



Avondale Heights Football Club (AHFC)

Child Safety Complaints & Reporting Procedure (2026)

1. Purpose

This Child Safety Complaints & Reporting Procedure outlines the steps that all AHFC committee members, coaches, volunteers and staff must follow when identifying, reporting, and responding to concerns about child safety.

This procedure supports AHFC's **Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy** and aligns with AFL safeguarding, integrity and reporting requirements.

2. Immediate Response (Priority Action)

If a child or young person is at **immediate risk of harm or in danger**:

👉 **Call Police – 000 immediately**

This overrides all other steps in this procedure.

3. What Must Be Reported

All concerns relating to a child or young person involved in AHFC activities must be reported, including:

- Any form of **child abuse or harm**:
 - Physical
 - Sexual
 - Emotional / psychological
 - Neglect
- **Grooming behaviours**
- **Bullying or harassment**
- **Discrimination (including racial or religious)**



- **Online / cyber incidents**
- **Any breach of AHFC Child Safety Policy or Code of Conduct**

This includes situations that are:

- **Observed**
 - **Disclosed**
 - **Suspected**
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4. Responding to a Disclosure (What To Do / Not Do)

When a child or young person discloses something:

✓ DO:

- Listen calmly and actively
- Reassure them they did the right thing
- Let them speak in their own words
- Ask open-ended questions (only if needed)
- Respect that they may not share everything
- Explain that you may need to tell someone to help keep them safe

✗ DO NOT:

- Ask leading questions
- Investigate or try to prove the allegation
- Make promises you cannot keep
- Pressure for more detail
- Share information unnecessarily

(This reflects the guidance table shown in the original document – page 1)

5. How to Make a Report

Step 1 — Emergency

If immediate danger → **Call 000**



Step 2 — Report Internally

Report immediately to the **AHFC Child Safety Officer**

Step 3 — Complete Incident Report

Complete the **AHFC Child Safety Incident Report Form** as soon as practical.

Important

- You can **report directly to Police or Child Protection at any time**
 - Internal reporting does **not replace legal obligations**
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6. Responsibilities

6.1 All AHFC Members (Coaches, Volunteers, Staff)

You must:

- Report any concern **immediately**
 - Not investigate or assess validity
 - Record facts only
 - Prioritise child safety at all times
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6.2 AHFC Child Safety Officer

Upon receiving a report, the Child Safety Officer must:

- Provide **support and guidance** to the reporter
- Ensure an **Incident Report Form is completed**
- Consider **mandatory reporting obligations**
- Notify:
 - AHFC Executive Committee
 - AFL Integrity / League Body (as required)
- Maintain a **child-centred, trauma-informed approach**
- **Not conduct investigations**



7. Reporting Timeframes

- Reports must be made **as soon as possible**
 - **Immediately** if a child is at risk
 - AFL reporting requirements must also be followed where applicable
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8. Mandatory Reporting

All AHFC members must comply with **Victorian child safety laws**, including mandatory reporting obligations where applicable.

If unsure — **escalate immediately to the Child Safety Officer**

9. Confidentiality & Privacy

- Information must be kept **confidential**
 - Only shared with those who **need to know**
 - Confidentiality must not override **child safety**
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10. Support & Wellbeing

AHFC recognises that handling disclosures can be difficult.

Support is available via:

- AHFC Child Safety Officer
 - External support services if required
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APPENDIX 1 — AHFC Incident Reporting Process

What to Report

- Observed abuse
 - Suspected abuse
 - Disclosed abuse
 - Policy or Code of Conduct breaches
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3-Step Process

- 1. IMMEDIATE DANGER → CALL 000**
 - 2. REPORT → AHFC Child Safety Officer**
 - 3. RECORD → Complete Incident Report Form**
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Key Principle

👉 If in doubt — report it.