

**Feilding Moa Harrier & Athletic Club**  
**Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

**Date of Issue:**

**Review Date:**

**1. Key Principles:**

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All children have the right to be protected from abuse, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, disability, or background.
- All concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon promptly.
- We work in partnership with whānau (families), caregivers, and external agencies.

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**2. Policy Purpose & Scope**

- **Purpose:** To promote the welfare of children, young people, and vulnerable adults, ensuring they have a safe, enjoyable experience in all club activities.
- **Scope:** This policy applies to all club members (including coaches, volunteers, parents/caregivers, officials, and staff), across all activities; training, competition, events, travel, camps, and social functions.

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**3. Club Positioned Responsibilities**

- Adopt a child/family-centred approach and a zero-tolerance stance on abuse.
- Recognise and respond appropriately to children or adults who may be at risk.
- Follow national standards and local legislation (e.g., Children's Act 2014) and align with Sport NZ's Safe Sport for Children policy and Athletics NZ's Member protection regulation.
- Ensure staff, coaches, and volunteers understand safeguarding responsibilities via recruitment, induction, and periodic training.

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**4. Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities**

- **Club Committee:** Overall accountability for implementing the policy; ensures periodic review, training, and resourcing.
- **Safeguarding Officer(s):** At least one designated individual responsible for safeguarding matters—receiving concerns, implementing safe practices, liaising with external agencies, and record-keeping.
- **Coaches, Volunteers & Officials:** Must adhere to the policy, complete screening, training, and follow guidance on safe behaviour and reporting.
- **Parents/Caregivers & Participants:** Play a key role in safeguarding; encouraged to raise concerns and work collaboratively with the club.

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**5. Recruitment, Screening & Training**

- **Screening:** All coaches/volunteers in direct contact with minors or vulnerable persons must undergo:
  - Police vetting.
  - Completion of a declaration confirming they are not barred from working with children.
- **Induction & Training:**
  - Safeguarding training on appointment, with annual refreshers.
  - Clear codes of conduct and behaviour guidelines provided.
- **Ongoing Supervision:** Periodic reviews and mentoring of coaches and volunteers.

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**6. Behaviour & Codes of Conduct**

- **Expectations for Adults:**
  - Treat all young participants respectfully and fairly.
  - Avoid one-on-one unsupervised situations.
  - Uphold appropriate physical contact and maintain professional boundaries.
  - Use respectful language; no bullying, harassment, or discrimination tolerated.
- **Expectations for Young People:**
  - Respect volunteers, coaches, fellow athletes, facilities, and equipment.
  - Follow club rules and report inappropriate behaviour.
- **Use of Social Media and Communications:**
  - Professional conduct online. Private messaging discouraged; group-authorised channels only.

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## 7. Safeguarding Practice Standards

- **Safe Training Environment:**
  - Ensure suitable supervision ratios and structures.
  - Have first aiders present.
  - Maintain safe equipment and facilities.
- **Online Safety:**
  - No sharing of images/videos without consent.
  - Digital platforms to be monitored and supervised by adults.
- **Travel/Events Camps:**
  - Pre-approved risk assessments.
  - Adequate staffing with proper mixed-gender supervision.
  - Clear parental consent for travel and accommodation arrangements.

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## 8. Recognising & Responding to Concerns

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All members of the club whether athletes, parents, coaches, volunteers, or officials must remain alert to signs of harm or poor practice and know how to respond appropriately.

### • **Recognising Signs of Harm or Risk**

Harm may be:

- Physical: unexplained bruises, cuts, injuries.
- Emotional: fearfulness, anxiety, depression, withdrawal.
- Sexual: age-inappropriate knowledge, secrecy, unusual behaviour.
- Neglect: consistently dirty, hungry, tired, or lacking medical care.

Concerns may relate to:

- Another athlete or young person disclosing something.
- Observed concerning behaviour by a coach, volunteer, parent, or peer.
- Inappropriate communication, contact, or disciplinary methods.
- Breach of the club's code of conduct or safeguarding standards.

Responding to Concerns

#### 1. **Immediate Safety First**

If someone is in immediate danger, call 111 and ensure the person is safe.

#### 2. **Do Not Investigate**

Do not ask leading questions or confront the alleged person. Record facts only.

#### 3. **Complete a Safeguarding & Complaints Form**

Anyone with a concern, big or small, is encouraged to complete the club's Safeguarding and Complaints Form, available:

- From the club website.
- From the Safeguarding Officer.

- On request by email.
- 4. **Submit the Form**  
Submit the completed form to the Club Safeguarding Officer via:
  - Email (confidential address),
  - In person, or
  - A sealed envelope handed to a committee member.
- 5. **Safeguarding Officer Response**  
The Safeguarding Officer will:
  - Acknowledge receipt within 48 hours.
  - Log the concern confidentially.
  - Take appropriate action - this may include informal resolution, internal disciplinary procedures, or referral to external agencies (Oranga Tamariki, NZ Police, Athletics NZ).
- 6. **Support and Communication**  
Throughout the process:
  - Support will be offered to the child or person at risk.
  - Parents/caregivers will be informed unless it increases the risk.
  - Whistle-blower protection will apply for those raising concerns in good faith.
- 7. **Escalation**  
If the concern involves a Safeguarding Officer, the matter should be escalated to the Club Chairperson or directly to Athletics NZ.

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## 9. Complaint & Disciplinary Procedures

Breaches of this policy will be taken seriously and handled appropriately:

- Minor concerns may result in reminders, education, or a formal warning.
- Serious or repeated breaches may lead to suspension or referral to external authorities.
- All incidents will be recorded and reviewed by the **Club Committee** and **Safeguarding Lead**.
- Serious misconduct will be reported to **Athletics NZ** and/or **Police**.

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## 10. Record-Keeping & Confidentiality

- **Secure Storage:** Maintain confidential records of incidents, vetting, training, and consents.
- **Retention:** Follow legal and organisational requirements (e.g., Children's Act guidelines).
- **Access:** Only key personnel (Safeguarding Officers, Committee) have access; others only with justifiable reason.

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## 11. Communication & Awareness

- **Inclusion:** Policy visible on club website, social media, noticeboard.
- **Introduction & Updates:** Covered at new member induction and referenced in coach/volunteer handbooks.
- **Training Events:** Offer workshops or toolkits, possibly co-ordinated with Athletics NZ or local bodies.

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## 12. Monitoring, Review & Continuous Improvement

- **Regular Review:** Annual evaluation; earlier review if relevant incidents occur or regulations change.
- **Auditing Practice:** Gather and assess feedback from members, caregivers, and staff to improve the policy.
- **Feedback Loop:** Commit to updating procedures and maintaining an open dialogue.

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### 13. Useful Contacts & References

Role	Contact
Club Safeguarding Officer	[Name], [phone], [email]
Club Chairperson	[Name], [phone], [email]
Children's Team Oranga Tamariki (Manawatu region)	0508 326 459, contact@ot.govt.nz
NZ Police	111 (emergencies), 105 (non-urgent)
Athletics NZ Safeguarding	safeguarding@athletics.org.nz

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### 14. Policy Acknowledgement

- All coaches, volunteers, officials, and staff must:
    - Read and understand this policy.
    - Confirm understanding and compliance annually via signature or digital acknowledgement.
    - Agree to notify the club of any relevant changes in personal circumstances.
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### Review & Sign-Off

- **Adopted by:** Feilding Moa Harrier & Athletics Club Committee
- **Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ (Chairperson)
- **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_