ Police.
- If the matter needs urgent attention then it may be appropriate for the Staff, Volunteer or Member concerned to directly make contact with the duty Social Worker for Oranga Tamariki or seek advice from the NZ Police.
- Once the Chair has received a report there may be one or more of these three processes that need to take place:
  - A child protection investigation
  - A criminal investigation
  - Action by Bowls Taranaki to remove or discipline the person concerned
- It is important that these are properly co-ordinated and that events are managed in the right order. For this reason, Bowls Taranaki will obtain expert advice where necessary.

### **Record Keeping/Information Protection**

- Any information regarding child protection issues will be stored in a secure place and access to this information will be very limited to just a few key people on the board of the Bowls Taranaki.
- All information/records in respect of child protection issues will be retained in a secure location by the Bowls Taranaki for 10 years.

### **Review**

- This policy is to be circulated to all Bowls Taranaki board members on an annual basis and will be formally reviewed every three years.

**Policy Date:** 30/07/2025

**Review Date:** 30/07/2028