



# **BLACKBURN JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB**

## **POLICY MANUAL**

*Updated November 2018*

*WE ARE*  
**BLACKBURN**

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## SECTION A – INTRODUCTION

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The Blackburn Junior Football Club provide an opportunity for the youth of Blackburn and the surrounding suburbs to play football in a safe and enjoyable environment.

Our **aim** is to provide the best football experience for junior players and their supporters.

We have a strategy which is designed to achieve this. Our strategy is built around four key themes:

- Participation
- Development
- Governance
- Community

Underpinning this are our **core values**:

- Fun
- Fairness
- Respect
- Commitment
- Sportsmanship

The Club will at all times endeavour to provide for the health, welfare and wellbeing of its players, administrators, volunteers, supporters and spectators.

Ultimately, we gauge our success by the following measures:

- We believe we have encouraged participation when we see the enjoyment all of our teams have throughout the season.
- The development of our players is demonstrated when we hear of individual success stories, our coaches end of year feedback, and the senior club and recruiters saying Blackburn Junior Football Club produces talented footballers.
- Our governance is measured by parent and player feedback surveys regarding how our club is run. Our surveys are being implemented annually and will be measurable from 2018 onwards.
- Our Community involvement is continually being discussed and we make specific note of feedback received from the parents, players and supporters in regards to how our club is valued within the community. Attendance at our family nights are also a strong indication of our value within the community.
- Continual emphasis on culture within our club on and off the field and the positive impact it has on the growth and development of a child. From Auskick through to hopeful entry into the senior club as a One Club player.

We are proud of Blackburn Junior Football Club's success to date, however, we don't want to rest on our laurels – we want to ensure we remain a successful Club providing the best football experience for junior players and their supporters.

The Club has developed a set of policies that are designed to support our core values and ensure that the Club continues to develop as one of the best clubs in the Eastern Football League.

Our policies are designed to ensure the Club deals with various matters in a fair and transparent way.

By registering to play with the BJFC player, along with his/her parents, guardians and supporters agree to abide by the Club's Policies. In accepting their various positions, all coaches, team officials and Club officials agree to abide by these policies.

Any variation to the policies requires the approval of the Executive Committee.

While the policies provide a comprehensive management framework, it is possible that matters may arise which are not covered by existing policies. Such matters or any suggestions regarding our policies should be referred to our Club Secretary at [secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au](mailto:secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au).

Peter Parker  
President  
Blackburn Junior Football Club

## 1. BLACKBURN FOOTBALL CLUB OVERVIEW

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**Blackburn Junior Football Club seeks to provide an opportunity for the youth of our area to participate in Australian Rules Football in a safe and enjoyable environment.**

### 1.1 **BLACKBURN FOOTBALL CLUB**

Blackburn Junior Football Club is part of the Blackburn Football Club.

The Club has a long and proud history, playing its first games in the 1890's on the same ground we play on today: Morton Park. The Club had its first Annual General Meeting in 1903 and won its first premiership in 1922.

The Club now plays in the Eastern Football League (EFL) - the largest football competition, with our seniors playing in the prestigious Premier Division and most of our junior teams playing in A Division.

### 1.2 **BLACKBURN JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB**

Our Junior competition was established in the 1988 with just a single boys team. The Club has continued to flourish since then and we now have over 500 players within 22 boys and girls teams this season, across our U8's to u18's. This year was an historic for the club with the introduction of the Senior Women's team (est. 2018).

While the Junior Club operates autonomously under our own Committee, we enjoy a strong relationship with the Senior Club. In conjunction with the Senior Club we hold several major events together. One being the whole club Season Launch.

Each of our junior teams has a Senior player appointed as their Team Leader. The Team Leaders provide assistance to our coaches and assist with training sessions and attend junior games throughout the season. In turn, Saturday's at Morton Park are a buzz with many junior players and their parents coming down to support the Seniors.

The Junior Club has also formed a very close relationship with our local Auskick Centres: Blackburn, Blackburn Lake and Laburnum Auskick. Most of our players come from these centres. The Club supports the development of these centres and arranges 'back to Auskick' days for our players, and host grid games enabling Auskickers to play a game and enjoy a sausage and drink at the half time break of our Senior games.

We are a proud family based club with a strong focus on participation and development.

The Club hosts a range of social activities throughout the season of which include family nights, a fun parent social night and the Junior teams are provided the opportunity to have an indoor training session over winter. These provide a great opportunity for our players and parents to get together and have fun, and a wonderful opportunity for new players and parents to get to know teams mates and their families even better.

Our Club's success can be attributed to the fantastic support we receive from our parents and supporters.

### 1.3 **BLACKBURN JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB - COMMITTEE**

Blackburn Junior Football Club (The Club) is managed by an Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee are responsible for:

- (1) the overall governance of the Club;
- (2) setting Club policy;
- (3) appointing coaches'
- (4) endorsing team selections; and
- (5) dealing with complaint matters that require consideration by the Executive Committee.

Our Executive Committee consists of:

Role	2019	Function
President	Peter Parker	Leadership, Policy
Vice President	Spencer Wilson	TM Coordinator
Treasurer	Pat Mannix	Operations and Finances
Member	David Couper	Grounds Manager
Member	Bernard Geason	Welfare Officer
Member	Suzanne Devers	Registrar

The Executive Committee is supported by a General Committee, responsible for:

(1) providing advice to the Executive Committee and; and (2) undertaking operational activities.

#### 1.4 **BLACKBURN JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB - POLICIES**

We have developed a set of policies and procedures that reflect our core values and help to ensure we can provide the best possible environment for juniors to play football and retain the wonderful culture of our Club.

Throughout this document you will find reference to the words 'must' and 'shall' and 'may' and 'should'. 'Must' and 'Shall' convey an obligation, with any variation from the Policy requiring the approval of the Executive Committee. The use of the words 'may' and 'should' convey an element of discretion.

If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact our Club Secretary on [secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au](mailto:secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au).

#### 1.5 **ALL CLUB – RULES**

All games of Australian Football must be played in strict accordance with the [Australian Football League Rules February 2018](#) as determined by the AFL, unless otherwise advised by the EFL.

Blackburn Junior Football Club must adhere to the rules set out within the [Eastern Football League Incorporated By-Laws \(May 2018\)](#) (EFL By-Laws).

Our female teams play within the Eastern Regional Girls (ERG) competition, which is a joint initiative between the EFL and the AFL Yarra Ranges competitions. In the first instance our female teams must adhere to the Eastern Region Girls By-Laws, as detailed within the [EFL By-Laws](#). These guidelines relate to specific scenarios unique to the Eastern Region Girls competition. Where there is no guideline listed on an occasion, all female teams operate under the rules and by-laws of their home competition (EFL or AFL Yarra Ranges).

#### 1.6 **BLACKBURN JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB - PLAYER WELFARE**

Irrespective of age or ability, player welfare is our number one priority. The Club provides helmets to all Under 8s, 9s, 10s, 11s and 12s and requires players within these age groups to wear the helmets during the game. We support other players who may wish to wear a helmet in the older age groups. We require mouthguards to be worn by all players during the game and at training.

The Club has adopted a code of behaviour ([Behaviour Policy](#)) which we expect everyone (players, parents, administrators, volunteers and supporters) to comply with. We have appointed a Player Welfare Manager (Bernard Geason) to act as our Child Protection Officer and Racial and Religious Vilification Officer, together with a Tribunal Advocate (Paul Oglethorpe) to assist where necessary. This policy is overseen by our appointed Welfare Manager who reports directly to the Executive Committee.

Player welfare is of prime importance to the Club. Any concerns should first be raised with your team manager and/or coach. If they cannot be resolved at that level they should be referred to the Executive Committee via our Club Secretary for consideration.

#### 1.7 **BLACKBURN JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB - GRIEVANCES**

Any person who feels aggrieved by the interpretation of the policies or possible failure to comply with the policies, may refer the matter to the Executive Committee via the Club Secretary for consideration in accordance with the Club's [Issue Resolution policy](#).

## SECTION B - REGISTRATION, SELECTION, COACHING, TRAINING & GAME DAY

### 2. PLAYER REGISTRATION POLICY

**Blackburn Junior Football Club seeks to maintain a fair registration process for both existing and new players.**

#### 2.1 REGISTRATION DAY

The Club will schedule a registration day, which is traditionally in early February, however this is not set in stone.

#### 2.2 REGISTRATION PROCESS

The Club will notify all past season players of the registration day once set.

The Club will:

- open registrations in late November / early December.
- hold a registration day (typically in early February).
- set a final registration date, after which any registration/s received will be deemed a late registration and processed in accordance with [Section 2.3](#).
- notify all current registered players from the previous season arrangements for the upcoming season via email and with postings on our social media channels - Instagram and Facebook.
- post the registration details on our website ([www.blackburnfc.com.au](http://www.blackburnfc.com.au)) in late November / early December.
- advertise the registration arrangements at local schools and Auskick centres.
- To register on time, players will need to:
  - 1 register and pay online before the final registration date (we no longer provide paper registrations), or
  - 2 register and pay online at the Club's registration day (laptops will be available).

Registrations will be processed on a Club basis with all registrations submitted on time processed in the order set out below for the 2018 season:

Order	Under 8s and 9s boys and Under 10 girls	Under 10 – Under 17s boys and Under 12 – Under 18 girls
1st	Players who played with BJFC in the previous year.	Players who played with BJFC in the previous year.
2nd	New players by eldest age (age requirements as per the <a href="#">EFL Junior Rules Summary</a> ) who (1) participated in Auskick in the previous year and (2) whose sibling or parent/s played for the Club in the previous year, or are playing in the 2018 season.	New players by date of registration, who (1) participated in Auskick in the previous year and (2) whose sibling or parent/s played for the Club in the previous year, or are playing in the 2018 season.
3rd	New players by eldest age (age requirements as per the <a href="#">EFL Junior Rules Summary</a> ) who participated in Auskick in the previous year.	New players by date of registration, who participated in Auskick in the previous year.
4th	New players by date of registration, who played for another Club or any other new players.	New players by date of registration, who played for another Club or any other new players.

#### 2.3 LATE REGISTRATIONS

Registrations received after the registration deadline will be deemed late with the player/s placed on a waitlist (even if the player has previously played with BJFC) and will be processed in the order in which they were received after all registrations received on time have been processed.

## **2.4 NEW PLAYERS**

Registrations from new players will not be processed until the Club has been able to allocate a place to all the previous year's players who registered on time. The Executive Committee, in consultation with the relevant coach, will determine whether new players should be offered a place.

All EFL clubs are subject to the [National Player Transfer Regulations](#) which outlines that team within the EFL junior competition are only permitted to gain a maximum of three players from one EFL junior club team to another, unless the club from which the players are transferring from allows more than three.

No new players can register during the season after 30th June of that year.

## **2.5 MINIMUM AGE**

In accordance with the [EFL By-Laws](#), a player must attain at least the age of seven by 30 April in their that person's first year of registration with the EFL. No person may play in any matches authorised or conducted by the EFL, other than practice matches, unless that person has attained the age of seven (7) years by 30th April during that persons first year of registration with the EFL.

In accordance with the [ERG By-Laws](#), female players must attain at least the age of seven by 31st December 2011 to be eligible to play in the Eastern Region Girls (ERG) Competition.

## **2.6 CORRECT AGE GROUPS**

For safety & developmental reasons, all players will be registered within their correct age group as detailed within the [EFL By-Laws](#).

Any player who has previously been allowed to play in an older age group will not automatically be permitted to play up in a subsequent year.

Players will only be allowed to play up in exceptional circumstances and at the invitation of the Executive Committee. Please refer to Section 7.6 – Movement of players between teams and age groups.

## **2.7 GENDER**

Blackburn Junior Football Club have teams in every age group for male and female players, and we actively encourage girls to play football. Refer to Section 10 – Our Female Football Program.

## **2.8 MIXED ABILITIES**

Blackburn Junior Football Club actively encourages people of mixed abilities to play football where it is safe to do so.

