

Manawatu Water Polo Incorporated

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Manawatu Water Polo Incorporated (the Club) is committed to providing an environment for children that is safe, free from harassment and abuse, and promotes respectful and positive behaviour and values.

This policy outlines the Club's commitment to child protection. It recognises the important role and responsibilities of volunteers, all our committee members, officials, contractors, and volunteers in the protection of children. It includes the Club expectations for when child abuse is reported or suspected. This policy will provide a guide for what to do should this occur.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Maintain a safe environment for children involved in the Club.
- Guide children and young people in the Club who need to seek guidance if they observe or experience any form of abuse.
- Provide guidance to those who have concerns around the wellbeing and safety of children and young people.
- Provide administrators, officials, volunteers, and parents/supporters with good practice information about protecting children in the Club.

WHO THIS POLICY APPLIES TO

This policy applies to the following people when under the jurisdiction of the Club:

- Persons appointed or elected to the Club committee and its sub-committees
- Employees and volunteers of the Club
- Support personnel appointed or elected to the Club teams and squads (both volunteers and paid persons) e.g. Referees, managers, sports trainers, etc.
- Coaches and assistant coaches
- All athletes who are members of the Club
- Parents, guardians and spectators at the Club events, functions, or trainings

RESPONSIBILITIES OF MANAWATU WATER POLO INCORPORATED

The Club will:

- Always promote and model appropriate standards of behaviour and promote this policy to whom this policy applies. This policy will be on Manawatu Water Polo Club's website for all to access

- Ensure that a copy of this policy is available or accessible to the persons and associations to whom this policy applies
- Promote and model appropriate standards of behaviour at all times
- Promptly deal with any observed or reported signs of abuse or disclosures, breaches or complaints made under this policy in a sensitive, fair, timely and confidential manner
- Apply this policy consistently
- Monitor and review this policy from time to time as appropriate on an annual basis or whenever timely

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Individuals bound by this policy are responsible for:

- Making themselves aware of this policy and complying with its standards of behaviour
- Placing the safety and welfare of children above other considerations
- Being accountable for their own behaviour
- Following the procedures outlined in this policy regarding child protection concerns
- Cooperating in providing an environment that supports the protection of children

CHILD PROTECTION

The Club has a responsibility to ensure that appropriate policies and procedures are established to safeguard all children from any threat of or form of abuse or harassment while participating in any aspect of our sport under their control. The policies/procedures promote action on suspicion of abuse and neglect either outside or inside the organisation. For the purpose of this Child Protection Policy, children are defined as under 17 years of age, in accordance with the Ministry for Vulnerable Children Oranga Tamariki's (MVCOT) description of a child or young person as being under the age of 17 years.

The Club aims to foster an environment within the sport that ensures the safety and wellbeing of all children. An awareness of the Child Protection Policy amongst all involved with children and young people in water polo also assists in reducing risk to our club. Coaches, officials, volunteers, and parents/supporters shall always establish and maintain appropriate professional boundaries in their relationships with children in water polo.

In the situation whereby parents/caregivers of the Club member/child are in a parental dispute over a child, or where an allegation of child abuse has taken place, the Club must have an official third party (i.e.. lawyer, MVCOT, Police or the Courts) confirmation to withhold or exclude information from either parent/caregiver at either parent/caregiver's request. The third-party does not need to disclose the specific nature of the child safety concern.

DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply to this policy:

Abuse – the harming (whether physically, emotionally, or sexually), ill-treatment, neglect or deprivation of any child

Neglect – the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical or psychological needs, leading to adverse or impaired physical or emotional functioning or development

Club committee and officials – elected members of the Club committee and coaches, managers, referees, and roles appointed by the Club committee such as uniform co-ordinator, equipment co-ordinator, etc.

