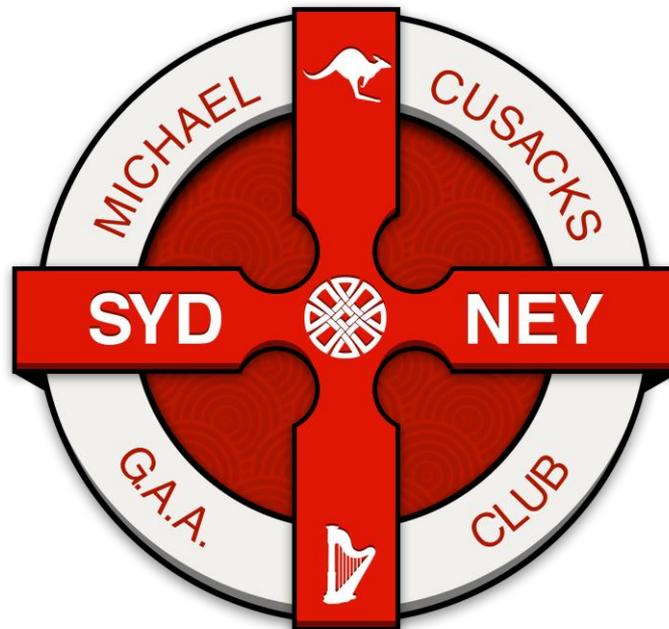


Michael Cusacks Gaelic Athletic Club



MEMBER PROTECTION POLICY

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MEMBER PROTECTION POLICY

1. Introduction

Michael Cusacks GAC is a not for profit Gaelic Athletic Club who promote and encourage participation in Gaelic Games in Sydney, Australia. The safety of our club members, children and those in the wider community is core how the club is managed.

2. Purpose of Our Policy

The main objective of our Member Protection Policy (policy) is to maintain responsible behaviour and the making of informed decisions by participants in this club. It outlines our commitment to a person's right to be treated with respect and dignity, and to be safe and protected from abuse. Our policy informs everyone involved in our club of his or her legal and ethical rights and responsibilities and the standards of behaviour that are required. It also covers the care and protection of children participating in our club's activities.

3. Who Our Policy Applies To

Our policy applies to everyone involved in the club including committee members, administrators, coaches, officials (umpires/referees/judges), players, parents and spectators.

4. Extent of Our Policy

Our policy covers unfair decisions (e.g. team selection) and actions, breaches of our code of behaviour and behaviour that occurs at practice, in the club rooms, at social events organised or sanctioned by the club (or our sport), and on away and overnight trips. It also covers private behaviour where that behaviour brings our club or sport into disrepute or there is suspicion of harm towards a child or young person.

5. Club Responsibilities

We will:

- implement and comply with our policy;
- promote our policy to everyone involved in our club;
- promote and model appropriate standards of behaviour at all times;
- respond to breaches or complaints made under our policy promptly, fairly, and confidentially;
- review this policy every 12-18 months; and
- seek advice from and refer serious issues to our State association

Serious issues include unlawful behaviour that involves or could lead to significant harm and includes criminal behaviour (e.g. physical assault, sexual assault, child abuse) and any other issues that our state or national body request to be referred to them.

6. Individual Responsibilities

Everyone associated with our club must:

- comply with the standards of behaviour outlined in our policy;
- treat others with respect;
- always place the safety and welfare of children above other considerations;
- be responsible and accountable for their behaviour;
- follow the guidelines outlined in this policy if they wish to make a complaint or report a concern about possible child abuse, discrimination, harassment or other inappropriate behaviour.

7. Protection of Children

7.1 Child Protection

Child abuse involves conduct which puts children at risk of harm and takes a number of different forms including:

- Physical abuse – e.g. deliberately hurting (hitting, punching), providing alcohol or drugs, training that exceeds child’s development or maturity
- Sexual abuse – e.g. sexual acts or threats, inappropriate touching or conversations
- Emotional abuse – e.g. ill-treating by threats, humiliation, intimidation
- Neglect – e.g. not providing child with basic necessities (food, drink, clothing), failing to protect a child from foreseeable risk of harm or injury.

Abuse, is usually against the law. We will take measures to protect children involved in our club from harm. We will do this by:

- Responding to all reports of abuse promptly, seriously and confidentially;
- Complying with state/territory child protection laws and working with children check requirements (see attachment 1);
- Carefully selecting and screening people over the age of 16 years who will have regular supervisory contact with children;
- Promoting and enforcing our codes of behaviour, particularly for roles associated with children;
- Making information about child protection available, particularly for roles associated with children; and
- Adopting practices that provide the maximum opportunity for a child safe environment.

Anyone who reasonably suspects that a child has been or is being abused must report their concerns to the police or relevant government agency. Advise the Club and State President/Secretary and Australasian Secretary that you have reported your concerns.

