

# Lane Cove Football Club

## Member Protection Information



# OVERVIEW



- Role of the Member Protection Information Officer (“MPIO”)
- What concerns should be raised?
- What is my role as a coach, manager, player, parent or spectator?
- Issue resolution process
- Child Protection matters
- Signs to look out for
- How child protection matters are resolved
- Role of the Coach and Manager
- Useful websites



# WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE MPIO?

- The MPIO is a mandated role (it is a requirement that all clubs must have at least one MPIO and that person must be trained and certified)
- **Member protection is for everyone** involved in Lane Cove FC (parents, child and adult players, spectators, volunteers, officials and parents)
- The MPIO is mandated to resolve issues and complaints confidentially (whether raised from inside the club or from another Club's MPIO)
- The MPIO also oversees the writing and implementation of club policies and procedures to comply with NSFA and FFA regulations (e.g. implementing the Working With Children Check requirements)



# WHAT CONCERNS SHOULD BE RAISED?

- **Bullying**
- **Harassment** - (language or behaviour that is not wanted, asked for, not returned, creates a hostile or uncomfortable environment)
- **Discrimination** - (based on race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, physical or intellectual capacity)
- **Inappropriate gestures** by players, parents, spectators or officials
- **Inappropriate language** - (negative words, aggressive tone, swearing) by players, parents, spectators or officials
- **Aggressive play** - (play that is dangerous beyond the normal scope of the game and injury is likely)

**Regardless of age or role, if you feel uncomfortable about something, contact the club MPIO**



# WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES?

## Bullying

“You are f\*\*\*ing hopeless”

Giving the referee the middle finger

“Score a goal or you are not going out with your friends tonight”

## Harassment

No one in the team will pass you the ball

“You kick like a girl”

Refusing to leave the field when sin binned

## Discrimination

“What the hell is wrong with you”

“F\*\*k off back to your own country”

You don't make the team because of your sexual preference

## Inappropriate gestures

Tackling the goalkeeper rather than going for the ball

“Some teammates keep telling me I am dumb and a retard”

## Inappropriate language

Arguing with a linesperson

Performing a late tackle with studs up

## Aggressive play



# WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE CONCERNS?

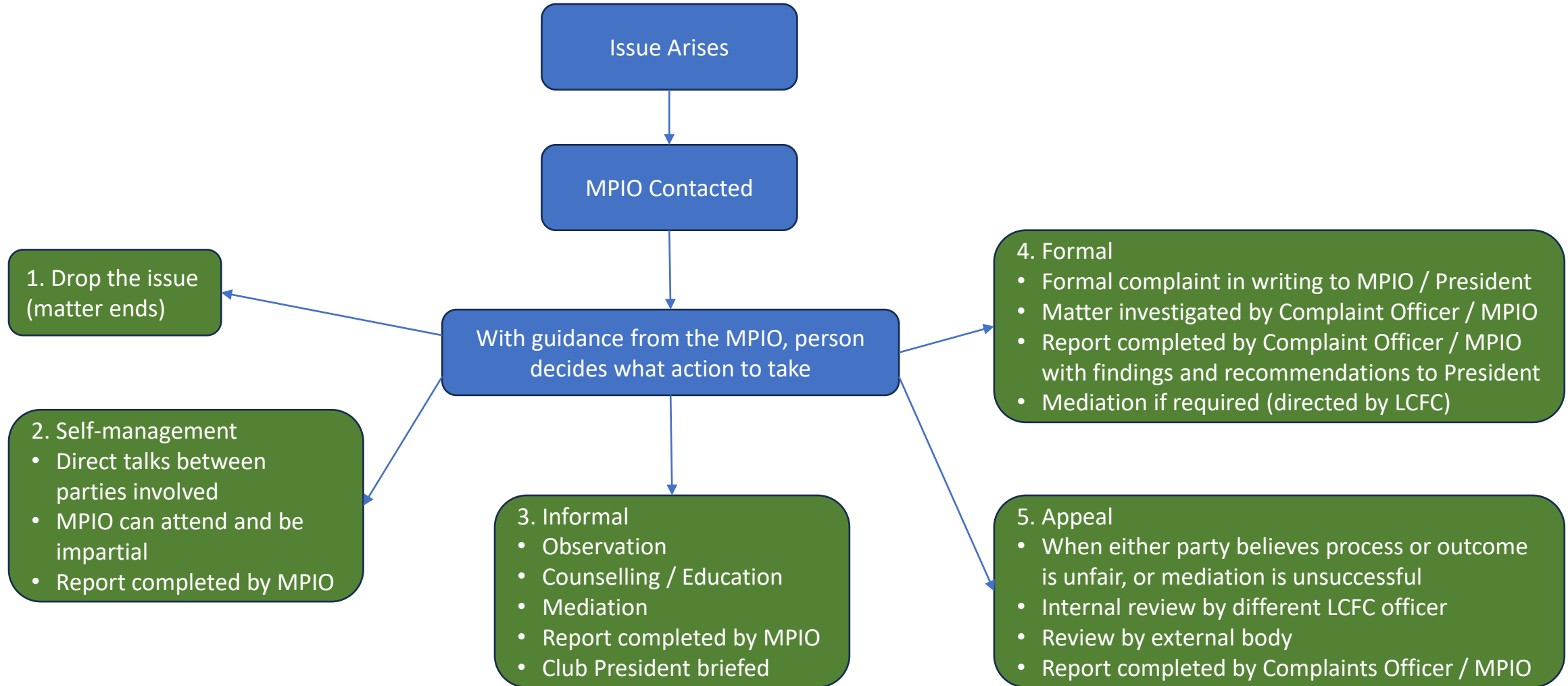
**If you have concerns during a match or training session:**

- **Players**
  - Speak to your coach at half time or full time to raise the issue
- **Coaches / Managers**
  - Notify the centre referee at half time of the concerns and monitor play
  - Move a player or substitute them to protect them or reduce the likelihood of further inappropriate behaviour
  - Talk to the player at the end of the game / session to explain what the issue is and what is expected of them
- **Parents / Spectators**
  - Speak to the club coach or manager and they will handle the issue using an agreed process

**If at any time you need advice on a concern or the concern cannot be resolved at the time that it was raised, report details to the MPIO as soon as possible via email or phone**



# ISSUE RESOLUTION PROCESS (GENERAL)





# CHILD PROTECTION MATTERS

## What do we mean by this?

- **Sexual abuse** – a sexual act or threat imposed on a child, including exposing them to sexual images
- **Physical abuse** – intentional harm, unintentional harm as a result of punishment, poorly maintained facilities and equipment
- **Emotional abuse** – rejection (an adult belittles them continuously and maliciously), verbal assaults, deliberately encouraging anti-social, deviant and destructive behaviour
- **Neglect** – failure to provide the basics (food, clothing, education, emotional bonding, reliable and safe accommodation)





# WHAT ARE THE WARNING SIGNS?

## Examples of warning signs include when a child....

- Is repeatedly not collected from training (late or at all)
- Stops attending training or games and you don't know why (parent has not provided you with an explanation)
- Shows attitude or behaviour changes (they may become more withdrawn, aggressive or teary on or off the field)
- Has bruising with no explanation on how it occurred, or differing explanations on how it arose
- Displays sexualised behaviour or language inappropriate for their age
- Displays extreme attention seeking, disruptive or aggressive behaviour
- Seeks inappropriate adult affection



# WHAT IS MY ROLE?

**As a Coach or Manager, if a child discloses alleged or potential abuse to you:**

- Remain calm to minimise the child's distress
- Ask open-ended questions ("What happened then...?") and avoid questions that lead to yes / no answers
- Try and find out who / what / when / where / how / who else knows / how often abuse occurs
- Contact the club MPIO immediately and follow their directions

**Child protection matters will be managed directly between the MPIO and the person raising the issue. Please keep all information in strict confidence.**



# INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOURS

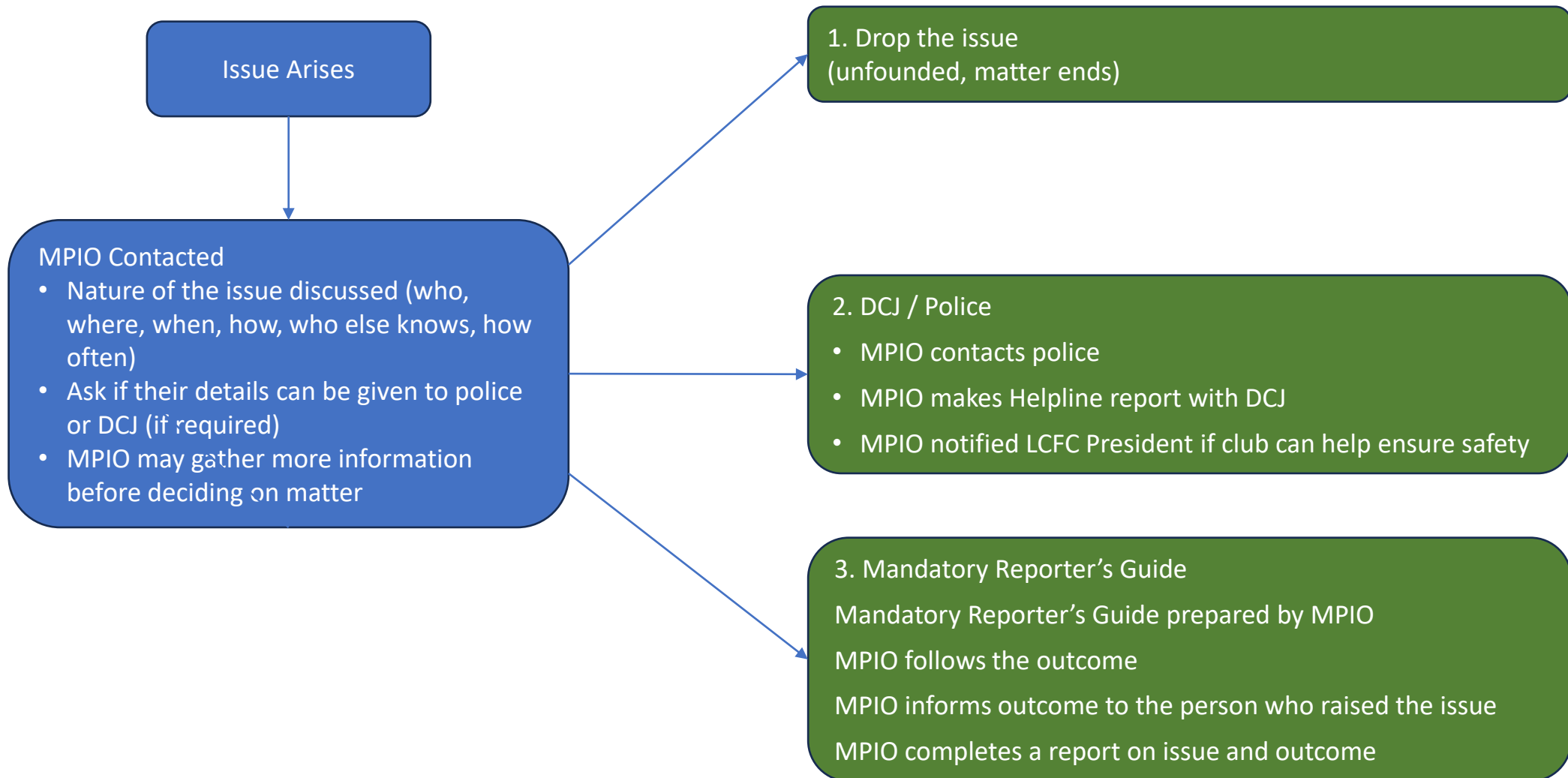
**Inappropriate actions, if left unchecked, can become illegal behaviours. Keep an eye out for the following:**

- Any use of camera equipment (including mobile phones) in areas where private activities occur (e.g. change rooms)
- Turning a blind eye to bullying behaviour
- Continual disregard for a child's personal space and boundaries when demonstrating a skill that requires physical contact

**If you are in doubt, contact the MPIO, they will ask you for more information to determine the appropriate next steps.**



# ISSUE RESOLUTION PROCESS (CHILD PROTECTION MATTERS)





# AS A COACH OR MANAGER...

## Generally

- Be mindful of the age of the players, any physical contact with a player should be appropriate to the situation and necessary for the player's skill development
- Be mindful of any changes in behaviour or attitude of a child player (could indicate signs of harassment, abuse or bullying)
- If a player under 18 stops attending training / matches without reason, ask the parent for explanation or contact the club MPIO
- Do not leave training or matches until all under 18 players are collected
- If you have any player (any age) who is displaying inappropriate behaviour at training or during matches:
  - Speak with the team manager / coach about your concerns and decide who will speak to the player
  - In a respectful way, speak to the player about their inappropriate behaviour
  - If they use inappropriate behaviour again, remind them to stop, or contact the club MPIO



# AS A COACH OR MANAGER...

## During a match

- Ensure all equipment and facilities meet safety standards and are appropriate to the age and abilities of the players
- If a player argues with an official ask them to stop, speak with them at half or full time and you can address the concerns with the centre referee
- You are not allowed on the field of play unless you are tending to an injury
- If a player is injured, follow the advice of their physician as to when they should return to training / playing
- If you have an over-involved parent (yelling out coaching directions, entering the field during matches / training, suggesting you “stack” the team with good players):
  - Speak with the team manager about your concerns
  - The manager or coach will speak to the parent in a respectful manner about the concerns raised
  - If the issue persists, contact the club MPIO who can raise it with the parent in a confidential manner

# CONTACTING THE LANE COVE FC MPIO



Lane Cove FC's MPIO contact details are listed on the Lane Cove FC website. The MPIO can be contacted via email at

[mpio@lcfc.com.au](mailto:mpio@lcfc.com.au)

# USEFUL WEBSITES



**Lane Cove FC**

[www.lcfc.com.au](http://www.lcfc.com.au)

**NSW Office of the Children's Guardian**

<https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/>

**Play by the Rules online courses**

<https://www.playbytherules.net.au/online-courses/>

**FFA Code of Conduct**

<https://www.footballaustralia.com.au/sites/ffa/files/2017-09/National%20Code%20of%20Conduct.pdf>