Child – any child or young person aged under 17 years and who is not married or in a civil union

Child protection – activities carried out to ensure that children are safe in cases where there is suspected abuse or neglect or the risk of abuse or neglect

Designated person for child protection – the manager/supervisor or designated person responsible for providing advice and support to club committee and officials where they have a concern about an individual child or who want advice about the child protection policy

Disclosure – the information given to club committee and officials by the child, parent, or caregiver or third party in relation to abuse or neglect

Ministry for Vulnerable Children Oranga Tamariki (MVCOT) – the agency responsible for investigating and responding to suspected abuse and neglect and for providing a statutory response to children found to need care and protection

New Zealand Police – the agency responsible for responding to situations where a child is in immediate danger and for working with the Ministry for Vulnerable Children in child protection work, including investigating cases of abuse or neglect where an offence may have occurred

Children’s services – any organisation that provides services to children or to adults where contact with children may be part of the service. These organisations should have child protection policies. Organisations that provide services to adults who may be caring for or parenting children should also consider developing a policy, e.g., adult mental health and addiction services

Safer recruitment – following good practice processes for pre-employment checking or volunteer screening which help manage the risk of unsuitable persons entering the children’s workforce or sport and recreation activity

Standard safety checking – the process of safer recruitment that will be mandatory for organisations covered by the Vulnerable Children Act 2014

Workforce restriction – a restriction on the employment or engagement of people with certain specified convictions under the Vulnerable Children Act 2014

Children’s workforce/children’s workers – people who work with children, or who have regular contact with children, as part of their roles

Police vetting – the process of screening club committee members, officials, and volunteers to ensure there are no convictions or concerns that should exclude them from interaction with children

Physical abuse – any acts that may result in the physical harm of a child or young person. It can be, but is not limited to bruising, cutting, hitting, beating, biting, burning, causing abrasions, strangulation, suffocation, drowning, poisoning and fabricated or induced illness.

Sexual abuse – any acts that involve forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether they are aware of what is happening. Sexual abuse can be, but is not limited to:

- Contact abuse: touching breasts, genital/anal fondling, masturbation, oral sex, penetrative or non-penetrative contact with the anus or genitals, encouraging the child to perform such acts on the perpetrator or another, involvement of the child in activities for the purposes of pornography or prostitution
- Non-contact abuse: exhibitionism, voyeurism, exposure to pornographic or sexual imagery, inappropriate photography, or depictions of sexual or suggestive behaviours or comments.

Emotional abuse – any act or omission that results in adverse or impaired psychological, social, intellectual, and emotional functioning or development. This can include:

- Patterns of isolation, degradation, constant criticism, or negative comparison to others. Isolating, corrupting, exploiting, or terrorising a child can also be emotional abuse.
- Exposure to family/whānau or intimate partner violence.

Neglect – neglect is the most common form of abuse, and although the effects may not be as obvious as physical abuse, it is just as serious. Neglect can be:

- Physical (not providing the necessities of life, like a warm place, food, and clothing)
- Emotional (not providing comfort, attention, and love)
- Neglectful supervision (leaving children without someone safe looking after them)
- Medical neglect (not taking care of health needs)
- Educational neglect (allowing chronic truancy, failure to enrol in education or inattention to education needs).

PRACTICE GUIDELINES

Good practice amongst coaches, officials and volunteers means:

- The safety and wellbeing of children/young people must be always paramount
- Athletes are treated with dignity and respect
- Always working in an open environment avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication
- At camps or 'away' competitions, coaches, managers, volunteers, etc. should not enter children's rooms or invite children/young people into their room (other than the child's own parents/caregivers) in the absence of other children or other adults
- At camps or 'away' competitions, it is recommended that team managers have an awareness of how to safeguard children in water polo
- Concerns regarding protection children/young people are referred and dealt with according to the steps within this policy
- Securing parental consent in writing to act in loco parentis, if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and and/or other medical treatment
- Ensuring any form of abuse or sexual harassment directed at a child from others, whether this is from another child or adult, is challenged and referred to NZWP, MVCOT or Police
- Knowing and understanding the Child Protection Policy
- Where a coach believes it is necessary to use touch with an athlete to correct or demonstrate technique, it is important that they:
 - Ensure the child is made aware of the purpose of the contact and gives consent and/or
 - Consider the appropriateness of the ways in which technique is corrected involving touch
 - Ensure this is not conducted in an isolated environment