7.2 Supervision

Members under the age of 18 must be supervised at all times by a responsible adult. Our club will provide a level of supervision adequate and relative to the members’ age, maturity, capabilities, level of experience, nature of activity and nature of venue. If a member finds a member under the age of 18 is unsupervised, they should assume responsibility for the member’s safety until the parent/guardian or supervisor can be found.

Parents must turn up on time to collect their child for reasons of courtesy and safety. If it appears a member will be left alone at the end of a training session with just one child, they will ask another member to stay until the child is collected.

7.3 Transportation

Parents/guardians are responsible for transporting their children to and from club activities (e.g. practice and games). Where our club makes arrangements for the transportation of children (e.g. for away or over night trips), we will conduct a risk assessment that includes ensuring vehicles are adequately insured, the driver has a current and appropriate licence for the vehicle being used and appropriate safety measures are available (e.g. fitted working seatbelts)]

7.4 Taking Images of Children

Images of children can be used inappropriately or illegally. The club requires that members, wherever possible, obtain permission from a child’s parent/guardian before taking an image of a child that is not their own and ensure that the parent knows the way the image will be used. We also require the privacy of others to be respected and disallow the use of camera phones, videos and cameras inside changing areas, showers and toilets.

If the club uses an image of a child it will avoid naming or identifying the child or it will, wherever possible, avoid using both the first name and surname. We will not display personal information such as residential address, email address or telephone numbers without gaining consent from the parent/guardian. We will not display information about hobbies, likes/dislikes, school, etc as this information can be used as grooming tools by paedophiles or other persons. We will only use appropriate images of a child, relevant to our sport and ensure that the child is suitably clothed in a manner that promotes the sport, displays its successes, etc.

8. Anti-harassment, Discrimination and Bullying

Our club opposes all forms of harassment, discrimination and bullying. This includes treating or proposing to treat someone less favourably because of a particular characteristic; imposing or intending to impose an unreasonable requirement, condition or practice which has an unequal or disproportionate effect on people with a particular characteristic; or any behaviour that is offensive, abusive, belittling, intimidating or threatening – whether this is face-to-face, indirectly or via communication technologies such as mobile phone and computers. Some forms of harassment, discrimination and bullying are against the law and are based on particular characteristics such as age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy, political or religious beliefs, race, and marital status.

Our club takes all claims of harassment, discrimination, bullying and cyber bullying seriously. We encourage anyone who believes they have been harassed, discriminated against or bullied to raise the issue with the club (see Responding to Complaints).

9. Our club is welcoming and we will seek to include members from all areas of our community.

9.1 People with a disability

Where possible we will include people with a disability in our club. We will make reasonable adaptations (e.g. modifications to equipment and rules) to enable participation.

9.2 People from diverse cultures

We will support and respect people from diverse cultures and religions to participate in our club and where possible will accommodate requests for flexibility

9.3 Sexual & Gender Identity

All people, regardless of their sexuality, are welcome at our club. We strive to provide a safe environment for participation and will take action over any homophobic behaviour.

9.4 Pregnancy

Pregnant women should be aware that their own health and wellbeing, and that of their unborn children, should be of utmost importance in their decision making about the way they participate in our sport. We recommend pregnant women to consult with their medical advisers, make themselves aware of the facts about pregnancy in sport, and ensure that they make informed decisions about participation.

10.5 Girls playing in boys teams

If there is not a separate sex competition, our club will support girls playing in boys teams up until the age of 12 years (when federal sex discrimination law says if differences in strength, stamina and physique are relevant, then single sex competition is required). After this age our club will consider each request on an individual basis including looking at the nature of Gaelic games and other opportunities to compete.

10. Responding to Complaints

10.1 Complaints

Our club takes all complaints about on and off-field behaviour seriously. Our club will handle complaints based on the principles of procedural fairness (natural justice), that is:

- all complaints will be taken seriously;
- both the person making the complaint (complainant) and the person the complaint is against (respondent) will be given full details of what is being said against them and have the opportunity to respond (give their side of the story);
- irrelevant matters will not be taken into account;
- decisions will be unbiased and fair; and
- any penalties imposed will be fair and reasonable.

More serious complaints may be escalated to our state or Australasian body.

If the complaint relates to suspected child abuse, sexual assault or other criminal activity, then our club will need to report the behaviour to the police and/or relevant government authority.

10.2 Complaint Handling Process

When a complaint is received by our club, the person receiving the complaint (e.g. President, Member Protection Information Officer) will:

- listen carefully and ask questions to understand the nature and extent of the problem;
- ask what the complainant would like to happen;
- explain the different options available to help resolve the problem;
- take notes; and
- maintain confidentiality but not necessarily anonymity.

Once the complainant decides on their preferred option for resolution, the club will assist, where appropriate and necessary, with the resolution process. This may involve:

- supporting the person complaining to talk to the person being complained about
- bringing all the people involved in the complaint together to talk objectively through the problem (this could include external mediation);
- gathering more information (e.g. from other people that may have seen the behaviour);
- seeking advice from our district, regional, state and/or national body or from an external agency (e.g. State Department of Sport or anti-discrimination agency);
- referring the complaint to state or Australasian association; and/or
- referring the complainant to an external agency such as a community mediation centre, police or anti-discrimination agency.

In situations where a complaint is referred to our state or Australasian association and an investigation is conducted, the club will:

- co-operate fully;
- ensure the complainant and respondent are not victimised;
- where applicable, ensure the complainant is not placed in an unsupervised situation with the respondent(s); and
- act on our state or Australasian association's recommendations.

At any stage of the process, a person can seek advice from or lodge a complaint with an anti-discrimination commission or other external agency.

10.3 Disciplinary Measures

Our club will take disciplinary action against anyone found to have breached our policy or made false and malicious allegations. Any disciplinary measure imposed under our policy must:

- Be applied consistent with any contractual and employment rules and requirements;
- Be fair and reasonable;
- Be based on the evidence and information presented and the seriousness of the breach;
- Be determined by our Constitution, By Laws and the rules of the game.

Possible measures that may be taken include:

- verbal and/or written apology;
- counselling to address behaviour;
- withdrawal of any awards, placings, records, achievements bestowed in any tournaments, activities or events held or sanctioned by our club;
- suspension or termination of membership, participation or engagement in a role or activity;
- de-registration of accreditation for a period of time or permanently;
- a fine; or
- any other form of discipline that our club considers reasonable and appropriate.

10.4 Appeals

The complainant or respondent can lodge one appeal against decisions of or disciplinary measures imposed by our club to our state or Australasian association. Appeals must be based on either a denial of natural justice, because of unjust or unreasonable disciplinary measure(s)

being imposed, or on the grounds that the decision was not supported by the information/evidence presented and available to the decision maker/club.

Attachment 1 MEMBER PROTECTION DECLARATION

Our club has a duty of care to all those associated with our club. As a requirement of our Member Protection Policy, we must enquire into the background of those who undertake any work, coaching or regular unsupervised contact with people under the age of 18 years.

I (name) of

..... (address) born/...../.....

sincerely declare:

1. I do not have any criminal charge pending before the courts.
2. I do not have any criminal convictions or findings of guilt for sexual offences, offences related to children or acts of violence, narcotics, murder
3. I have not had any disciplinary proceedings brought against me by an employer, sporting organisation or similar body involving child abuse, sexual misconduct or harassment, other forms of harassment or acts of violence, narcotics
4. To my knowledge there is no other matter that the club may consider to constitute a risk to its members, employees, volunteers, athletes or reputation by engaging me.
5. I will notify the President of the club immediately upon becoming aware that any of the matters set out in clauses 1 to 4 above has changed.

Declared in the State/Territory of

on/...../.....(date) Signature

Parent/Guardian Consent (in respect of a person under the age of 18 years)

I have read and understood the declaration provided by my child. I confirm and warrant that the contents of the declaration provided by my child are true and correct in every particular.

Name:.....

Signature:.....

Date:

Attachment 2: CODES OF BEHAVIOUR – SUPPORTS PLAYER CODE OF CONDUCT

- operate within the rules and spirit of Gaelic Games, promoting fair play over winning at any cost
- encourage and support opportunities for people to learn appropriate behaviours and skills
- support opportunities for participation in all aspects of Gaelic Games
- treat each person as an individual
- display control and courtesy to all involved with Gaelic Games, respect the rights and worth of every person regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion
- respect the decisions of officials, coaches and administrators in the conduct of the games
- wherever practical, avoid unaccompanied and unobserved one-on-one activity (when in a supervisory capacity or where a power imbalance will exist) with people under the age of 18 years
- adopt appropriate and responsible behaviour in all interactions
- adopt responsible behaviour in relation to alcohol and other drugs
- act with integrity and objectivity, and accept responsibility for your decisions and actions
- ensure your decisions and actions contribute to a safe environment
- ensure your decisions and actions contribute to a harassment free environment
- do not tolerate harmful or abusive behaviours

Athletes

- give your best at all times
- participate for your own enjoyment and benefit

Coaches

- place the safety and welfare of the athletes above all else
- help each person (athlete, official etc) reach their potential - respect the talent, developmental stage and goals of each person and compliment and encourage with positive and supportive feedback
- any physical contact with a person should be appropriate to the situation and necessary for the person's skill development
- be honest and do not allow your qualifications to be misrepresented

Officials

- place the safety and welfare of the athletes above all else
- be consistent and impartial when making decisions
- address unsporting behaviour and promote respect for all people

Administrators

- act honestly, in good faith and in the best interests of the sport as a whole
- ensure that any information acquired or advantage gained from the position is not used improperly
- conduct your responsibilities with due care, competence and diligence
- do not allow prejudice, conflict of interest or bias to affect your objectivity

Parents

- encourage children to participate and have fun
- focus on the child's effort and performance rather than winning or losing
- never ridicule or yell at a child for making a mistake or losing a competition

Spectators

- respect the performances and efforts of all people
 - reject the use of violence in any form whether it is by spectators, coaches, officials or athlete
-

Attachment 3: REPORTING FORMS

RECORD OF COMPLAINT

Name of person receiving complaint		Date: / /
Complainant's Name	<input type="checkbox"/> Over 18 <input type="checkbox"/> Under 18	
Complainant's contact details	Phone: Email:	
Complainant's role/status in Club	<input type="checkbox"/> Administrator (volunteer) <input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Athlete/player <input type="checkbox"/> Spectator <input type="checkbox"/> Coach/Assistant Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Support Personnel <input type="checkbox"/> Employee (paid) <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Official 	
Name of person complained about	<input type="checkbox"/> Over 18 <input type="checkbox"/> Under 18	
Person complained about role/status in Club	<input type="checkbox"/> Administrator (volunteer) <input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Athlete/player <input type="checkbox"/> Spectator <input type="checkbox"/> Coach/Assistant Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Support Personnel <input type="checkbox"/> Employee (paid) <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Official 	
Location/event of alleged issue		
Description of alleged issue		

<p>Nature of complaint (category/basis/grounds)</p> <p>Can tick more than one box</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Harassment or <input type="checkbox"/> Discrimination</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sexual/sexist <input type="checkbox"/> Selection dispute <input type="checkbox"/> Coaching methods</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sexuality <input type="checkbox"/> Personality clash <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal abuse</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Race <input type="checkbox"/> Bullying <input type="checkbox"/> Physical abuse</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Religion <input type="checkbox"/> Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Victimisation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy <input type="checkbox"/> Child Abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Unfair decision</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other</p>
<p>What they want to happen to fix issue</p>	
<p>Information provided to them</p>	
<p>Resolution and/or action taken</p>	
<p>Follow-up action</p>	

Attachment 4: Michael Cusacks Player Code of Conduct

We want Michael Cusack's GAC to be known and respected in Sydney and NSW as a club which upholds the ideals of the Gaelic Athletic Association. We are reputed for high standards from our players, officials, mentors and spectators in terms of commitment and preparation, as well as the sporting attitude and behaviour which we show to those with whom our games bring us in contact. The following Code of Conduct is based on standards of ethical behaviour, which are fundamental to Gaelic games, in combination with skill development and style of play. By following the Code of Conduct, the enjoyment of players, mentors and supporters will be maximised.

Michael Cusack's Committee

1. Always remember that you are representing Michael Cusack's GAC.
2. Trust and show respect for your team mentors, coaches and club officials. Acknowledge that they are volunteers, not professionals, and may make mistakes.
3. Always let your mentors know well in advance, if you cannot attend a training session and, especially, if you will not be available for a match.
4. Work equally hard for your team as for yourself. Try to make your teammates' contribution as productive as possible, in training and in matches, by encouraging rather than criticising.
5. Show respect for the referee and match officials at all times, be aware that he/she is likely to respond unfavourably when criticised. Give your name if asked and accept the referee's approach responsibly, without dissent. Abusive language is unacceptable.
6. Always remember that you owe a duty of care to your opponents. Play hard but fairly and within the rules, do not intend to hurt your opponent. Do not use remarks based on race, religion, gender or ability as many such comments are politically incorrect.
7. Control your temper and most of all, resist the temptation to retaliate when you feel you have been wronged. Do not react to intimidating tactics from opponents. Concentrate on playing the game and on affecting the outcome of the game with your best efforts.
8. Always respect the club's equipment made available to you. Theft of any equipment or Club playing gear will not be tolerated.
9. Respect the playing facilities made available at all state and interstate competitions.
10. Abide by the Rules and Regulations of NSW GAA and Australasia GAA.
11. Michael Cusack's GAC expects that individuals covered by this Code and undertaking activities associated with the Club shall at all times where there is alcohol usage:
 - Behave in a dignified and professional manner that promotes and upholds standards of integrity, dignity and professionalism;
 - Act as role models for their club/team and Gaelic Games
 - Not put themselves, club/team mates nor the general public at risk of serious physical and social harms;
 - Accept that they are responsible and accountable for the choices they make and the consequences of these choices;
 - Assist their club/team mates and others covered by the Code of Conduct if they have had too much to drink; and
 - Take reasonable action to both prevent alcohol problems and address any alcohol-related issues as they emerge.