

Child Protection Policy

Milford Tennis Club (MTC)

Policy Statement

MTC is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children in its care.

We recognise the responsibility to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm and exploitation while participating in our activities.

Staff and volunteers will work together to embrace difference and diversity and respect the rights of children.

For the purposes of this policy and associated procedures, a child is recognised as someone under the age of 18 years.

MTC believes that:

- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief and/or sexual identity, have a right to participate in sport and recreation that is safe and where they are protected from potential or actual injury, abuse and other harm.
- Children should feel respected, valued and encouraged to enjoy their participation and to reach their full potential.
- MTC has a duty of care when it comes to children and should take steps to ensure that children can participate safely in the activities it provides. This includes protecting them from: injury, bullying, all forms of abuse, age-inappropriate training regimes and unsafe equipment/and or facilities. MTC will work in partnership with children and their parents/carers to promote the welfare, health and development of children.
- Involvement in our activities can improve the well-being of vulnerable children - improving their physical and mental health.

Strategy

In order to ensure safe sport for children MTC adopts the following approach:

1) Prevent those who have been identified as causing harm to children from having contact with our children.

It is important that best effort is made to ensure that appropriate people are working with our children.

MTC recruitment process:

The Head coach is professionally qualified. Appropriate police vetting is undertaken and references followed up.

The Head coach employs assistant coaches who have come through MTC's coaching programme as juniors themselves. The assistant coaches are well known to the Head coach.

If, exceptionally, assistant coaches are employed who are not known personally to the Head coach, then police vetting is undertaken.

2) Remove/minimise any risks of accident or harm to children

MTC has a Health & Safety (H & S) protocol and a H & S committee to implement that protocol (comprising Club Coach, Club Administrator plus at least 1 member of the MTC main committee).

A Hazard identification & assessment process is in place.

Club members are encouraged to report hazards and accidents.

Club Administrator attends H & S seminars and briefing sessions organised by the regulatory bodies (Tennis Northern "TNR" and Tennis NZ "TNZ")

The Head Coach attends First Aid seminars organised by TNR & TNZ and has an up to date First Aid certificate

3) Identify and stop inappropriate behaviour if it occurs

MTC has codes of conduct that outline our expectations in terms of behaviour for staff, volunteers, participants, parents and supporters. These codes of conduct are communicated via – posters in the clubhouse, the junior interclub rules and regulations, the club handbook.

Maintaining good practices amongst coaches, officials and volunteers means the safety and wellbeing of children/young people must be paramount at all times; children are treated with dignity and respect and good practice is promoted to reduce the possibility of abusive situations.

The relationship between MTC coaches and club officials who hold a position of trust and responsibility with children must be professional and appropriate at all times. This relationship is important - not only does it develop a child's tennis potential and self-esteem, but it also allows them to develop an appropriate and trusting relationship with a responsible adult. The power and

influence a coach has in a professional relationship with a child/young person cannot be underestimated.

Code of Conduct for coaches, officials and volunteers:

- a) Always working in an open environment, avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication.
- b) Securing parental consent to act in loco parentis, if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.
- c) Ensuring any form of abuse directed at a child from others, whether this is from another child or adult, is challenged and reported.
- d) Where a coach believes it is necessary to touch an athlete in order to correct their technique, it is important that they:
 - Consult with the parent/caregiver if present; and/or
 - Ensure the child is made aware of the purpose of the contact and gives consent.
 - Consider the appropriateness of the ways in which technique is corrected involving touch
- e) All coaches, officials and volunteers must ensure they never:
 - Take, or be in the presence of children/young people in secluded places where they will be alone.
 - Reduce a child/young person to tears as a form of control
 - Deliberately make a child feel diminished, humiliated or embarrassed.
 - Use inappropriate language, or allow other children to use inappropriate language unchallenged (e.g. swearing, name calling/put downs, sarcasm, innuendo, sexualised connotations, culturally or racially offensive comments)
 - Leave a venue before all players have been collected or are continuing to be supervised by appropriate adults.
 - Engage in rough, physically or sexually provocative games.
 - Take photographs of, or film children without parental consent.

Code of conduct for supporters:

- Treat all players (MTC players and their opponents) with the same respect, using correct and proper language at all times.
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of fellow parents, team managers and spectators.
- Understand that final team decisions and disputes are to be resolved by the Team Manager.
- Never punish or belittle players for losing or making mistakes.
- Focus on efforts and performance rather than results.
- Be a positive role model for all young players having fun and aspiring to improve

4) Handling Disclosures of Abuse

MTC Code of Conduct for dealing with disclosures of abuse by the victim or another person, such as a sibling or parent/caregiver. :

- a) Listen – and tell them that no one deserves to be hurt and that it was not their fault. Let them know you're glad they told you.
- b) Ensure the child/young person's immediate safety. Try not to alert the alleged abuser. Seek advice and support from the Tennis Northern Child Protection Advocate.
- c) Do not ask investigative or leading questions (as this can contaminate evidence), but assess safety

by asking open-ended questions, such as “Who did this?”, “When and where did this happen?” Keep questions to a minimum & record the information

d) Discuss confidentiality and its exclusions and that you will need to tell someone else.

e) Consider involvement of Police and/or Child Youth & Family

Complaint and Investigative process

Any breach of the above Codes of Conduct is to be reported to the Club Administrator, who should investigate and discuss with Main Committee.

On receipt of a formal complaint, both the complainant and the accused are to be interviewed separately by 2 members of the committee. If the complaint is considered to be justified, the accused is to be given a “Formal Written Warning” that such behavior is unacceptable and must write a formal apology to the complainant. If any further incidents are reported, the accused will be asked to resign from MTC and will henceforth be unable to represent MTC in competition.

Policy Review

Child Protocol Policy to be reviewed by main committee on a biennial basis.

Next review March 2017.