All coaches, officials and volunteers must ensure:

- They never take, or are in the presence of, children/young people in secluded places where they will be alone, irrespective of gender
- They do not share a room with a child other than their own
- They never use inappropriate language or allow other children to use inappropriate language unchallenged (e.g., innuendo, sexualised connotations, culturally or racially offensive comments)
- They never cause an athlete to lose self-esteem by humiliating or undermining the individual
- They never make sexually suggestive comments or actions to or in the vicinity of a child/young person, even in fun
- They never engage in rough, physically, or sexually provocative games
- They never engage in or allow unchallenged, any form of abuse or sexual harassment as described in this policy

The relationship between coaches/officials who hold a position of trust and responsibility with athletes, particularly, but not limited to those under 17 years, must be always professional and appropriate.

Please note: It is the responsibility of the parent/caregivers to ensure their children are not left alone at a training or competition venue without adult supervision. The exception to this is when a team is at an 'away competition/tour' and an adult such as the team manager is acting as loco parentis on behalf of the Club.

HANDLING CONCERNS / DISCLOSURES

As a trusting adult, disclosures of abuse or sexual harassment may be made to you by the person affected or another person, or you may directly observe concerning behaviour. The following is a guide to handling disclosures or concerning observations:

- If you have observed behaviour by another person to a child that causes you concern, firstly ensure the child is not in immediate danger. You do not have to discuss this with the child/young person but can contact the Club Captain in the first instance, MVCOT or the Police to seek advice.
- At any time, you can report concerns to the Club Captain, MVCOT or the Police. Your referral to these agencies may be anonymous
- At any time, you can bypass the Club and go directly to MVCOT or the Police if you have any child safety concerns
- Any investigation into the nature of the concern must only be managed by an external statutory agency. Your role is not to investigate but to gather information and pass it on to a statutory agency like MVCOT/Police. Please contact MVCOT or the Police should this need arise.

TAKING IMAGES OF CHILDREN

Images or videos of children can be used inappropriately or illegally. Any device that can take/record images or videos is included in this policy, including the use of telescopic or zoom lens and mobile phones. Vigilance is encouraged to ensure the use of photography or video with children is appropriate.

It is possible for images or video to be taken with any device without the knowledge of the subject. the Club requires all its members to be vigilant in changing rooms and other areas of the pool and to report immediately

any concerns arising from the taking or recording of images or video. The Club prohibits the use of camera phones, videos and cameras inside changing areas, showers, and toilets. The use of these devices in these areas will always result in an investigation.

Always be vigilant about people who don't appear to be relatives or friends of those who are playing water polo but seem to spend a lot of time videoing or taking images of them. Report these incidents to the event organisers or the pool management immediately.

Spectators need to exercise caution when recording videos or images that include children who are not their own. Caution is needed when considering uploading these onto any electronic device or website. NZWP recommends that all individuals and associations, wherever possible, obtain permission from a child's parent/guardian when sharing images or videos of a child that is not their own.

When using images of a child, the Club will not display personal information such as residential address, email address or telephone numbers without gaining consent from the parent/guardian. They will not display any information about hobbies, likes/dislikes, school, etc. as this information can be used as grooming tools by paedophiles or other persons.

The exception to this is where:

- Information given to the Club by the player's parents/caregivers for uploading on the player profile, and
- Where a parent/caregiver submits information or images to be uploaded on the athlete's Club player profile on its website or gives consent for the Club to use their own images and player names on their website or Facebook page.

It is important to note that an athlete may be under an external agency's protection order that may not be known to another parent, coach, volunteer, or official photographer. Images of this nature may compromise the safety of the person.