## **2.9 TOO MANY PLAYERS PER AGE GROUP**

The Club is likely to have multiple teams in each age group. Depending on the number of players who register in subsequent years it may be necessary to consolidate teams from previous seasons into a single team.

Should this be the case, the Club will endeavour to accommodate all players (e.g. it may invite players to play in the next age group). No new players will be accepted into the higher age group team until this process has been completed. If there are still too many players from the previous season, the players will be selected in the following order:

1. Players have a sibling/parent registered to play with the Club;
2. Players whose parents have made a significant contribution to the Club in past years (i.e. coach, assistant coach, team manager, runner, trainer, committee person or other persons deemed by the Executive Committee to have made a significant contribution to the Club in past years);
3. Players who have played the most years with the Club;
- If necessary, priority may be given to those players who have played the most games with the Club.

### 3. FINANCIAL MEMBERS

**Blackburn Junior Football Club expects all players to be financial members of the Club.**

#### 3.1 **PAYMENT**

Players must be financial members of the Club and pay their playing (registration) fees prior to playing in their first game of each season. Players are also required at the time of Registration to pay a compulsory Insurance Fee set by the EFL.

The Club may accept progressive payments in exceptional circumstances. A request to make progressive payments should be sent to the Club Secretary at [secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au](mailto:secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au) and will be considered by the Executive Committee.

#### 3.2 **CLUB PLAYING (REGISTRATION) FEE'S**

The Club shall set the playing fees prior to Opening registrations.

The Club fee covers:

- Club operating costs and games costs (e.g. venue hire, umpires, training equipment, medical supplies, Council curation costs etc.).
- the provision of a jumper which is provided on loan and must be returned at the end of the season.
- the provision of a helmet which is provided on loan to players in Under 9s – 12s teams and must be returned at the end of the season.

No additional game fees will be charged.

#### 3.3 **DISCOUNTS**

The Club will offer a reduced fee to families who have two or more siblings playing at the Club in the same season. This discounts will be set prior to Opening registrations.

The Club may reduce or waiver the fee in exceptional circumstances (e.g. genuine financial hardship).

The Club may offer a reduced fee to players who register late:

Register prior to and including Round 8	No discount
Register after to Round 8	Equivalent to the second sibling fee

Requests for a discount (other than the family discount) should be sent to the Club Secretary at [secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au](mailto:secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au) and will be considered by the Executive Committee.

#### 3.4 **REFUNDS**

The Club may provide a refund in exceptional circumstances:

A request for a refund should be sent to the Club Secretary and will be considered by the Executive Committee.

Refunds will not be provided to players who are rostered off or are not available to play.

#### 3.5 **CLUB EQUIPMENT**

The Club provides each player with a jumper. It also supplies each child in the Under 8s – 12s with a helmet. These items plus any other items borrowed from the Club must be returned to the Club within one week of the player having played his/her last game for the season.

Damaged items or any items not returned to the Team Manager at the end of the teams season will be considered 'lost' and the player liable to pay for its replacement at the following rates:

- Jumpers - \$90
- Helmets - \$50
- Other items - at cost plus \$20

The Club may require Under 17 male players and Under 18 female players to pay a deposit with their registration fees for the jumper. The deposit shall be fully refundable provided that the jumper is returned in good condition by September 1st of their under 17 (male) or under 18 (female) year.

### **3.6 NON-FINANCIAL MEMBERS**

A player who has not paid his/her fees will be considered a non-financial member of the Club.

A player who has not paid outstanding fines imposed by the EFL will be considered a non-financial member of the Club.

A player who has not returned Club equipment (e.g. jumper, helmet etc.) at the end of the season or on notifying the Club of their resignation, will be considered a non-financial member of the Club.

Non-financial members will not be rostered on to play.

The Club will not provide a clearance to any player who has an outstanding debt to the Club or who has not returned Club property.

## 4. COACHING POLICY

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**Blackburn Football Club seeks to appoint the best available coaches to lead its teams.**

### 4.1 **COACHING APPOINTMENTS**

At the end of the season, the Club will declare all coaching positions vacant and encourage existing and new coaches to apply for coaching positions in the following year.

Coaching appointments will be advertised on our clubs Facebook and Instagram pages, and emailed out to our previous years database. Coaching appointments may also be advertised on the EFL website as deemed necessary.

Coaches must be able to demonstrate that they have the right attributes to coach relevant to the applicable age group and be prepared to undertake or renew their coaching accreditation standards.

### 4.2 **TENURE**

A coach shall be appointed for one season. He/she may be appointed to coach the same team for a second season if they are deemed the most suitable applicant for the position.

Should no suitable applicant be forthcoming for a third or greater consecutive season, the Executive Committee may consider approaching the incumbent coach.

### 4.3 **COACHING ATTRIBUTES**

Our coaches are expected to:

Be **qualified** and in doing so:

- must have a Level 1 qualification or in receipt of a Level 1 coaching qualification by May 31 in the year that they are coaching. (NB The club will reimburse the Coach for the registration fees for his/her Level 1 course).
- must have a valid working with children check prior to commence pre-season training and for the duration of the season.
- must attend BFC coaches' nights

Act **responsibly** and in doing so:

- adhere at all times to the [EFL's Code of Conduct](#).
- adhere at all time's to the club's policies.
- not speak to the media without the consent of President or Vice President.
- not enter into any commercial arrangements or make purchases without the consent of the President, Vice President or Treasurer.

Display a sense of **professionalism** and in doing so:

- wear appropriate attire, including Club polo/hoodie/jacket to all games.
- promote the 'Blackburn' brand of football.
- make decisions which are in the best interests of our players and the club.

Display **fairness** and in doing so:

- respect all players.
- adhere to the club's policies.
- maintain records of the number of games played for each player and the amount of game time they receive.

Demonstrate **commitment** to their team and the club and in doing so:

- arrive promptly and well prepared for training and games.
- attend family nights and other key events such as our Season Launch and the Auskick Super-clinic).

Show **leadership** and in doing so:

- display sincerity, integrity and honesty.
- base actions on reason and not emotions.
- set goals and share a vision with your team.
- display confidence and inspire players.
- be fair to all players and responsive to their sensitivities.
- seek out and listen to the opinions of others to help you succeed.

Build an appropriate **support network** and in doing so enlist a team manager, assistant coach and runner who are responsible, and who are prepared to act in accordance with the policies and values of the club.

## 5. TEAM SIZE AND SELECTION POLICY

**Blackburn Junior Football Club seeks to maintain a fair, transparent and equitable team selection process.**

### 5.1 **TEAM SELECTION**

Blackburn Junior Football Club is committed to fairness, transparency and equity.

The Club adopts an approach which recognises that teams vary in size, skill and ability but that all players are entitled to be treated fairly and that teams are managed to be competitive irrespective of their grading.

### 5.2 **UNDER 8s, 9s & 10's**

#### 5.2.1 **TEAM SIZE**

The EFL has capped the maximum number of players in any team at 26.

The Club considers that the ideal number of players in the Under 9s teams to be:

- 26 – if we are fielding two teams, or
- 20+ – if we are fielding three teams

#### 5.2.2 **TEAM SELECTION**

It is the Club's intention to field at least two teams, and possibly 3 subject to numbers.

Team selection will be determined after registration day, although in the non-competitive age groups it is expected that teams will be based on school groupings. Generally the Club will seek to place all the players from the one school in the same team. However, if there are a significant number of players from one school, the Club may divide the players into two teams so as to avoid the dominance of players from one school over another.

The teams shall be the Black team, Red team and if a third team is established a White team. The EFL does not grade the Under 8, 9 and 10 competitions, hence the players shall not be graded.

The teams should aim to have an equal number of players to ensure that all players in the age group have access to equal playing opportunities.

The Club may limit the number of players in these teams to 60 players.

Depending on player numbers, the Club may need to alter the make up of the Under 10 teams from those that existed in Under 9s. For example where three Under 9 teams existed, it is most likely that they will need to be consolidated into two Under 10 teams which may result on some changes, so as to ensure two equally sized teams.

### 5.3 **UNDER 11s to 15s**

#### 5.3.1 **TEAM SIZE**

The EFL has capped the maximum number of players in any team at 26. The Club considers that the ideal number of players in these teams to be 26 and shall cap these teams at this number. Should less than 26 players from the previous year register on time, the Club may offer a place to new players.

#### 5.3.2 **TEAM SELECTION**

It is the Club's intention to field at least two teams in each age group.

Where there are enough players to form two or more teams in the one age group, the players will be graded based on their skills, size, confidence and football maturity.

The players will then be split into two (or three) teams having regard to the suitability of the players to participate in the relevant divisions and the Club's desire to field two competitive teams. On this basis it is expected that the majority of the more competent players but not necessarily all the better players will be in the higher graded team.

The higher graded team shall be referred to as the Black team, the second team shall be referred to as the Red team, and a third team the White team.

The teams will operate as separate teams (i.e. the Red and White teams shall not be considered a 'reserve' teams). Notwithstanding this, it is expected that the teams will train together and that the coaches will cooperate during the selection process and in the sharing of players throughout the season should a team be short of players.

Culturally, it would be hoped teams socialize and mix as one whole age group, negating the barriers between what is seen as a top and bottom sides and encouraging the one club mentality.

Ideally, the teams should have an equal number of players to ensure that all players in the age group have access to equal playing opportunities. However, in order to field two or more competitive teams within each age group, and in consideration of the EFL's grading system for age groups registering two teams (placing one team in A grade and one team in D grade), the number of players in each team may require flexibility to ensure players participate in the most suitable divisions for their ability level.

In order to determine the formation of multiple teams, the coaches should:

- observe all players during the pre-season 'try-out' period;
- take into account the player assessments prepared by the previous year's coaches;
- liaise with the previous year's coaches (if necessary);
- liaise with the Blackburn Junior Football Club's Football Director;
- agree the proposed composition of the two teams, and
- forward the team lists to the Executive Committee for approval.

It is important that players play in the most appropriate division having regard to their abilities and the competitiveness of our teams. In recognition of this and the fact that players develop at different rates (both physically and ability wise) all players will be assessed during the pre-season 'try-out' period each year to determine the most appropriate team that they should play in.

**The coaches should not disclose the composition of the recommended teams to any players or parents until the teams have been approved by the Executive Committee.**

When teams are announced by the coaches, the coaches are to ensure all players are aware that movement of players may occur within the first four (4) weeks of the season if they believe players are better suited to play within another team.

All coaches are required to assess all players from the other team/s at training for a minimum of two (2) training sessions within the first four (4) weeks of in-season training. Movement of players between teams can be made during this time.

### **5.3.3 TRY-OUT PERIOD**

The try-out period is 3 intra club match type sessions in early February.

Prior to the try-outs, the coaches shall develop player assessment guidelines to assist them with the team selection process. The Guidelines must be approved by the Executive Committee and shall be made available to parents and players prior to the commencement of the try-outs.

Players must attend at least two of three try-outs to be considered for the higher graded team(s). The Coaches must run these three tryouts in February so that the players can be properly graded as early as possible.

Any player who does not participate in the try-outs will automatically be placed in the Red team and will be assessed in their first two games to determine which team they should play in for the remainder of the season.

However, a player may be exempt from this requirement in exceptional circumstances and subject to the approval of the Executive Committee. For example better players within the older age groups may be in training squads at Oakleigh Chargers or Eastern Rangers and may not be available for the try-outs. These players may be selected to the Black team subject to the referral of the relevant coach and approval of the Executive Committee.

#### **5.4 UNDER 17's**

##### **5.4.1 TEAM SIZE**

The EFL has capped the maximum number of players in any team at 30. The Club considers that the ideal number of players in these teams to be 26 but will offer a place to all players from the previous year. Should less than 30 players from the previous year register on time, the Club may offer a place to new players.

##### **5.4.2 TEAM SELECTION**

It is the Club's intention to field at least two teams in the Under 17s competition.

Where there are enough players to form two or more teams, the players will be graded based on their skills, size, confidence and football maturity.

The players will then be split into two or three teams having regard to the suitability of the players to participate in the relevant divisions and the Club's desire to field two competitive teams. On this basis it is expected that the majority of the more competent players but not necessarily all the better player will be in the higher graded team.

