



MARIST AUCKLAND WATER POLO CLUB (Inc)

WELLBEING POLICY

1.0 Purpose

Marist Water Polo is committed to promoting a positive, inclusive and supportive environment where players can thrive both in and out of the pool. This policy sets out the club's commitment to a person-first, athlete-second approach, recognising that player wellbeing is central to enjoyment, development, and sustainable performance in sport.

This policy outlines how the club promotes, supports, and enables player wellbeing across all levels of participation.

2.0 Scope

2.1 The scope of this policy is designed to cover:

- Club training sessions at designated pools
- Water polo games including league games and tournaments
- Team environments, travel, and club-organised activities

2.2 The policy applies to:

- Players
- Coaches (employed, voluntary or contracted)
- Team managers and support staff
- Volunteers (including parents and caregivers of players where relevant to club activities)

3.0 Player Wellbeing Principles

Player wellbeing at Marist Water Polo is guided by the following principles:

- Person first, athlete second
- Balance between sport, education/work, and personal life
- Sustainable participation and long-term athlete development
- Open communication and early support-seeking
- Respect for individual circumstances and needs
- Positive team culture that supports belonging and enjoyment

These principles guide decision-making by coaches, managers, and the club committee.

4.0 Responsibilities

4.1 The Marist Committee is responsible for:

- Setting the overall direction and expectations for player wellbeing
- Ensuring processes are in place to support wellbeing practices across teams
- Promoting a culture that values wellbeing alongside performance
- Providing access to appropriate support pathways where required
- Reviewing wellbeing practices periodically to ensure effectiveness
- Encouraging alignment between coaching practices and wellbeing principles

4.2 Coaches / Team Managers / Coordinators are responsible for:

- Supporting a positive and respectful team environment
- Considering player wellbeing when planning and delivering training and competition
- Encouraging open and honest communication with players
- Being aware of signs of stress, fatigue, or disengagement in players
- Adjusting expectations where appropriate to support wellbeing and balance
- Supporting players returning from injury or absence in a respectful and inclusive way
- Promoting healthy team culture and discouraging excessive pressure or negativity
- Escalating wellbeing concerns to the appropriate club contact where needed

4.3 Players are responsible for:

- Communicating openly about their availability, workload, and wellbeing needs
- Taking responsibility for rest, recovery, and self-management where possible
- Respecting their own physical and emotional limits
- Supporting teammates and contributing to a positive team environment
- Seeking support when they are struggling or experiencing challenges

5.0 Wellbeing Support and Practices

The club will promote wellbeing through the following practices:

- Encouraging regular informal check-ins between coaches and players
- Supporting balanced training loads where possible
- Promoting recovery, rest, and sustainable participation practices
- Encouraging inclusive team environments where all players feel valued
- Supporting players through periods of injury, non-selection, or reduced participation
- Encouraging a culture where speaking up about wellbeing is safe and supported

6.0 Communication and Reporting

Wellbeing concerns should be raised as early as possible.

Reporting pathways:

1. Coach or team manager (if appropriate)
2. Grade coordinator

3. Committee wellbeing contact
4. Club President

Where concerns involve coaches or sensitive issues, direct escalation is encouraged.

The club will:

- Respond to concerns promptly
- Treat matters confidentially where appropriate
- Share information only on a need-to-know basis
- Provide updates where appropriate while respecting privacy

7.0 Mental Health and Wellbeing

Mental health is treated with the same importance as physical health.

Players experiencing stress, anxiety, burnout, or other mental health concerns will be supported in a respectful, confidential, and non-judgemental manner. The club will:

- Encourage open communication where appropriate
- Avoid stigma or discrimination
- Support reasonable adjustments to participation
- Encourage continued engagement with the club where suitable
- Promote access to external professional support when needed

8.0 Player Transitions and Participation Changes

The club recognises that players may experience changes in participation due to injury, illness, mental health, selection decisions, personal circumstances, or life commitments.

The club will:

- Treat all transitions with respect and fairness
- Prioritise player wellbeing and safety
- Support continued connection to the club where appropriate
- Apply flexibility where reasonable
- Maintain a positive and inclusive environment

Selection and participation decisions will be based on fair and transparent criteria and communicated respectfully. Sensitive matters will be managed privately.

Where players return after a break:

- Safe return-to-play processes will be supported
- Medical clearance may be required where applicable
- Training load will be managed appropriately
- Reintegration will be positive and inclusive

9.0 Conduct and Culture

All members are expected to contribute to a respectful and inclusive environment.

Bullying, harassment, exclusion, or negative commentary relating to participation, selection, performance, or wellbeing will not be tolerated.

Approved: May 2026