SOCIAL MEDIA / NETWORKING AND THE INTERNET

The Club acknowledges the contribution social networking websites, such as, but not limited to, Facebook and Twitter, make in promoting and celebrating our sport.

We expect all people, bound by this policy to conduct themselves appropriately when using social networking sites to share information related to our sport. Children and young people are some of the biggest users of social media and must also know how to use these platforms appropriately within our sport.

Social media postings, blogs, status updates and tweets:

- Must not use offensive, provocative, or hateful language
- Must not be misleading, false or injure the reputation of another person
- Should respect and maintain the privacy of others

Children & Communications:

Many children and young people communicate using electronic and social networking platforms, of which many modalities are available to them. Ideally, communication should be conducted between the coach/another adult and the parent of the child, however, if you need to communicate directly with the child/athlete, you need to observe the cautions stated below:

The Club recommends the following cautions:

- If coaches/managers use phone text or social networking means to communicate directly with children under the age of 17 years, content should remain brief and directly related to sport, avoiding any social comment, and parents should be copied in
- Any electronic communication by a coach/manager with a child remains professional and relevant
- Do not include personal information of yourself or others in social media channels
- Do not use offensive, provocative, or hateful language or images
- Use your best judgement – do not publish something that makes you feel the slightest bit uncomfortable and never write/publish if you are feeling emotional or upset
- Always ask for a person’s permission before posting their picture on a social networking forum
- Never comment on rumours, do not deny, or affirm them or speculate about rumours, and
- Always use electronic and social network forums to add value which promotes the sport in a positive way

LEGAL / PRIVACY ISSUES

When disclosures or observations of child abuse are made that fall in the remit of this Child Protection Policy, those to whom disclosure is made are required in all circumstances to follow the procedures outlined. All those involved in dealing with issues of Child Protection are required to respect the provisions of confidentiality which relate to their responsibility. The Privacy Act 1993 and the Health Information Privacy Code 1994 authorises disclosure of information necessary to prevent or lessen serious and imminent harm to any individual (to the extent necessary) to statutory social workers or the Police.

The Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 also gives way to privacy under certain circumstances. The Act deals with the reporting of child abuse (Section 15) and protection of an individual from proceedings (disciplinary, civil, and criminal) when disclosing child abuse to either a MVCOT social worker or the Police (Section 16). The Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 states that concerns can be passed on based on a ‘belief’ that abuse/neglect may be occurring.

Upon request in writing, information can or must be released to a MVCOT social worker, police officer or care and protection co-ordinator (Section 66 Oranga Tamariki Act 1989).

SCREENING AND VETTING REQUIREMENTS

Child abusers often seek to work with children. Robust and consistent screening and vetting will help you assess whether people are suitable to work with children.

The following outlines the screening and vetting processes for people in the Club, who work, volunteer, coach, referee, manage, supervise, or have regular unsupervised contact with children under the age of 18 years.

For ALL paid or unpaid coaches, team managers, referees, and committee members aged 18 years or older, the Club is required to:

1. Carry out identity verification – this is where proof is required for people to verify who they say they are, including previous identities

2. Obtain a signed consent form from the applicant for a check of Justice records (often referred to as police vetting)
3. Undertake the check of Justice records
4. This information should be updated and reassessed every three years
5. Protect the privacy of the person who is checked and maintain confidentiality of any information obtained through the checking process, and
6. Return all information or paperwork to the person if they are not appointed

Those who have conviction(s) for child sex offences or violent crimes against children are not permitted to work or volunteer with children affiliated to Manawatu Water Polo Club.

RESPONDING TO A CHILD WHEN THE CHILD DISCLOSES ABUSE

Listen to the child	Disclosures by children are often subtle and need to be handled with care, including an awareness of the child's cultural identity and how that affects interpretation of their behaviour and language.
Reassure the child	Let the child know that they are not in trouble and have done the right thing. While reassuring the child it is important that you do not agree 'not to tell anyone'.
Ask open ended prompts, e.g. "What happened next?"	Do not interview the child (do not ask questions beyond open prompts for the child to continue).
If the child is visibly distressed	Provide appropriate reassurance and engage in appropriate activities under supervision until they can participate in ordinary activities.
If the child is not in immediate danger	Re-involve the child in ordinary activities and explain what you are going to do next.
As soon as possible formally record the disclosure	Record: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word for word, what the child said. • The date, time and who was present

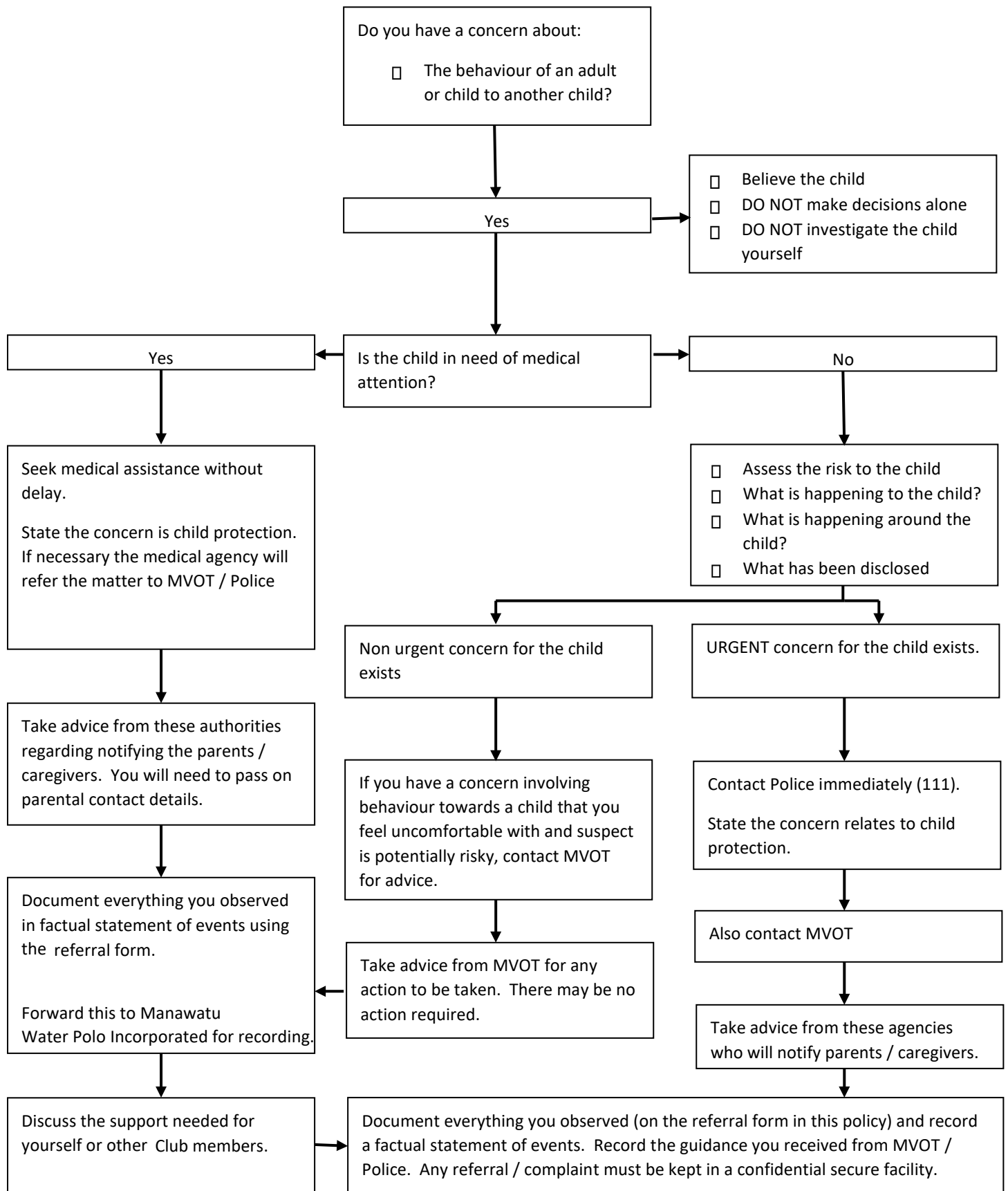
RECORDING AND NOTIFYING MINISTRY FOR VULNERABLE CHILDREN OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

What process to follow	For example	Key considerations
Recording	Formally record: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anything said by the child. • The date, time, location and the names of any staff that may be relevant. • The factual concerns or observations that have led to the suspicion of abuse or neglect (e.g. any physical, behavioural or developmental concerns). • The action taken by your organisation. • Any other information that may be relevant 	Relevant information can inform any future actions
Decision making	Discuss any concern with the manager/supervisor or the designated person for child protection	No decisions should be made in isolation

Notifying authorities	<p>Notify MVCOT promptly if there is a belief that a child has been or is likely to be abused or neglected. A phone call to the National Contact Centre is the preferred initial contact with MVCOT (see below) as this enables both parties to discuss the nature of the concerns and appropriate response options.</p> <p>Phone: 0508 Family (0508 326 459)</p> <p>Email: contact@mvcot.govt.nz</p>	<p>MVCOT will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make the decision to inform the parents or caregivers, in consultation with our organisation. 2. Advise what, if any, immediate action may be appropriate, including referring the concern to the Police
Following the advice of MVCOT	<p>MVCOT advice will include what, if any, immediate action may be appropriate, including referring the concern to the Police</p>	<p>MVCOT is responsible for looking into the situation to find out what may be happening, whether our organisation needs to work with the family/whānau or put them in touch with people in their community who can help</p>

Storing relevant information	<p>Securely store:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The record of the concern. • A record of any related discussions (including copies of correspondence, where appropriate). • A record of any advice received • The action your organisation took, including any rationale. • This concern with any earlier concerns, if the notification is based on an accumulation of concerns (rather than a specific incident). 	<p>Records assist in identifying patterns</p>
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APPENDIX A: RESPONDING TO CHILD SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS



APPENDIX B Record of Complaint

This form is used in association with the flowchart in this policy under 'Responding to Child Safeguarding Concerns'. If kept by Manawatu Water Polo Club, this will be in a secure/locked location.

<p>Complainant's Name</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Over 18</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Under 18</p>	<p>Date Formal Complaint Received:</p>
<p>Complainant's Contact Details</p>	<p>Phone:</p> <p>Email:</p>	
<p>Child's Contact Details (if applicable)</p>	<p>Name:</p> <p>Date of Birth:</p> <p>Address:</p> <p>Name of Parents/Caregivers if known:</p>	

	Name of siblings if known:			
Complainant's Role/Status	<input type="checkbox"/>	Administrator/Volunteer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parent
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Player	<input type="checkbox"/>	Spectator
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Coach/Assistant Coach	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Official		
Name of person complained about (Respondent)	Name:			
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Over 18		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Under 18		
Nature of Complaint (can tick more than one box)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sexual harassment		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sexual		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Verbal Abuse		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Physical Abuse		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Child Abuse		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____		
Date of Alleged Incident				
Location of Alleged Incident	<input type="checkbox"/>	Competition		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Training		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____		
Description of alleged incident. Facts as stated by complainant (do not include opinion or conjecture)				

Please use separate sheet if required.	
Witnesses	Name (1): Contact Details: Name (2): Contact Details: Name (3): Contact Details:
Interim action taken (if any) of attempted information resolution, or to ensure child's safety	
Government Agency contacted (if applicable)	Who: When: Advice Provided:
Complainant	Name: Signature: Date: