



## **BRUNSWICK NETBALL CLUB COMPLAINTS POLICY**

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

Brunswick Netball Club is committed to providing an environment where all players, coaches, officials and parents can feel safe, are shown respect, be fairly treated and have a right to be heard.

While we endeavour to consult, collaborate and be overt in our decision making we respect the right of our members to lodge a complaint should they have issue with a decision or process undertaken by the Club. If a grievance does arise we recognise the importance of dealing with complaints in a confidential, professional and timely manner.

Any issue, regardless of who is involved, will be addressed promptly in a professional manner and contained to the relevant people involved, so not to affect other players or parties within club or any external parties.

### **SCOPE**

This policy applies to all players, coaches, team managers, Committee members and parents/guardians of registered netball players at the Brunswick Netball Club.

### **PURPOSE**

1. To provide an avenue through which all players, coaches, team managers, committee members and parents/guardians of registered netball players at BNC can provide feedback, make a complaint and resolve issues if and when they arise.
2. To clearly outline the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved in the dispute/ conflict.
3. To clearly describe the role of the Committee in the resolution of conflict or disputes.
4. To clearly describe the process by which a complaint can be made to the relevant association on match day.

### **DEFINITIONS**

- **BNC:** Brunswick Netball Club
- **the Club:** Brunswick Netball Club
- **the Committee:** Current office bearers and general members as elected at Brunswick Netball Club Annual General Meeting
- **Match Day:** Day that netball competition or tournament is played on.
- **Mediator:** Person appointed by BNC Committee that is deemed to be impartial to both parties to assist in the resolution of a conflict or dispute.

## **PROCEDURE**

In resolving grievances and complaints, the Club will use the following general principles and guidelines:

1. Feedback, grievances or complaints should be brought to the attention of the Club as soon as practicable.
2. Feedback, complaints and grievances should be in writing, addressed to the Secretary at [secretary@brunswicknetballclub.org](mailto:secretary@brunswicknetballclub.org) and clearly setting out the issue or problem.
3. If the complaint concerns a breach of child safety, it should be addressed to the Child Safety Officer at [BNCsafety@brunswicknetball.club.org](mailto:BNCsafety@brunswicknetball.club.org)
4. If it is not appropriate to send the complaint to the Secretary or Child Safety Officer, then the complaint may be forwarded to the President.
5. The Secretary, Child Safety Officer or President will acknowledge receipt of the feedback or complaint within 48 hours.
6. The Committee will determine the most appropriate person and method of dealing with the feedback or complaint.
7. The Club will endeavour to resolve the complaint in a timely, fair and transparent way. The Club will keep the complainant informed of the progress and likely time for resolution.
8. If the grievance relates to a person, they will be informed of the complaint and have the right of reply.
9. If the complaint concerns a breach of child safety, involving alleged child abuse or sexual misconduct, it will be reported to Victoria Police and/or relevant Child Protection authorities (refer BNC Child Safe Policy). If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse or danger, call 000.
10. Any person who is the subject of a grievance, cannot be involved in the investigation of the complaint.
11. The Club's preferred method is to deal with the matter informally through mediation and discussion, subject to both parties being amicable to this.
12. In more serious cases, the matter may be considered by the Committee or other bodies as directed by the Committee.
13. Where a written response to a complaint is requested, the response will be reviewed by the Committee prior to issue of the response.
14. Where a complaint may involve criminal or unlawful issues, the Committee will refer the matter to the relevant external agency for assistance.
15. In dealing with complaints, the Club will ensure that the principles of natural justice are adhered to including the right to be heard, treated with respect, confidentiality, unbiased and no conflict of interest as well as keeping all parties informed.
16. The Club will securely maintain records of complaints as appropriate.

Responsibilities for BNC Club officials, parents/guardians, coaches, and umpires in relation to making and responding to grievances are listed below.

### **BNC Club Responsibilities:**

- BNC Committee aims to be aware of conflicts and grievance and treat all issues as "legitimate" and then will assess the merit of the grievance.
- BNC Committee will assess the issue by speaking with relevant parties and seeking feedback and further information.

- BNC will decide what should be done, make a plan and carry out relevant actions to improve the situation.
- BNC President and/or nominee will act as mediator when required between two parties.
- BNC President and/or nominee will refer a selection grievance to the Selection Committee and will assist to resolve the issue.
- If the grievance remains unresolved the issue may be raised at the BNC Committee meetings in a confidential manner if the President and/or nominee deems appropriate where necessarily action will be taken.

#### **Player/Guardian Responsibilities:**

- The coach is the first person to approach if a player is unhappy with any situation related to selection, time on court/field, or position. This approach should be courteous and polite. Any abusive communications will not be tolerated.
- If the grievance is with a team mate, contact the coach to address the issue amicably.
- If the player feels that their concern has not been addressed, the player may contact the Secretary in writing at [secretary@brunswicknetballclub.org](mailto:secretary@brunswicknetballclub.org) for further guidance/support, whereby the Secretary will forward the dispute to the relevant area for escalation.
- Other grievances with a coach, umpire or the club in general should be addressed to the Secretary in writing (in a clear and factual manner).
- The person reporting the issue to the Club will be provided with feedback, support with mediator if required and a plan developed aiming to improve the situation or the correct procedures explained and enforced.
- At no time, should a parent / guardian engage in any defamatory or other similar conduct through email, social media (e.g. facebook) or similar.

#### **Coach's Responsibilities**

- Coaches should discuss issues with players in a friendly and non-confronting way.
- If a player is unhappy with the position or team selected in, an explanation on why that decision has been made and feedback given on how they could meet their goals.
- Unresolved issues between coaches will be addressed by the appropriate Committee members at the selection meeting, between the relevant parties or individually where a plan will be developed or the correct procedures will be explained and enforced. All parties will have the opportunity to express their views.

#### **Umpire's Responsibilities**

- If an umpire needs support on match day, they should contact the Umpiring Coordinator.
- An umpire is encouraged to discuss any issues with the Umpiring Coordinator in the first instance.
- If further assistance to resolve an issue is required, the umpire should contact the Secretary in writing if appropriate, who will acknowledge receipt of the correspondence within 48 hours and forward to a committee member for action.
- The Club will undertake to resolve or mediate any issue in a timely manner.

## **Related policies and procedures**

BNC Code of Conduct

BNC Child Safe Policy

## **Useful resources**

### **Netball Victoria Policies and Guidelines**

<https://vic.netball.com.au/policies-guidelines>

### **How to Report a Complaint Fact Sheet - Netball Victoria**

<https://vic.netball.com.au/sites/vic/files/2022-07/How%20to%20Raise%20a%20Concern%20Fact%20Sheet%2027072022.pdf>

### **Netball Victoria Child Safety Tips and Scripts for Complaint Conversations**

<https://www.ddna.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Complaint-Management-Tips-and-Scripts.pdf>

## **Document history table**

<b>Version</b>	<b>Reason for update</b>	<b>Date approved</b>
2	Updated to include reference to handling of child safety complaints	24 January 2024