The higher graded team shall be referred to as the Black team with the second team the Red team and any third team, the White team.

The teams will operate as separate teams (i.e. the Red and White teams shall not be considered a 'reserve' teams). Notwithstanding this, it is expected that the teams will train together and that the coaches will cooperate during the selection process and in the sharing of players throughout the season should a team be short of players.

Ideally, the teams should have an equal number of players to ensure that all players in the age group have access to equal playing opportunities. However, in order to field two or more competitive teams within each age group, and in consideration of the EFL's grading system for age groups registering two teams (placing one team in A grade and one team in D grade), the number of players in each team may require flexibility to ensure players participate in the most suitable divisions for their ability level.

In order to determine the formation of multiple teams, the coaches should

##### **IN CONJUNCTION WITH AT LEAST ONE INDEPENDENT REPRESENTATIVE:**

- observe all players during the pre-season 'try-out' period;
- take into account the player assessments prepared by the previous year's coaches;
- liaise with the previous year's coaches (if necessary);
- liaise with the Blackburn Junior Football Club's Football Director;
- agree the proposed composition of the two teams;
- FOR EACH PLAYER, PROVIDE SOME BRIEF COMMENTS TO JUSTIFY THE PROPOSED GRADING and
- forward the team lists to the Committee for approval.

ALL PLAYERS, WHETHER THEY BE PREVIOUS YEAR'S UNDER 15 BLACK OR RED PLAYERS, NEW PLAYERS TO THE CLUB, OR PREVIOUS YEAR'S UNDER 17 PLAYERS, SHALL BE ASSESSED ON THEIR MERITS. THE COACHES SHALL FAIRLY AND OBJECTIVELY CONSIDER THE PROPOSED COMPOSITION OF TEAMS. TO AVOID DOUBT THERE SHALL BE NO PRESUMPTION THAT ANY PLAYER SHALL BE AUTOMATICALLY SELECTED IN THE PREMIER TEAM.

**The coaches should not disclose the composition of the recommended teams to any players or parents until the teams have been approved by the Committee. The Committee shall appoint a three-person sub-committee to review the teams.**

When teams are announced by the coaches, the coaches are to ensure all players are aware that movement of players may occur within the first four (4) weeks of the season if they believe players are better suited to play within another team.

All coaches are required to assess all players from the other team/s at training for a minimum of two (2) training sessions within the first four (4) weeks of in-season training. Movement of players between teams can be made during this time.

#### **5.4.3 TRY-OUT PERIOD**

The try-out period is 3 intra club match type sessions in early February.

Prior to the try-outs, the coaches shall develop player assessment guidelines to assist them with the team selection process. The Guidelines must be approved by the Executive Committee and shall be made available to parents and players prior to the commencement of the try-outs.

Players must attend at least two of three try-outs to be considered for the higher graded team(s). The Coaches must run these three tryouts in February so that the players can be properly graded as early as possible.

Any player who does not participate in the try-outs will automatically be placed in the Red team and will be assessed in their first two games to determine which team they should play in for the remainder of the season.

However, a player may be exempt from this requirement in exceptional circumstances and subject to the approval of the Executive Committee. For example the better players at this level may be in training squads at Oakleigh Chargers or Eastern Rangers and may not be available for the try-out. These players may be selected to the Black team, subject to the approval of the Executive Committee.

#### **5.5 END OF SEASON ASSESSMENTS**

At the end of the season, the coaches must provide the Club with a simple player assessment addressing: size; skills (kicking, marking, handball; positioning and reading of play); confidence (to attack the ball under pressure, tackle players etc.); maturity; and the recommended team for the following year.

These assessments will be used in subsequent years to assist in the selection of teams where we have multiple teams in the Under 11s - 17s.

The assessments are confidential documents and will not be released to players or parents.

Once the teams have been selected our Football Director will review the teams against the previous year's assessments.

#### **5.6 TEAM SUPPORT STAFF**

The Club greatly appreciates the time and effort of our many volunteers, including the coaches and their support staff (i.e. assistant coaches, team managers, runners and trainers).

Where a single side exists in an age group, the support staff should be confirmed as soon as possible and definitely before pre-season training commences.

Where multiple teams exist, it is important that coaches take in establishing support staff having regard to the likely and most suitable team for their players. Supporting staff roles should not be finalised until the teams are selected - players **should not** be selected based on the roles their parents may undertake in the Club, or indicated they will undertake within a specific team; rather they should be selected based on the team most suitable for their skills and ability.

## **5.7 TIMING**

It is anticipated that the teams will be finalised three weeks prior to the first game.

## **5.8 GRIEVANCES**

Team selection is not an exact science and requires consideration of a range of factors.

Coaches will be provided with selection guidelines to ensure that players are placed in the most appropriate teams having regard to their skill level in consideration of the skill level of all players registered to that age group.

The coaches will provide feedback on areas of improvement to all players in the second side within two weeks of the announcement of the teams.

Any person who feels aggrieved should first raise the matter with the relevant coaches and or team managers. If the matter can not be resolved at that level, the matter may be referred to the Club Secretary at [secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au](mailto:secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au) prior to Round 3 (Note: The EFL Bi-Laws make it difficult to move players after Round 3) for consideration in accordance with the Club's [Issue Resolution policy](#).

## 6. PLAYER DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING

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**Blackburn Junior Football Club seeks to develop all of our players to the best of their abilities.**

### 6.1 DEVELOPMENT PATHWAYS & TRAINING

Blackburn Junior Football Club is committed to the development of all of its players.

The Club adopts a pathway approach encouraging children to participate in Auskick, then developing them through their junior years (Under 8s – 17s) with the hope that they will then go on to play senior football.

The underlying aim is to have fun and develop players to the best of their ability.

### 6.2 UNDER 8s, 9s and 10s

#### 6.2.1 DEVELOPMENT

The majority of players in the Under 8s, 9s and 10s are still in the early stage of learning what many would consider to be the basic skills.

In these age groups the emphasis is placed on participation and enjoyment. Additional goals are the acquisition of football skills and the nurturing of physical and emotional development and wellbeing.

The Club believes strongly in the equality of opportunities given to players in the Under 8s, 9s and 10s. Players should be provided equal game time, although this may need to be averaged out over several weeks. Similarly players should be provided with the opportunity to play in all positions, although this may need to be averaged out over several weeks. We believe this to be the best way to provide young footballers with all round development regardless of their level of ability.

#### 6.2.2 TRAINING

The Under 8s, 9s and 10s shall train one night a week.

The coaches will advise the location, timing and duration of training.

Players are encouraged to attend training and to participate in a co-operative manner. Non-attendance at training will not affect a player's selection or game time.

Players **must** wear mouthguards and helmets at training.

The Club does not provide first aid officers at training. Training may also be cancelled due to excessive heat, inclement weather or poor ground conditions. Accordingly, parents are expected to remain at training. They are also encouraged to assist the coaches with training.

### 6.3 UNDER 11s and 12s

#### 6.3.1 DEVELOPMENT

Some players in the Under 11s and 12s have developed good skills and are able to perform at a faster pace, which places them at a more competitive level in a match situation. However, some players are still in the early stages of understanding the game and developing their skills. In many ways this is a transitional period as the players' progress into a more competitive environment.

In these age groups the emphasis is placed on participation and enjoyment. Additional focus is placed on skill development and teamwork supplemented through set plays and positioning.

The Club believes strongly in providing equal opportunities to players in the Under 11s and 12s. Players should be provided equal game time, although this may need to be averaged out over several weeks. While some players at this age become naturally suited to set positions, we encourage players to try various positions. We believe this to be the best way to provide young footballers with all round development regardless of their level of ability.

### **6.3.2 TRAINING**

The Under 11s and 12s may train one or two nights a week.

The coaches will advise the location, timing and duration of training.

Players are encouraged to attend both training sessions where there are two provided. Players are expected to attend at least one training session per week and to participate in a cooperative manner.

Non-attendance at training shall not affect a player's selection or game time. However, a player who is not able to regularly attend training may be selected in the Red team where the coaches believe that the player's failure to regularly attend training could prejudice his/hers skill development and the ability to effectively compete at a higher level.

Players **must** wear mouthguards and helmets at training.

The Club does not provide first aid officers at training. Training may also be cancelled due to excessive heat, inclement weather or poor ground conditions. Accordingly, parents are expected to remain at training. They are also encouraged to assist the coaches with training.

## **6.4 UNDER 13s – u15s**

### **6.4.1 DEVELOPMENT**

Many players in the Under 13s and 15s have developed good skills with some even playing representative football while others are still developing.

This can be a difficult time as players mature at different rates: individual players can grow rapidly leading to significant differences in size, ability, confidence and maturity.

In these age groups there is still an emphasis on participation and enjoyment but with an increasing focus on development as the players mature.

The Club believes strongly in providing equal opportunities to players in the Under 13s – 15s. Players should be provided equal game time, although this may need to be averaged out over several weeks. Players are still encouraged to try various positions while recognizing that this is a time when players can begin to specialize as they develop and mature.

### **6.4.2 TRAINING**

The Under 13s – 15s shall train for two nights a week.

The coaches will advise the location, timing and duration of training.

Players are encouraged to attend both training sessions, and expected to attend at least one training session per week and to participate in a cooperative manner.

Non-attendance at training shall not affect a player's selection or game time. However, a player who is not able to regularly attend training may be selected in the Red team where the coaches believe that the player's failure to regularly attend training could prejudice his/hers skill development and the ability to effectively compete at a higher level.

Players must wear mouthguards at training.

The Club does not provide first aid officers at training. Training may also be cancelled due to excessive heat, inclement weather or poor ground conditions. Accordingly, parents are expected to remain at training. They are also encouraged to assist the coaches with training.

## **6.5 UNDER 17s**

### **6.5.1 DEVELOPMENT**

By this stage we expect that most players will have developed good skills and a sound understanding of the game. While the coach has overall responsibility for the development and well being of the team we expect players to become more accountable and take greater responsibilities for their training and performance.

This is a watershed period: some players have developed very good skills and have been selected by Oakleigh Chargers/Eastern Rangers. Others are aspiring to play senior football at Blackburn while others are less driven to play senior football. Hence it can be a difficult period with boys having various aspirations. Our aim is to help the boys develop to the best of their abilities and while the Club will seek to achieve this, it will very much depend on the desires of the players and their individual commitments to not only training but their own development.

### **6.5.2 TRAINING**

The Under 17s shall train two nights a week.

The coaches will advise the location, timing and duration of training.

Players are encouraged to attend both training sessions, and expected to attend at least one training session per week and to participate in a cooperative manner.

Non-attendance at training may affect a player's selection or game time where the coaches believe that the player's failure to regularly attend training could prejudice the player's skill development and the ability to effectively compete on game day.

Players must wear mouthguards training.

The Club does not provide first aid officers at training. Training may also be cancelled due to excessive heat, inclement weather or poor ground conditions. Accordingly, parents are expected to remain at training. They are also encouraged to assist the coaches with training.

## 7. GAME TIME (ROSTERING & ROTATION) POLICY

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**Blackburn Junior Football Club seeks to provide all players with similar opportunities to play football.**

### 7.1 UNDER 8s, 9s and 10s – GAME TIME

#### 7.1.1 **PLAYER NUMBERS – UNDER 8s and 9s**

The EFL limits the number of Under 8s and 9s to 26 per game with 15s players on the ground.

Where sufficient players are available a team of 20 players should be selected to play. The coach may use his/her discretion to field additional players.

Subject to injury or other extenuating circumstances each player should be afforded the opportunity to play the same number of games as their teammates.

Players who are rostered off are encouraged to attend the game bringing their full playing gear. Should the opposition not have sufficient players then the BJFC player may get the opportunity to play with the opposition.

#### 7.1.2 **PLAYER NUMBERS – UNDER 10s**

The EFL limits the number of Under 10 to 26 per game with 18s players on the ground.

Where sufficient players are available a team of 26 players should be selected to play.

Subject to injury or other extenuating circumstances each player should be afforded the opportunity to play the same number of games as their teammates.

Any player rostered off should be considered an 'emergency' and should attend the game to replace a player who may not be available or to assist the team (e.g. water carrier etc.).

Players who are rostered off are encouraged to attend the game bringing their full playing gear. Should the opposition not have sufficient players then the BJFC player may get the opportunity to play with the opposition.

#### 7.1.3 **GAME TIME – UNDER 8s, 9s and u10s**

Subject to injury or other extenuating circumstances each player:

- should be afforded the same amount of game time over the course of the season.
- selected on game day will play a minimum of half a game (or equivalent time over the duration of the game).

No player should play a full game until all players have had the opportunity of playing at least half a game (or equivalent time over the duration of the game).

#### 7.1.4 **POSITIONING – UNDER 8s, 9s and u10s**

Players should be provided with the opportunity to play in all positions (i.e. backline, centre/on ball, forward line and bench), although this may need to be averaged out over several weeks. We believe this to be the best way to provide young footballers with all round development regardless of their level of ability.

Players should rotate their position on the ground at least once during the game, to maximize exposure to the game.

#### 7.1.5 **LIGHTNING PREMIERSHIP – UNDER 9s and u10s**

The Lightning Premiership gives players in the EFL's non-competitive age groups a taste of competitive football – undefeated teams on the day are crowned Lightning Premiers!

All players wishing to participate in the Lightning Premiership should be entitled to play. However, if there are too many players, priority will be given to those players who turn 9 that year and who have not participated before.

Subject to injury or other extenuating circumstances, every player should be rostered for approximately the same amount of game time, although there may not necessarily be equal rotation through all positions.

## **7.2 UNDER 11s – UNDER 15s – GAME TIME - HOME & AWAY**

### **7.2.1 PLAYER NUMBERS**

The EFL limits the number of Under 11s and 15s to 26 players per game with 18 on the field and 6 on the bench.

Where sufficient players are available a team of 24 players should be selected to play. Hence there is the potential for players to be rostered off.

Subject to injury or other extenuating circumstances each player should be afforded the opportunity to play the same number of games as their teammates.

Under 11s - 12s - Any player rostered off should be considered an 'emergency' and should attend the game to replace a player who may not be available or to assist the team (e.g. water carrier etc.).

Under 13s - 15s - If there is the need to roster off a player:

- the coach should liaise with other coaches in his/her age group and the coaches in the next age group to ascertain whether any other teams are short of players and whether the rostered off player(s) may be suitable to play in another team.
- If the rostered off players do not play in another team, they should be considered an 'emergency' and should attend the game to replace a player who may not be available or to assist the team (e.g. water carrier etc.).

### **7.2.2 GAME TIME**

Subject to injury or other extenuating circumstances each player:

- should be afforded the same amount of game time over the course of the season.
- selected on game day will play a minimum of three quarters (or equivalent time over the duration of the game).

Under 11s - 12s - No player should play a full game until all players have had the opportunity of playing at least three quarters (or equivalent time over the duration of the game).

### **7.2.3 POSITIONING**

While some players at this age become naturally suited to set positions, the Club encourages players to try various. We believe this to be the best way to provide young footballers with all round development regardless of their level of ability.

## **7.3 UNDER 11s – UNDER 15s - GAME TIME - FINALS**

As detailed within the EFL Bi-Laws, a player must play a minimum of 3 matches with their affiliated junior club in the home and away matches to qualify to play in the finals series for their junior club.

It is generally recognised that finals football is different from Home and Away games. The policy will be based on the following principles:

- An opportunity for as many players as is possible to experience finals football.
- An understanding that player selection and playing time for individual players gives the team the best possible opportunity to win.
- An understanding that the policy will provide Coaches in the Under 13s – 15s greater scope for varying playing time for individual players than Under 11s and 12s.

### **7.3.1 PLAYER NUMBERS**

Where sufficient players are available a team of 24 players should be selected to play.

Any player rostered off should be considered an 'emergency' and should attend the game to replace a player who may not be available or to assist the team (e.g. water carrier etc.).

### **7.3.2 PLAYER SELECTION**

Where a team will play two or more finals then every player on the team list must be selected in at least one of the first two finals.

Where a team is not guaranteed to play more than one final then team selection is at the discretion of the coach. It is expected that a fair and reasonable selection process will be undertaken should the team continue to progress (i.e. the Committee expects that all players should be given the opportunity to play in finals).

Where a team plays three or more finals, it is expected that a fair and reasonable selection process will be undertaken to give all players equal opportunity to play in finals.

### **7.3.3 GAME TIME**

Subject to injury or other extenuating circumstances, every player selected in a finals game will play a minimum of half a game.

### **7.3.4 POSITIONING**

Players should be positioned having regard to their abilities and the needs of the game.

## **7.4 UNDER 17s – GAME TIME - HOME & AWAY**

### **7.4.1 PLAYER NUMBERS**

The EFL limits the number of Under 17 to 30 players per game with 18 on the field and 6 on the bench.

Where sufficient players are available a team of 24 players should be selected to play. Hence there is the potential for players to be rostered off.

Subject to injury or other extenuating circumstances each player should be afforded the opportunity to play the same number of games as their teammates.

Any player rostered off should be considered an 'emergency' and should attend the game to replace a player who may not be available or to assist the team (e.g. water carrier etc.).

### **7.4.2 GAME TIME**

Subject to injury or other extenuating circumstances each player selected may play a minimum of half a game (or equivalent time over the duration of the game).

Coaches may, however, apply some discretion to the selection of players and the amount of game time they play in any particular week having regard to:

- the preparation of the player (incl. attendance and commitment at training)
- the performance of the player (incl. commitment to the game)
- the calibre of the opposition
- the safety of the player concerned
- the status of the game

### **7.4.3 POSITIONING**

Players should be positioned having regard to their abilities and the needs of the game.

## **7.5 UNDER 17s - GAME TIME - FINALS**

As detailed within the EFL Bi-Laws, a player must play at least 3 matches with their affiliated junior club in the home and away matches to qualify to play in the finals series for their junior club.

It is generally recognised that finals football is different from Home and Away games. The policy will be based on the following principles:

- An opportunity for as many players as is possible to experience finals football.
- An understanding that player selection and playing time for individual players gives the team the best possible opportunity to win.
- An understanding that the policy will provide Coaches in the Under 17s greater scope for varying playing time having regard to player commitment and the needs of the game.

### **7.5.1 PLAYER NUMBERS**

Where sufficient players are available a team of 24 players should be selected to play.

Any player rostered off should be considered an 'emergency' and should attend the game to replace a player who may not be available or to assist the team (e.g. water carrier etc.).

### **7.5.2 PLAYER SELECTION**

Where a team plays two or more finals then every player on the team list must be selected in at least one of the first two finals.

Where a team is not guaranteed to play more than one final then team selection is at the discretion of the coach. It is expected that a reasonable and fair selection process will be undertaken should the team continue to progress (i.e. the Committee expects that all players should be given the opportunity to play in finals).

Where a team plays three or more finals, it is expected that a fair and reasonable selection process will be undertaken.

### **7.5.3 GAME TIME**

Subject to injury or other extenuating circumstances, every player selected in a finals game will play a minimum of one quarter (or equivalent time over the duration of the game).

### **7.5.4 POSITIONING**

Players should be positioned having regard to their abilities and the needs of the game.

## **7.6 MOVEMENT OF PLAYERS BETWEEN TEAMS AND AGE GROUPS**

There may be occasions where a team has insufficient players for a game and coaches may seek players from other teams.

Where there are two teams in the same age group, coaches should seek players from the other team in their age group in the first instance.

Where additional players cannot be sourced from the same age group, coaches should seek players from the age group below.

The two relevant coaches should satisfy themselves that any child nominated to play up is capable of playing in the higher competition.

The coach has total discretion about the amount of game time a substitute player may play if s/he has already played a game that day.

The EFL poses severe limits on players playing up (e.g. number of games allowed, final's qualifications etc.): coaches should consult with our Football Director before seeking to play a player up.

All players in the Under 10 to Under 15 grades (inclusive) may play out of their registered age group. However, no player may:

- Play more than two years above his/her registered age group.
- Play more than two (2) games out of his/her registered age group in any one
- season.

The first team a player plays his third (3) match in is the only team they can qualify for finals in. Once a player has qualified in a division they are limited to two (2) matches in a higher division. They cannot move down to a lower division.

All players in the Under 17 grade may play out of their registered age group. However, no player may:

- Play nine (9) or more games out of his/her registered age group in any one
- season.
- Play nine (9) or more games in the senior competition or TAC Cup Competition and participate in the Under 17 finals in that season

Players may qualify for finals in both Under 17 and Under 19/seniors.

## **7.7 MOVEMENT OF PLAYERS WITHIN AGE GROUPS**

In accordance with the [EFL By-Laws](#), players in Under 10s to Under 15s can only play up two age groups (e.g. an Under 12 player can only play up to u14s), and can only play out of their registered age group twice per season.

Players in Under 17s may play out of their registered age group. However, no player may play nine or more games out of his/her registered age group in any one season; play nine or more games in the senior competition or TAC Cup Competition and participate in the Under 17 finals in that season. Players may qualify for finals in both Under 17 and Under 19 Seniors.

Where a club fields more than one (1) team in the same age grade a player in Under 11s to Under 17s is

permitted to move between teams. However:

- Once a player has played five (5) matches in the higher graded team, that player may not move to the lower graded team for the remainder of the season.
- Players in the lower rated team are free to move to the higher rated team during home and away matches.
- The first team a player plays 5 games is the only team that player is eligible to represent in the finals series.
- Where a bye is fixture in the higher graded team, no player is permitted to move to the lower graded team during the week of the bye.
- If a club with multiple teams in one age group forfeits a match, the forfeit can only occur in the lower rated team.

## **7.8 PLAYER AVAILABILITY & GAME TIME RECORDS**

The Coach must keep a record of:

- player availability each week; and
- the amount of game time a player receives each week.

The Team Manager must:

- keep the records until presentation day; and
- provide the records to the Committee with 48hours of receiving a request from the Club Secretary or Football Manager for the records.

## 8. CAPTAINS

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**Blackburn Junior Football Club seeks to provide strong leadership for all of our teams and to reward players who clearly lead by example and reflect the values of the Club.**

### 8.1 UNDER 8s, 9s and 10s – TEAM CAPTAINS

The coach shall appoint a captain or co-captain each week. A player shall not be reappointed until all players have had the chance of being a captain.

### 8.2 UNDER 11s to 16s – TEAM CAPTAINS

Ideally a captain should be appointed for the season. Alternatively, the team may elect to appoint a leadership group.

Where a captain is appointed, the team may also appoint a vice captain or vice captains.

The coach may appoint the captain or invite the players to vote for whom they believe should be the captain. The coach should ensure that the Captain demonstrates maturity, leads by example, has the respect of the players and, most importantly, complies with the Club's [Behaviour policy](#).

A player in the Under 11s – 16s teams should not be appointed as a captain for two or more consecutive seasons.

### 8.3 Under 17s and Under 18s – TEAM CAPTAINS

Only a single captain should be appointed for the boys Under 17s teams and girls Under 18s teams.

The teams should also appoint a vice captain or vice captains.

The coaches may invite the players to vote on who they believe should be the captain. The coach should ensure that the captain demonstrates maturity, leads by example, has the respect of the players and, most importantly, complies with the Club's [Behaviour policy](#).

The captain of the second Under 17s boys team may be reappointed as the boys Under 17s captain for the following season.

### 8.4 CLUB CAPTAINS

Each season the Club shall appoint 2 Club Captains, consisting of one boys captain and one girls captain. The criteria for appointing these captains shall include leadership skills, community participation and values, and communication skills.

The boys captain shall be appointed from the Under 17s teams and the girls captain shall be appointed from the Under 18s team.

The captains shall, in consultation with their coach, arrange for each top age Under 17 boys player and top age Under 18 girls player to attend at least one Under 8, Under 9 or Under 10 boys or Under 10 girls training session to assist with coaching.

## 9. AWARDS & MILESTONES

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The Blackburn Junior Football Club seeks to celebrate the achievement and development of our players.

### 9.1 WEEKLY AWARDS

Weekly encouragement awards should be distributed evenly to all players over the year to recognise their efforts and achievements.

These awards are granted at the discretion of the Coach.

### 9.2 UNDER 8s and 9s - AWARDS FOR HOME & AWAY SEASON

All Under 8s and 9s players will receive a participation trophy or medallion at the end of the season.

### 9.3 UNDER 10s – 18s - AWARDS FOR HOME & AWAY SEASON

The following awards will be presented at the end of the season for the Under 10s – Under 18s:

- Best and Fairest (by votes). Multiple winners are allowed and each receives a trophy (i.e. no count backs).
- Runner up Best and Fairest (by votes). Multiple winners are allowed and each receives a trophy (i.e. no count backs).
- Most consistent, Second runner up in Best and Fairest (by votes). Multiple winners are allowed, and each receives a trophy (i.e. no count backs).
- Coaches Award. Selected at discretion of coach and support staff. Single award only.
- Most Improved. Selected at discretion of coach and support staff. Single award only.

#### 9.3.1 **BEST & FAIREST VOTING**

The 'Best and Fairest' and 'Runner Up' will be determined by a combination of coaches and parent/guardian votes.

Each round there will be two voting cards. One is to be completed by the Coach (or his nominated team official i.e. assistant coach or runner) and one is to be completed by the rostered parent/guardian (not being the coach, assistant coach or runner). All votes carry equal weight and all votes will be recorded in a players end of season tally.

Before and during the match the parent/guardian and the coach (or his nominated official) may consult but at the conclusion of the game there is to be no further discussion between the two parties. The nominated parent/guardian is required to listen to the coach's pre match, half time and post match addresses to ensure he/she understands the requests the coach has given to the playing group. The coach (or his nominated official) and the parent each then allocates their 5 votes. 5 votes for B & F down to 1 vote for 5th B & F of the match.

Both the Coach (or his/her nominated official) and the parent will fill out separately one voting card each after the match. Votes are then to be placed in an envelope which is then sealed and given to the Team Manager immediately after the game. The envelopes must remain sealed until the end of the season. **A running tally of the votes must not be kept during the season.**

Votes must be based on the players' performance on the day and their contribution to the team; they should not be given as encouragement awards or to reflect improvement unless they were genuinely one of the best five players on the day.

All votes must remain confidential with the winners to be announced at the Club's annual presentation day. Notwithstanding this, the Under 17s Black team may undertake a counting of the votes and announcement of the winners at an end of season function, although the official declaration of the winners and awarding of trophies will be made at the Club's annual presentation day.

If two or more players are tied on the same number of votes, they should be declared joint winners. The same applies to the two runners up.

#### **9.4 UNDER 11s – 18s – AWARDS FOR FINALS**

A Best Finals Player award will be provided for each team who participates in **two** or more finals.

The method used to identify the best player of the home and away season will also apply to the finals series.

#### **9.5 AWARD PRESENTATIONS**

The awards outlined in Sections 9.2 – 9.4 will be awarded at the Club's Annual Presentation Day. Team officials should not disclose the award recipients prior to presentation day without the Committee's approval.

#### **9.6 MILESTONES**

The Blackburn Junior Football Club will recognise the outstanding achievement of a player reaching 50/100 junior games, as follows:

<b>Games</b>	<b>BJFC Recognition</b>	<b>EFL Recognition</b>
50	Club Trophy	
100	Club Trophy	Medallion and mention in Eastern Footballer.
150	Club Trophy	Mention in Eastern Footballer.

The Club's Registrar keeps a list of games played at the end of each season with Blackburn Junior Football Club. This list is provided to all team managers at the start of each season.

Players who transfer from another Club, should advise their team manager of the number of games played.

The Team Manager will advise the Registrar when a player is approaching his/her milestone, so trophies/medals can be ordered.

Ideally trophies/medals are to be presented at the proceeding Club Family night. If this is not suitable for the coach and/or player/family, the trophy/medal can be present by the coach before or after the milestone game played, at the clubs Trophy Presentation Day or at the team's end of season team break up celebration.

## 10. OUR FEMALE FOOTBALL PROGRAM

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**Blackburn Football Club** are serious about continuing to develop a strong girls football program.

Blackburn Junior Football Club's Female Program started more than ten years ago with encouragement for girls to play in our mixed junior teams. We were one of the first clubs (one of only three) in the EFL to establish a Girls' Football Program back in 2012. We have since had over 300 girls play footy at Blackburn and we are proud to have a team in every age group this season.

With the AFL's establishment of a national competition in 2017, female football has become a serious proposition. Blackburn Junior Football Club is equally serious about continuing to develop a strong girls' football program. We have been long-time supporters of girls playing football, and our girls program goes far beyond simply fielding girls' teams:

- In 2017, we celebrated our 11th year of actively promoting girls playing football and our 6th year of hosting all-girls teams.
- In 2015 we launched Blackburn Girls Auskick the only Auskick centre exclusively for girls in the City of Whitehorse.
- We have been running a series of primary school clinics including those for Blackburn, Blackburn Lake, St Thomas', Laburnum, Mt Pleasant, Kingswood and Orchard Grove Primaries, as well as Blackburn, Box Hill and Forest Hill Secondary Colleges.
- We run school holiday skill clinics just for girls.
- In 2014 we hosted the Blackburn District Primary School Sports Association Girls Footy Day. This was expanded further in 2016 to include the Nunawading District Primary School Sports Association with more than 400 primary school girls all playing footy at Morton Park in 2016 and 2017.

### 10.1 APPLICABLE POLICIES

The policies set out in this document apply equally to the girls as to the boys.

All games of Australian Football must be played in strict accordance with the "Laws of Australian Football" as determined by the AFL, unless otherwise advised by the EFL.

Our female teams play within the Eastern Regional Girls (ERG) competition, which is a joint initiative between the EFL and the AFL Yarra Ranges competitions. In the first instance our female teams must adhere to the Eastern Region Girls By-Laws, as detailed within the [EFL By-Laws](#). These guidelines relate to specific scenarios unique to the Eastern Region Girls competition. Where there is no guideline listed on an occasion, all female teams operate under the rules and by-laws of their home competition (EFL or AFL Yarra Ranges).

In relation to the participation of males and females within Australian Football competitions conducted by AFLV and AFLV affiliates, the [EFL By-Laws](#) reference Regulation 4 – Gender Regulation within the AFL Victoria Gender Regulation policy which state that in accordance with the [Equal Opportunity Act 1995 \(Vic\)](#) "people aged under 12 years of age cannot be excluded on the basis of sex or gender identity from participating in a competitive sporting activity".

In additional "AFL Victoria Affiliates will exclude females who reach 14 years of age as at 1 January in the year of play from playing in any competition that is not a "female competition".

## SECTION C – BEHAVIOUR & SAFETY

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### 11. BEHAVIOUR POLICY

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**Blackburn Junior Football Club seeks to provide an enjoyable football environment where we play fairly and respect our teammates, players, coaches, opponents, umpires, parents and visitors.**

#### 11.1 CODE OF CONDUCT

The EFL has adopted a [Code of Conduct](#) for players, coaches, administrators/officials and parents/spectators (as detailed below). Blackburn Football Club fully supports the EFL's Code of Conduct and expects all players, coaches, administrators/officials and parents/spectators to abide by the code.

All persons associated with the Club must comply with the EFL's Code of Conduct. Any breaches should be reported to your Team Manager or to the Club Secretary at [secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au](mailto:secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au) and will be managed in accordance with our [Issue Resolution Policy](#).

### CODE OF CONDUCT

#### COACHES:

- Be reasonable in your demands on players' time, energy and enthusiasm.
- Avoid over-playing the talented players, the "just average" players need and deserve equal time.
- Remember that players participate for fun and enjoyment.
- Ensure that equipment and facilities meet safety standards and are appropriate to the age and ability of the players.
- Take into consideration the maturity level of the players, when scheduling and determining the length of practice times and competition.
- Develop team respect for the ability of opponents as well as for the judgement of officials and opposing coaches.
- Follow the advice of a physician when determining when an injured player is ready to recommence training or competition.
- Keep yourself informed of the sound coaching principles and the principles of growth and development of players.
- Create opportunities to teach appropriate sports behaviour as well basic skills.
- Ensure that skill learning and appropriate sports behaviour have priority over highly structured competitions for young players.
- Help players understand the responsibilities and implications of their freedom to choose between fair and unfair play.

"A child's self-esteem is delicate and easily damaged, particularly by parents attempting to act out their own lives through the youngsters on the sports field. Participation in sports events must be something for children to enjoy. They should not be saddled with win-at-all costs attitudes at any early age."

Daily Telegraph editorial.

#### **ADMINISTRATORS/OFFICIALS:**

- Ensure that equal opportunities for participation in sports are made available to all players, regardless of ability, size, shape, sex (for females under 14), age, disability or ethnic origin.
- Ensure that rules, equipment, length of games and training schedules take into consideration the age, ability and maturity level of participating players.
- Ensure that adequate supervision is provided by qualified and competent coaches and officials capable of developing appropriate sports behaviour and skill technique.
- Remember that players participate for enjoyment and play down the importance of rewards.
- Provide clinics aimed at improving the standards of coaching and officiating, with an emphasis on appropriate behaviour and skill technique.
- Ensure that parents, coaches, sponsors, physicians and participants understand their responsibilities regarding fair play

Modify rules and regulations to match the skill level of players and their needs.

- Condemn unsporting behaviour and promote respect for all opponents.
- Publicly encourage rule changes which will reinforce the principles of participation for fun and enjoyment.
- Ensure that your behaviour is consistent with the principles of good sporting behaviour.
- Make a personal commitment to keep yourself informed of sound officiating principles and the principles of growth and development of players.

#### **PARENTS/SPECTATORS**

- Encourage players to participate, if they are interested.
- Encourage players to always participate according to the rules.
- Never ridicule or yell at a player for making a mistake or losing the game.
- Remember that players learn best from example. Applaud good plays by all teams.
- If you disagree with an official, raise the issue through the appropriate channels rather than questioning the official's judgement and honesty in public.
- Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from sporting activities.
- Recognise the value and importance of volunteer coaches.
- Remember that children play organised sports for fun. They are not playing for the entertainment to spectators only, nor are they miniature professionals.
- Condemn the use of violence in any form, be it by spectators, coaches, officials or players.
- Encourage players to follow the rules and the officials' decisions.
- Demonstrate appropriate social behaviour by not using foul language, harassing players, coaches or officials.

**PLAYERS:**

- Play by the rules.
- Never argue with an official. If you disagree, discuss the matter with your coach.
- Control your temper. Verbal abuse of officials or other players, or provoking an opponent is not acceptable.
- Work equally hard for yourself and/or for your team. Your team's performance will benefit, so will you.
- Be a good sport. Applaud all good plays whether they be by your team, opponent or the other team.
- Treat all players as you would like to be treated. Do not interfere with, bully or take unfair advantage of another player.
- Co-operate with your coach, team mates and opponents. Without them there would be no competition.
- Play for the "fun of it" and not just to please parents and coaches.
- Avoid using derogatory language.

**Note:** Codes of Conduct are part of the National Football Policy provided by the Australian Football League.

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**11.2 RACIAL & RELIGIOUS VILIFICATION**

No person in his/her capacity as a participant, coach, administrator, official, volunteer, parent or spectator in the Club in the course of carrying out his/her duties or functions as or incidental to being a participant in the Club shall engage in conduct that offends, humiliates, intimidates, contempts, ridicules, incites, threatens, disparages, vilifies or insults another person on the basis of that person's race, religion, colour, descent, gender, sexual orientation, ability, or national or ethnic origin.

No person in his/her capacity as a spectator or participant in the Club in the course of carrying out his/her duties or functions as or incidental to being a participant in the Club shall intentionally engage in conduct that s/he knows is likely to incite hatred against another person, or threaten physical harm or incite hatred in others to cause physical harm to a person or to a person's property because of that person's race, religion, colour, descent, gender, sexual orientation, ability, or national or ethnic origin.

Our club supports the [EFL's Discrimination and Vilification policy](#) and must adhere to the [Australian Football League National Vilification and Discrimination policy \(February 2003\)](#).

The Club is bound by the [Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 \(Vic\)](#), the [Racial Discrimination Act 1975 \(Cth\)](#), and the [Equal Opportunity Act 1995 \(Vic\)](#). This Policy is consistent with the legislation but not in substitution of the legislation.

All persons associated with the Club must comply with these requirements. Any breaches should be reported to your team manager or to the Club Secretary at [secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au](mailto:secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au) and will be managed in accordance with our [Issue Resolution Policy](#).

**11.3 VICTIMISATION**

No person in his/her capacity as a participant, coach, administrator, official, volunteer, parent or spectator in the Club in the course of carrying out his/her duties or functions as or incidental to being a participant in the Club should victimise another person.

A person will victimise another person (the victim) if:

- (a) the person subjects or threatens to subject the victim to any detriment because the victim (or a person associated with the victim) intends to or has lodged a complaint in contravention of this Policy; or
- (b) the person assists, requests, induces, encourages or authorises another person to subject the victim to any detriment because the victim (or a person associated with the victim) intends to or has lodged a complaint in contravention of this Policy.

All persons associated with the Club must comply with these requirements. Any breaches should be reported to your Team Manager or to our Club Secretary at [secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au](mailto:secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au) and will be managed in accordance with our [Issue Resolution Policy](#).

#### **11.4 GENDER**

Blackburn Junior Football Club actively encourages both boys and girls to play football.

In accordance with the [Equal Opportunity Act 1995 \(Vic\)](#), people aged under 12 years of age cannot be excluded on the basis of sex or gender identity from participating in a competitive sporting activity.

Pursuant to section 66 (1) of the Act, people of one sex or gender aged 12 and over can be excluded from participating in competitive sporting activities in which the strength, stamina and physique of competitors is relevant.

As a member of AFL Victoria, the EFL excludes females who reach 14 years of age as at 1 January in the year of play from playing in any competition that is not a 'female competition'.

All persons associated with the Club must comply with these requirements. Any breaches should be reported to your Team Manager or to our Club Secretary at [secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au](mailto:secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au) and will be managed in accordance with our [Issue Resolution Policy](#).

#### **11.5 REPORTED PLAYERS (Including Yellow and Red Cards)**

It can be a very traumatic experience for a junior player to be reported or to be the victim of a reportable incident. The Club will endeavour to ensure that the distress associated with this event is minimised. To ensure this happens, the following needs to occur:

The Coach and Team Manager need to manage the situation in a calm and supportive manner. Often a report may occur as a result of a heated incident. It is the responsibility of the two Club officials to ensure:

- a. The player is removed from the ground for the Coach to be able to talk to the player about the incident and point out the outcomes of such an incident.
  - i. That the bench and player/s remain calm, ensuring that no further incidents grow out of the particular case.
  - ii. That supporters, and in particular, the parents of the reported player remain calm and do not incite a further incident.
  - iii. Ensure that all details (including witness details) of the incident are immediately noted, as this may be needed as evidence at the tribunal.
- b. After the game, the Coach and Team Manager, in consultation with the player and parents (if they are able to contribute in a positive manner) will discuss the timing and actions to be taken.
- c. The Club Secretary ([secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au](mailto:secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au)) needs to be notified of the report and the decision of the Coach, Team Manager and player regarding the taking of the Set Penalty. If the case goes to the tribunal, the Club Secretary will then contact the Club President who will then commission the services of the Clubs Tribunal Advocate (Paul Oglethorpe) and Player Welfare Manager (Bernard Geason).

- d. The Advocate will then take charge of the defense. It would be expected that the Coach would still take a very active role in the moral support for the player.
- e. In the event of one of our players being required to give evidence, then all steps will be followed except those related to Set Penalty.
- f. In the event that a set penalty is handed down, there is no grounds for appeal, so no further evidence can be given.
- g. A player who has been on the receiving end of a reportable incident and is required to give evidence needs to be well supported especially morally.

It should also be noted that the Club in certain circumstances might impose disciplinary action and/or penalties or suspensions outside the findings of the League / Tribunal with respect to misconduct or bringing the game or the Club into disrepute. This action may be taken even in a report has not been made. These decisions will be at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

All incidents / outcomes should be recorded on an incident report form and should be filed by the Club's Secretary.

#### **11.6 EFL PENALTIES & FINES**

A player who is suspended is not eligible to be selected to play for the duration of the suspension. A suspended player should not be considered to be rostered off.

Players (and their parents) are liable for the payment of any fines imposed on them by the EFL. If the EFL issues the fine to the Club it is expected that the player/parents will fully compensate the Club. An unpaid fine will be considered a debt to the Club:

- The player cannot play for the Club until the fine is paid.
- The Club will not re-register a player in future season until the fine is paid.
- The Club will not approve a transfer to another club until the fine has been paid.

## 12. ISSUE RESOLUTION POLICY

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**Blackburn Junior Football Club seeks to ensure that any issues raised are resolved in a timely and amicable manner to the satisfaction of all parties.**

### 12.1 **RAISING A CONCERN**

Any person wishing to raise an issue should do so as follows:

- Team related – Raise the concern with the Team Manager or Coach;
- General nature – Raise the concern with a Committee Member, ideally our Club Secretary at [secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au](mailto:secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au).

### 12.2 **TEAM COMPLAINTS**

#### 12.2.1 **PARENTS/PLAYERS CONCERNS ABOUT COACHING**

Our coaches are not paid. They volunteer a lot of time and effort to provide a positive learning environment for our children. Parents are asked to fully support and, where possible, assist coaches when required. If you have any concerns regarding the coach, you should inform the Team Manager and where possible, speak directly to the coach about your concerns. At no time should you attempt to confront a coach whilst training or a game is in progress.

#### 12.2.2 **COACHES CONCERNS ABOUT PARENTS**

If a coach has a problem with a parent they should try to establish and maintain an open line of communication and talk to the parent about your their concern. It is advisable that this is done in the presence of the Team Manager. Do not let the situation become heated. If the matter is not able to be resolved in this manner, it should be referred to the Club Secretary at [secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au](mailto:secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au) who in turn may refer it to the Executive Committee, including the Welfare Manager, for mediation and resolution.

#### 12.2.3 **COACHES CONCERNS ABOUT A PLAYER**

If a coach has a problem with a player they should talk to the player and express their concerns. Discussions are always best undertaken in the presence of a parent.

If they are unable to resolve the matter at that level they may refer it to the Club Secretary at [secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au](mailto:secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au) for consideration.

If concerns continue, Coaches have the authority to suspend players if the further incident warrants this action, however this path of action would need to be discussed in the first instance with our Football Director.

#### 12.2.4 **PLAYER CONCERNS ABOUT ANOTHER PLAYER**

If a player has an issue with another player, s/he (or their parents) should not take matters into their own hands but rather refer the matter to the coach in the first instance.

If they are unable to resolve the matter at that level they may refer it to our Club Secretary for consideration.

### 12.3 **COMPLAINTS INVOLVING OTHER CLUBS**

#### 12.3.1 **COMPLAINS AGAINST ANOTHER CLUB**

If a Club member has concerns about the behaviour of a player, team official or spectator, they should first raise the matter with the relevant Team Manager who should address it by speaking to the opposing Team Manager.

If they are unable to resolve the matter, they may refer it to our Club Secretary at [secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au](mailto:secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au) for consideration.

Irrespective of the outcome any complaints made to an opposing club should be referred to our Club Secretary for noting.

### **12.3.2 COMPLAINTS BY ANOTHER CLUB**

If a representative of another Club wishes to raise a concern, they should do so in the first instance with the relevant BFC team manager.

If they are unable to resolve the matter, they may refer it to our Club Secretary at [secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au](mailto:secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au) for consideration.

Irrespective of the outcome any complaints received from an opposing club should be referred to the Club Secretary for noting.

## **12.4 COMPLAINTS TO THE CLUB SECRETARY**

The Club Secretary shall act as the Club's Complaints Officer.

### **12.4.1 RESPONSIBLE OFFICERS**

Depending on the nature of the issue the Club Secretary will, in consultation with the President, refer the matter to the relevant Club Official for investigation and resolution, typically:

<b>Matter</b>	<b>Investigating Officer</b>
Player selection, game time etc.	Football Director
Coaches and other team officials behaviour	Football Director
Player behaviour	Welfare Manager
Matters involving claims of vilification, discrimination & bullying	Welfare Manager
Parent / spectator behaviour	Welfare Manager
Matters involving the EFL and/or other clubs	Welfare Manager

Depending upon the nature of the issue the matter may be referred to a third party either internally or externally to the Club (e.g. Child Protection Officer).

The Club President, Vice President and Secretary are the only representatives of the Club who may lodge an official complaint with another team, the EFL or any other organisation.

### **12.4.2 RESOLUTION**

In attempting to resolve the issue, all parties should take into account the following factors:

- The extent of the issue, i.e., if it is likely to have a wider effect in the Club;
- The number of players or teams affected;
- Whether appropriate temporary measures are possible or desirable;
- The expected time before the issue can be addressed; and
- What resources may be needed to resolve the issue.

On receiving a complaint the Investigating Officer shall:

- inform the person alleged to have contravened the Policy (the respondent) of the complaint and provide the respondent with an opportunity to respond to it;
- obtain statements from any witnesses identified by both parties to the complaint;
- where available, obtain any other evidence;
- arrange for the complaint to be conciliated, by an independent conciliator agreed upon by both parties;
- take all steps necessary for the complaint to be conciliated within 5 working days from the day on which the incident is alleged to have occurred;
- ensure that where a matter is resolved by conciliation the only public statement made shall be agreed to by both parties to the complaint and the Club's President and that the terms of any settlement are finalised to the satisfaction of the complainant and respondent and signed by the parties and the conciliator.

## **12.5 SANCTIONS**

Where a Club member is found to have breached Club policy, the Club may adopt the following response:

### **12.5.1 COMMITTEE**

By taking a role in the Junior Committee, each member accepts the collective responsibilities this entails. Each member must ensure that his/her behaviour and demeanour sets an example for others to follow. Possible consequences of breaches of the Code may include:

- Written Warning: (By Executive Committee / Delegated Committee Representative).
- Written Caution: (By Executive Committee - after appearing before a recommended constituted panel - to be comprised of at least two of: Relevant Coordinator, Secretary or delegated Board representatives).
- Suspension: (decision of Executive Committee).

### **12.5.2 PLAYERS**

Part of learning how to play the game is learning how to conduct themselves both on and off the field. Players must be aware that Blackburn Junior Football Club demands the highest standards of behaviour. Possible consequences of breaches of the Code, may include:

- 'Formal' Verbal Warning: (Coach) - Coach to handle the initial on-field misdemeanours.  
(b) Written Warning: (Committee /Delegate).
- Written Caution: (By Executive Committee - after appearing before an appropriately constituted panel - to be comprised of at least two of: Football Manager and/or committee representative, Team Manager, Coach, Team Captain).
- Suspension: (By Executive Committee).
- Deregistration: (By Executive Committee).

### **12.5.3 COACHES**

A coach is mentor, role model, teacher and counsellor to players. Parents and players therefore should expect that the behaviour and demeanor of coaches is not only exemplary but beyond reproach. Possible consequences of breaches of the Code (graded):

- Warning: (Football Manager / Executive Committee Representative).
- Written Caution: (By Executive Committee - after appearing before an appropriately constituted panel - to be comprised of at least two of: Football Manager and two other relevant officials, approved by the Junior Committee).
- Suspension (By Executive Committee).

### **12.5.4 PARENTS**

Parents of players at Blackburn Junior Football Club have the right to expect that the Club will provide a safe, harmonious and enjoyable environment for their child to play football. The Club in return expects that parents will ensure that their behaviour does not bring the Club into disrepute. Possible consequences of breaches of the Code (graded):

- Warning: (By Team Manager / Executive Committee representative).
- Written Caution: (By Executive Committee - after appearing before an appropriately constituted panel - to be comprised of at least two of: Football Manager and two other relevant officials, approved by the Executive Committee).
- Suspension: (By Executive Committee).

Care needs to be exercised to ensure that players are not penalised for the behaviour of others.

## **12.6 CONFIDENTIALITY**

Confidentiality must be maintained throughout the complaints process. All parties to a complaint must all agree to the maintenance of confidentiality. No person involved in the complaints process should publicly comment on any aspect of the complaints process without the prior written agreement of all parties.

## 13. PLAYER SAFETY POLICY

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**Blackburn Junior Football Club seeks to provide a safe playing environment for its players and spectators.**

### 13.1 **MEDICAL NOTIFICATION**

At the start of the season each player (or parent/guardian) must complete the players required medical details as outlined on the Club's online Registration form.

The player (or parent/guardian) must advise of any conditions that would place the player at risk or could impede his/her ability to participate.

The medical details of each player is retained by the team's Trainer for the duration of the season and destroyed at the end of the season.

Players (or parent/guardians) must notify their coach and/or trainer of any changes in circumstances (injury / health problem etc.) that could place the player at greater risk.

### 13.2 **INJURIES**

The health and safety of the Club's players, personnel and spectators is the Club's most important priority and overrides any other consideration including winning games and finals.

There may be occasions during the season when injuries occur.

All teams must have a qualified Trainer (Refer Section 13.8). At least one parent or guardian of each child is expected to remain at training and during the games, to attend to any off site medical attention that their child may need.

Before each game, the responsibility for a player's capacity to play the relevant game rests with the player's parents/guardians. Although the relevant Trainer and Coach may be consulted concerning this issue, any decision must ultimately be made by the player's parents/guardian.

During each game the responsibility for the health and safety of players rests with the Trainer together with the player's parents/guardian. Any decision concerning this issue must ultimately be made by the player's parents/guardian together with the Trainer.

In the event of an injury or health concern during a game, other Club personnel including coaches and assistant coaches are to be guided by the Trainer and the player's parents/guardians concerning the player's capacity to play the game and any decision concerning this issue must ultimately be made by the player's parents/guardian together with the Trainer.

It is the responsibility of the Trainer to administer any medications or substances/sprays etc. but consent must be provided as set out below.

Except in the case of an emergency, no medications, medical assistance or substances/sprays etc. are to be provided by the Trainer to a player without the consent of the player's parents/guardian. To avoid doubt this does not include minor and routine assistance to a player such as stretching/rub down/ice assistance for a muscle strain or similar type of injury which may be provided as a matter of course and without the need for consent of the player's parents/guardian.

The cost of transportation and/or medical treatment is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

Any player who is sent to an hospital for treatment as a result of an incident at a game or training, must provide a medical certificate stating that they are fit to play, prior to resuming training / playing.

All injuries are to be reported to the Trainer in the first instance. Serious injuries (i.e. those that may require medical treatment) should be reported to the Team Manager who should then inform the Club Secretary at [secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au](mailto:secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au) within 24 hours.

Team managers are provided with accident forms in their kits.

If the Coach or Trainer is concerned about a player's fitness they may require the player to provide a medical certificate stating that they are fit to play, prior to resuming training / playing.

### **13.2.1 CONCUSSION**

The most important element in the management of concussion is the welfare of the player in the short and long term.

The Club recommends a conservative approach to the management of concussion. In particular, the Club adopts the key AFL concussion management principle, namely "If in doubt, sit them out."

Any player who suffers a concussion or suspected concussion as a result of an incident at a game or training, must not return to the field.

If a coach or trainer suspects a player may have suffered a concussion at a game or training, s/he must require the player to provide the teams trainer a medical certificate stating that the player is fit to play, prior to resuming training / playing. The trainer will be required to advise the coach.

Any player who suffers a concussion or suspected concussion away from the field must provide the coach or trainer with a medical certificate stating that the player is fit to play, prior to resuming training / playing.

The priority for players is the successful return to learning and school before returning to playing.

### **13.3 MOUTHGUARDS**

Players must wear a mouth guard during matches and at training. The Club organises for mouth guards to be fitted and purchased prior to each season to assist in the facilitation of this policy. The fitting is traditionally held on the Junior Clubs Registration Day. Team managers are supplied with one 'boil it' mouth guard. Any player who forgets his/her mouth guard may use it provided that they are willing and agree to replace it with a new mouth guard prior to the next game.

### **13.4 Under 8s – 12s HELMETS**

The wearing of helmets is compulsory in the Under 8s – Under 12s teams.

### **13.5 Under 13s – 18s HELMETS**

The wearing of helmets in Under 13s – Under 18s is at the discretion of the individual players and their parents. Any child playing up is actively encouraged to wear a helmet.

### **13.6 EXTREME WEATHER**

#### **13.6.1 EXTREME WEATHER AT TRAINING**

When weather is inclement the coach will decide if training is to proceed and coaches will always defer to player safety.

If lightning is present at the commencement of training then training will not proceed until the lightning dissipates. Players and coaches should seek shelter. Parents should feel free to take their children home.

A coach should cancel training if s/he believes that weather conditions are unsuitable.

When the weather is extremely cold or inclement, parents should decide if they want to subject their child to training in such conditions. The decision ultimately remains with the parents.

In heat conditions (pre and early season) parents should decide if they want to subject their child to training in such conditions. The decision ultimately remains with the parents.

Selection in the team for matches will be in accordance with the Club's [Team size and Selection policy](#) and the [Game Time \(Rostering & Rotation\) policy](#). Cancellation of training or non-attendance due to severe weather conditions shall not be a factor in selection.

Parents are encouraged to remain at training and games, especially in times of extreme weather.

### **13.6.2 EXTREME WEATHER ON GAME DAY**

Blackburn Junior Football Club must adhere to the [Australian Football League National Extreme Weather policy \(June 2013\)](#) and Match Cancellation – Adverse Weather Conditions guidelines as detailed within the [EFL's By-Laws](#).

## **13.7 GROUND SAFETY**

### **13.7.1 GROUND SAFETY AT TRAINING**

The Coach should satisfy him/herself that the ground and weather condition are such that it is safe to train.

If the Coach considers that the conditions are not safe, i.e. due to poor ground conditions, excessive heat or inclement weather, they can either check if the clubrooms are available to run an indoor training session if suitable, or training may be required to be cancelled.

Accordingly, parents are expected to remain at training for all junior teams.

### **13.7.2 GROUND SAFETY ON GAME DAY**

The Coach should satisfy him/herself that the ground and weather condition are such that it is safe to play football.

If the Coach considers that the conditions are not safe, they should first consult with his/her Team Manager and the Coach and Team Manager of the opposing team to discuss the matter.

If the Coach still considers that the conditions are not safe, they should immediately raise the matter with the Field Umpire, although it should be noted that the EFL does not give the umpires the responsibility of determining whether an oval is fit for play.

If the matter still cannot be resolved the Coach or Team Manager should immediately contact the Club President or a member of the Executive Committee who will liaise with the EFL.

The Club will fully support a Coach who determines and can demonstrate that the conditions are unsafe for football.

A parent or guardian may determine that the conditions are not safe for their child and withdraw them from the game without fear of recrimination.

## **13.8 TRAINERS**

Each team must have a suitably qualified trainer in attendance for the duration of the game.

As detailed in the [EFL By-Laws](#), at least one Level one accredited trainer needs to attend all matches. All other trainers are required to complete a recognised senior first aid course (e.g. Sports First Aid, St Johns or Red Cross). Details regarding the qualification of trainers can be obtained from the Eastern Football League Trainers Association.

Each team is permitted to have three trainers.

The minimum age for trainers is 15 years of age.

## **14. CHILD SAFETY POLICY**

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### **14.1 PURPOSE**

This policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of the Executive Committee, General Committee and volunteers of the Blackburn Junior Football Club to child safety, and to provide an outline of the policies and practices the Club has developed to keep everyone safe from any harm, including abuse.

Blackburn Football Club support the [AFL's National Child Protection Policy \(March 2015\)](#).

### **14.2 COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY**

All children who are a part of the Club have a right to feel and be safe. The welfare of the children in our club care will always be our first priority and the Club has a zero tolerance to child abuse. The Club aims to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and have fun and the Club's activities are always carried out in the best interests of the children.

### **14.3 APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY**

This policy was developed by the Club and in collaboration with our volunteers.

This policy applies to all individuals involved in our organisation (paid and volunteer) including, but not limited to:

- Participants/players
- Coaches
- Parents/guardians
- Spectators
- Administrators
- Volunteers
- Officials
- Contractors

All of the people to which this policy applies have a role and responsibility in relation to child protection. They must all:

- understand the indicators and risks of child abuse;
- appropriately act on any concerns raised by children; and
- understand and follow all applicable laws in relation to the protection of children and reporting or management of child safety concerns.

### **14.4 CHILD ABUSE**

Child abuse can take a broad range of forms including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional or psychological abuse including via social media and neglect. People to whom this policy applies need to be aware that child abuse can occur whenever there is actual or potential harm to a child, and these are circumstances that the Club is committed to reducing the risk of occurrence.

### **14.5 CHILDREN'S RIGHT TO SAFETY & PARTICIPATION**

The Club encourages children to express their views about their safety. We listen to their suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect them. We actively encourage all children who use our services to 'have a say' about things that are important to them.

We listen to and act on any concerns children or their parents/guardians raise with us.

We have a Welfare Manager who complaints can be made to, and we have Executive and General Committee members who are aware of and committed to the importance of child safety.

#### **14.6 VALUING DIVERSITY**

We value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices. To achieve this we:

- value and promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children and their families including by welcoming Aboriginal players into the Club;
- value and promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families;
- welcome children with a disability and their families and act to promote their participation including by holding an annual All Abilities clinic for children with special needs;
- seek appropriate volunteers from diverse cultural backgrounds; and
- implement anti vilification and discrimination education for all our junior teams.

#### **14.7 RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS**

The Club takes the following steps to ensure best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of its volunteers:

- Interview and conduct reference checks on all Coaches.
- Require Working with Children Checks for our Coaches, Assistant Coaches, Team Managers, Trainers and Runners.
- Require our Coaches and Assistant Coaches to obtain an AFL Victoria level 1 coaching course
- Require our coaches and volunteers to sign the Club's [Child Safe Code of Conduct](#). This register is to be managed by the Club Secretary.
- Our commitment to Child Safety and our screening requirements are included in all coaching applications and as part of the induction process for our volunteers, which includes the Club's use of the Everproof platform - <https://everproof.com>.

#### **14.8 SUPPORTING OUR VOLUNTEERS**

The Club seeks to attract and retain the best volunteers. We provide support and supervision so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated. For example we run education sessions for our coaches, anti vilification talks for our players and coaches, and a biannual Community and Social Responsibility night. We also subscribe to Sports Chaplaincy Australia in the event that a chaplain is required to assist a volunteer, player or parent/guardian. We have also developed a [Child Safe Code of Conduct](#) to provide guidance to our volunteers, all of whom are required to sign the Code.

#### **14.9 REPORTING A CHILD SAFETY CONCERN OR COMPLAINT**

The Club has appointed our player Welfare Manager Bernard Geason as a Child Safety Officer with the specific responsibility for responding to any complaints made by children, parents/guardians or volunteers. Bernard can be contacted via our Club Secretary at [secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au](mailto:secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au). Our complaints process is outlined in Section 16 - [Child Safety reporting procedures](#).

#### **14.10 RISK MANAGEMENT Child Safety reporting procedure**

We recognise the importance of a risk management approach to minimising the potential for child abuse or harm to occur and use this to inform our policy, procedures and activity planning. In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children. For example we have adopted the [Australian Football League's National Social Media Engagement policy \(June 2013\)](#).

To reduce the risk of child abuse occurring, adults to whom this policy applies should avoid or minimise direct, unsupervised contact with children. For example, this should be a consideration when:

- using change room facilities;
- using accommodation or overnight stays;
- travel; or
- physical contact when coaching or managing children.

## 15. CHILD SAFE CODE OF CONDUCT

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This Code of Conduct outlines appropriate standards of behaviour by adults towards children.

The Code of Conduct aims to protect children and reduce any opportunities for abuse or harm to occur. It also helps staff and volunteers by providing them with guidance on how to best support children and how to avoid or better manage difficult situations. This Code of Conduct applies to all people involved in the activities of the Blackburn Junior Football Club, including coaches, officials, administrators, volunteers and parents/guardians.

All coaches and volunteers are responsible for promoting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people by:

- Adhering to our [Player Safety policy](#) and [Child Safe Policy](#), the [EFL's Code of Conduct](#) and all relevant policies as detailed within this document.
- Taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse.
- Treating everyone with respect, including listening to and valuing their ideas and opinions.
- Welcoming all children and their families and carers and being inclusive.
- Respecting cultural, religious and political differences and acting in a culturally sensitive way, particularly when interacting with children who are Aboriginal or otherwise culturally or linguistically diverse and those with a disability.
- Modelling appropriate adult behaviour.
- Listening to children and responding to them appropriately.
- Reporting and acting on any breaches of this Code of Conduct, complaints or concerns appropriately and treat them seriously and with respect.
- Complying with our guidelines on physical contact with children.
- Working with children in an open and transparent way – other adults should always know about the work you are doing with children.
- Respecting the privacy of children and their families, and only disclosing information to people who have a need to know.

Coaches and volunteers **MUST NOT:**

- Seek to use children in any way to meet the needs of adults.
- Ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse.
- Use prejudice, oppressive behaviour or language with children.
- Discriminate on the basis of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability or sexuality.
- Initiate unnecessary physical contact with children or do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes.
- Develop 'special' relationships with specific children or show favouritism through the provision of gifts or inappropriate attention.
- Exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking site or email addresses with children, except where necessary for a football related purpose such as availability to play or train.
- Have unauthorised contact with children and young people online or by phone.

By observing these standards you acknowledge your responsibility to immediately report any breach of this code to the Blackburn Junior Football Club.

I have read the Child Safe Code of Conduct and agree to abide by it at all times.

Name:

Role:

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Signature:

Date:

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## **16. CHILD SAFETY REPORTING PROCEDURES**

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The Blackburn Junior Football Club is committed to thoroughly and quickly responding to any allegations of abuse in order to protect the safety of our players.

The safety and welfare of our players are paramount and are more important than, for example, the reputation of our club and winning games of football.

### **16.1 INITIAL REPORTING TO CLUB VOLUNTEER**

If a player discloses an allegation to a club volunteer the volunteer shall:

- show concern and empathy for the player;
- listen to what they are saying including by letting them use their own words;
- tell the player that they did the right thing by telling them;
- let them know what will happen next; and
- inform the Club's Child Safety Officer. The Club has appointed our player Welfare Manager Bernard Geason as a Child Safety Officer with the specific responsibility for responding to any complaints made by children, parents/guardians or volunteers. Bernard can be contacted via our Club Secretary at [secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au](mailto:secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au).

The volunteer must not:

- make promises you cannot keep e.g. such as promising you won't tell anyone;
- push the player into giving details of the alleged abuse. The role of the volunteer is to listen and not to investigate; and
- indiscreetly discuss the circumstances of the incident with others not directly involved with the player.

### **16.2 NEXT STEPS**

The Club via its Welfare Officer and Executive Committee will initially consider which steps to take, which may include:

- providing appropriate support to the player and their family including counselling;
- commencing an internal investigation;
- reporting to an external authority; and
- obtaining legal advice.

If appropriate the Club should consult the Police or Department of Human Services (DHS) regarding how they want the Club to proceed before undertaking any internal investigation. Such bodies may for example want to speak to the accused or witnesses before the Club does this.

### **16.3 INTERNAL INVESTIGATION**

When an internal investigation is conducted the specific details concerning the incident should be obtained by asking questions such as:

- Can you tell me what happened from the start?
- When and where did the incident occur?
- Did anyone see the incident?
- Who was there?
- What was said?
- Did you make a note of what happened including via text or social media message etc.?

All participants in the investigation must be required to maintain confidentiality and should be required to sign a confidentiality agreement as part of this process.

Depending on the circumstances the Club should consider appointing an independent and external investigator who is suitably qualified.

All participants must be afforded procedural fairness. To ensure this, the accused must be made aware of the allegations against them in sufficient detail and must be allowed a reasonable opportunity to respond to them.

The investigator may then seek to interview all relevant witnesses and gather all relevant documents. They should then prepare a witness statement for each participant to record their version of events and sign.

The investigator should then prepare a comprehensive report setting out their findings on the balance of probabilities and their reasoning for the findings. All information collated as part of the investigation should be attached to the investigation report and stored in an appropriate location to ensure confidentiality.

It's very important that the report is kept confidential and not circulated or disseminated.

#### **16.4 REPORTING OBLIGATIONS**

If any person (aged 18 or over) forms a belief on reasonable grounds that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria against a child (under the age of 16 years) by another person (aged 18 or older), that person must make a report to the police as soon as possible unless certain exceptions apply.

Committee members, volunteers or of age players of the Club should discuss their concerns and observations with the Club's Child Safety Officer (The Club has appointed our player Welfare Manager Bernard Geason as a Child Safety Officer with the specific responsibility for responding to any complaints made by children, parents/guardians or volunteers. Bernard can be contacted via our Club Secretary at [secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au](mailto:secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au)) who can assist the person to make the report to the police as required. The EFL and/or AFL Victoria can also be contacted on a confidential basis as required.

Any person (of any age) that forms a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from child abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, psychological or neglect) may disclose that information to the police or DHS. The Club encourages all persons with concerns to raise this directly with the Club's Child Safety Officer.

#### **16.5 MAKING A REPORT**

Ring:

- Victoria police on 000 for emergencies;
- If not an emergency, call the Victoria Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Investigation Team on (03) 8690 4056.
- DHS on 1300 664 977 or 131 278 (AH). Ask for child protection.

The information needed for making a report is:

- name age and address of child;
- the reason for suspecting that the behaviour or injury is a result of abuse;
- an assessment of the level of danger to the child;
- a description of the injury or behaviour observed;
- the current whereabouts of the child;
- any other information about the family; and
- any specific cultural details e.g. English speaking or disability etc.

The person making the report should:

- ask that the Club be informed of each step of the procedure; and
- ask that if an interview is to take place at the club the visiting officer is in plain clothes and the time of the interview is specified so that the club can make appropriate arrangements.

If the complainant alleges that a crime has been committed by a committee member, coach, volunteer or contractor, that person will be stood aside immediately while an investigation takes place.

## **16.6 FURTHER MATTERS**

Where an allegation has been made the Club will make secure and retain records of the allegation of child abuse and the Club's response to it.

If the child is to be interviewed by the police or DHS then the Club's child safety officer should offer to be present at the interview to give support.

If a report is made the child safety officer should confidentially inform AFL Victoria and the EFL so that any records can be amended or updated as is appropriate.

Throughout the process outlined above, the interests of the child and their family should be protected from unnecessary disclosure of information concerning the alleged abuse.

If any club volunteers, coaches' players or parents have any queries concerning these procedures they should contact the club's child safety officer or an executive committee member.

These procedures will be reviewed in February 2019.

## **17. SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES**

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Blackburn Junior Football Club have adopted the [Australian Football League's National Social Media Engagement policy \(June 2013\)](#).

No adult within the club shall engage in individual social friendships with any children, including players on personal social media sites, or shall exchange personal contact details such as phone number, email addresses or social networking site with children, except where necessary for a football related purpose such as availability to play or train.

Multiple adults including an Executive or General Committee member should be part of the contact list and included in any social media communication with players on behalf of or regarding the club.

For any club social media platform, a club administrator needs to monitor posts and comments.

The club must obtain permission (by opt-out request) from parents for any use of a child's name or photo to be used in any postings.

## 18. SMOKING & ALCOHOL

**Blackburn Junior Football Club seeks to provide a safe and healthy environment for its players and spectators.**

### 18.1 NO SMOKING POLICY

The Blackburn Junior Football Club is strongly opposed to smoking at all Junior Football activities. Whilst we acknowledge the individual right to smoke we also recognise the potential health implication associated with smoking and passive smoking.

Coaching staff must not smoke whilst they are actively engaged in coaching.

Support and administrative staff must not smoke whilst in the presence of children on the ground.

Parents/guardians and supporters are encouraged not to smoke at junior football matches and events.

Smoking is not allowed in the clubrooms, change rooms or in the coach's box.

All persons associated with the Club must comply with these requirements. Any breaches should be reported to our Club Secretary at [secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au](mailto:secretary.junior@blackburnfc.com.au) and will be managed in accordance with our [Issues Resolution Policy](#).

In doing so, the Club may adopt the following response:

1. Assume that the person is unaware of our No Smoking policy.
2. The Team Manager or a member of the Committee will approach the person breaching the policy and politely ask them to refrain from smoking and advise them of our clubs No Smoking policy.
3. If the offence continues, then a member of the Committee will verbally warn them and remind them again of the Club's No Smoking policy. The offending patron must also be made aware that if they don't stop smoking then they will be required to leave the Club's facility.
4. If the offence does continue then the patron will be escorted out of the facility by a Committee member/Senior Club representative.
5. The Club may suspend a team official, match day official or committee member who continues to breach the policy.

### 18.2 ALCOHOL POLICY

A total prohibition on alcohol consumption within the reserve applies during junior game days, whilst games are in progress and during training sessions.

There is also a total prohibition of alcohol on the ground during training nights held at our club grounds or at any other grounds.

While alcohol may be served on social occasions, it may only be served:

- in accordance with liquor licensing requirements; and
- in a responsible manner.

Alcohol must not be served to nor consumed by persons who are:

- Under 18 years of age; and /or
- intoxicated.

Alcohol must only be served in accordance with the [Liquor Control Reform Act 1998 \(the Act\)](#) as regulated by the Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation.

All persons associated with the Club must comply with these requirements. Any breaches should be reported and will be managed in accordance with our [Issues Resolution Policy](#).

In doing so, the Club may adopt the following response:

1. Assume that the person is unaware of our Alcohol Policy.
2. The Team Manager or a member of the Committee will approach the person breaching the policy and politely ask them to refrain from drinking alcohol and advise them of our clubs Alcohol Policy.
- ~~3.~~ If the offence continues, then a member of the Committee will verbally warn them and remind them again of the Club's Alcohol policy. The offending patron must also be made aware that if they don't comply then they will be required to leave the Club's facility.
4. If the offence does continue then the patron will be escorted out of the facility by a Committee member/Senior Club representative.
5. The Club may suspend a team official, match day official or committee member who continues to breach the policy.

## ENDORSEMENT

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<b>POLICY REVIEWED BY:</b>	Mrs Suzanne Devers – BJFC Registrar, Executive Committee member 2018
<b>POLICY OWNER:</b>	Mr Peter Parker – BJFC President 2018
<b>POLICY RATIFIED BY:</b>	Blackburn Junior Football Club Executive Committee 2018
<b>RATIFICATION DATE:</b>	20th November 2018
<b>NEXT REVIEW DUE:</b>	November 2021

## SOURCES & RELATED POLICIES

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- [Eastern Football League Incorporated By-Laws \(May 2018\)](#)
- [Easter Football League's Code of Conduct \(November 2017\)](#)
- [Australian Football League Rules \(February 2018\)](#)
- [Australian Football League National Child Protection Policy \(as at March 2015\)](#)
- [Australian Football League National Vilification and Discrimination policy \(February 2003\)](#)
- [Australian Football League National Social Media Engagement policy \(June 2013\)](#)
- [Australian Football League National Extreme Weather policy \(June 2013\)](#)
- [Australian Football League Victoria's Affiliate Regulations \(Regulation 4 – Gender Regulation\)](#)
- [Equal Opportunity Act 1995 \(Vic\)](#)
- [Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 \(Vic\)](#)
- [Racial Discrimination Act 1975 \(Cth\)](#)
- [Liquor Control Reform Act 1998 \(the Act\)](#)

## EVALUATION

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In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Policy Owner will:

- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, policy, research and best practice.
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy.
- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness.