



MERNDA JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB

President: Tom Felle

Secretary: Sally Prior

ABN: 32 707 298 648

PO BOX 23 Mernda VIC 3754

www.junior.merndaafc.com.au

Anti-Bullying Policy

It is expected that all members of the Mernda Junior Football Club will endeavour to

- Uphold the dignity and respect of the individual.
- Promote the principle of equal opportunity.
- Refrain from any behaviour that attacks a person's dignity and rights, morale and work effectiveness.

Adhere to this Policy, as any breaches will lead to disciplinary responses by the Committee, additional to any which may be imposed by law.

RATIONALE

- Bullying behaviour strikes at the basis of these values and prevents players reaching for excellence in every dimension of life.
- Bullying affects everyone, not just those directly involved in incidents of bullying. It also affects those who may witness violence, intimidation and the distress of the person being bullied.
- Bullying goes against the very grain of what has made the Mernda Junior Football Club a friendly, family environment that it has achieved. Intimidation and violence have no place in our community and will not be accepted by the Mernda Junior Football Club under any circumstances.

BULLYING. WHAT IS IT?

The most frequently cited definition of bullying is the "repeated oppression, psychological or physical, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group of persons" (Rigby 1996). There are three critical points in this definition:

1. **Power:** Children who bully may acquire power through various means: physical size and strength; status within a peer group; and recruitment within the peer group so as to exclude others.
2. **Frequency:** Bullying is not a random act; it is characterized by its repetitive nature. Because it is repetitive, the children who are bullied not only have to survive the humiliation of the attack itself but live in constant fear of its recurrence.
3. **Intent to harm:** Bullies usually deny any intent to harm others and may not always be fully conscious of the harm they cause. Causing physical and emotional harm however, is usually a deliberate act. It puts the child who is bullied in a position of oppression by the child who bullies.

Bullying is "recipient defined", i.e. "It was only a joke" or "He doesn't mind" is an unacceptable excuse. In many cases of bullying, there are elements of harassment and discrimination on the grounds of 'difference'. The intention of the bully is irrelevant; the important factor is the harm done to the other person.

BULLYING CAN BE.....

- **Physical:** Kicking, punching, pushing, shoving, spitting, fighting, damaging or destroying other people's property, jostling, pinching, touching, or any unwelcome physical intimidation, such as gestures or staring.
- **Verbal:** Offensive or abusive comments, sarcasm, crude jokes and comments, ridiculing appearance, actions or beliefs, obscene or threatening phone calls and emails, teasing or putting other people down (sledging and pay-outs), verbal intimidation, whistling.
- **Social:** Exclusion, spreading rumours, gossip, racial or sexual comments, graffiti and notes about others, emails, SMS and chat rooms.
- **Emotional:** Victimization, instilling fear in others, extortion (forcing other players to hand over money, food or other possessions), forcing other players to do their work.



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RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Within the Mernda Junior Football Club all persons have certain rights. However, along with those rights we also must take responsibility for our own actions.

All persons have the right:

- To feel safe, cared for and respected whilst at the Club.
- To be free from threat and intimidation.
- To an enjoyable day at sport.
- To have a pleasant, healthy and safe environment.

All persons have the responsibility:

- To consider the impact of their actions on others.
- To respect the property and rights of others.
- Not to accept bullying, but to report it.
- To follow the Club's Policies and rules.

All Club officials have the responsibility to:

- Provide a safe, secure learning environment for our members/players.
- Strive to provide an environment free from bullying, harassment, intimidation and abuse.
- Engender a culture where to "ignore" bullying is to condone it.
- To be role models in word and action at all times.
- To follow Club Policy

CLUB RESPONSE TO BULLYING

The Mernda Junior Football Club does not condone bullying or harassment and the following process has been established to help us deal with such unacceptable behaviour should it occur.

Based on the severity of the bullying incident, a person may commence at any stage of the below process.

The Interview process will involve the Child and parents, the Club President, Vice-President and Coach at any of the below Stages and the Secretary will be present to take minutes. Parents will be kept informed at all stages of the process.

Stage 1

When concerns are raised regarding a person being bullied, or responsible for bullying, Coaches will manage the response and will seek information to clarify what has happened and report the incident to the committee. All persons involved will be interviewed and if the reported bullying incident is substantiated, the person responsible for bullying will be issued with a written Official Caution from the committee.

Following this process, Coaches and the committee will formulate an appropriate response to allow players to move forward.

The President will inform the parents of children involved in the investigation process.



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Stage 2

When a repeated incident is substantiated the person(s) will be referred to the committee who will:

- Provide a verbal and written response to the parents of the children involved.
- Request counsellor involvement to assist children involved in the bullying.
- Consult with coaches, children and parents to develop an appropriate, meaningful consequence.

Stage 3

Should a person reach this stage, the committee will interpret this to indicate that the person has chosen, through their actions, to exclude themselves from the Mernda Junior Football Club.

This Document was first developed in March 2019 by the MJFNC Executive Committee.