

BALMORAL LITTLE ATHLETICS CLUB

Code of Conduct

Standards of behaviour for everyone involved with BLAC

Policy owner	BLAC Management Committee
Applies to	Athletes, parents/guardians, spectators, volunteers, coaches, officials, committee members and operational role holders
Related LAQ documents	Codes of Conduct; Child Safeguarding and Young People Policy; Complaints, Disputes and Discipline Policy; Member Protection Policy; Blue Card Policy
Related BLAC documents	Parent/Guardian Onsite and Athlete Supervision Policy; Family Volunteering Policy; Photography and Media Policy; Child Safety Policy
Review	Annually, or following a relevant change to legislation, LAQ policy or Club operations

1. Purpose

Balmoral Little Athletics Club (BLAC) is committed to providing a safe, welcoming, inclusive and enjoyable environment where children and young people can participate in Little Athletics.

Everyone involved with BLAC has a responsibility to contribute to that environment through respectful, safe, and sportsmanlike behaviour.

This Code sets out the standards of behaviour expected of athletes, parents and guardians, spectators, volunteers, coaches, officials and BLAC committee members.

BLAC operates under the Little Athletics Queensland (LAQ) Codes of Conduct, Child Safeguarding and Young People Policy and Complaints, Disputes and Discipline Policy. This Code supports those requirements and sets out the additional expectations within BLAC.

2. Who and when this Code applies

This Code applies to:

- athletes
- parents and guardians
- spectators and visitors
- volunteers
- Age Marshals and Age Group Coordinators
- coaches
- officials
- committee and operational role holders
- any other person participating in or assisting with a BLAC activity.

It applies during:

- training
- BLAC competition nights

- carnivals and competitions
- coaching and development activities
- presentations and Club functions
- meetings
- volunteering activities
- communications and online activity, including social media, where there is a clear connection with BLAC or Little Athletics.

3. Standards expected of everyone

Everyone involved with BLAC is expected to:

- treat athletes, families, volunteers, coaches, officials and visitors with dignity and respect
- contribute to a safe, inclusive and positive environment
- follow reasonable directions from officials, coaches, committee members and other authorised persons
- use respectful language and behaviour
- respect differences in age, ability, background and experience
- respect Club facilities, grounds and equipment
- support fair play and good sportsmanship
- place the safety and wellbeing of children and young people first
- raise concerns appropriately rather than confronting, intimidating or abusing another person
- comply with BLAC and LAQ policies and applicable laws.
- Bullying, harassment, discrimination, threatening behaviour, physical or verbal abuse, intimidation and other unsportsmanlike behaviour are not acceptable.

4. Athletes

Participate positively

- participate for enjoyment, development and personal achievement
- try their best and compete fairly
- follow the rules of Little Athletics and individual events
- remain with their allocated age group or activity unless directed otherwise
- listen to and follow reasonable instructions from coaches, Age Marshals, officials and volunteers
- tell an adult if they feel unsafe, unwell or need assistance.

Show good sportsmanship

- respect the performances and achievements of other athletes
- encourage teammates and competitors
- accept officials' decisions
- win and lose graciously
- avoid cheating, foul play, taunting or deliberately interfering with another athlete.

Show respect

Athletes must not:

- bully, threaten or intimidate another person

- swear at, insult or demean another athlete, volunteer, coach, official or person
- deliberately push, strike or physically harm another person
- misuse equipment or Club facilities
- engage in behaviour that could place themselves or others at risk.

5. Parents, guardians and spectators

Parents, guardians, and spectators play an important role in creating the environment in which children experience Little Athletics.

Support children positively

- remember that children participate for their own enjoyment and development
- encourage effort, improvement and good sportsmanship
- acknowledge good performances regardless of placing
- never ridicule, shame or belittle a child for a mistake or performance
- avoid placing inappropriate pressure on athletes to win.

Respect officials and volunteers

- respect officials' decisions
- not argue with, abuse or intimidate officials, coaches or volunteers
- raise questions or concerns calmly and through the appropriate BLAC process
- follow reasonable directions from the Operations Manager, committee members and authorised officials.

Model appropriate behaviour

- Parents, guardians and spectators must not:
- use abusive, threatening, discriminatory or aggressive language or behaviour
- engage in physical confrontation
- taunt or intimidate athletes, families, officials or volunteers
- attend training or competition under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs
- use social media or other communications to harass, bully or disparage people connected with BLAC.
- Parents and guardians must also comply with BLAC's Parent/Guardian Onsite and Athlete Supervision Policy and Family Volunteering Policy.

6. Volunteers, coaches and officials

BLAC relies on volunteers, coaches and officials to provide safe, fair, and enjoyable activities for athletes.

Put athlete welfare first

- place the safety and wellbeing of athletes above competitive outcomes
- provide activities appropriate to the age, ability and experience of athletes
- show appropriate care for sick or injured athletes

- actively discourage unsafe, unfair or unsportsmanlike behaviour
- comply with applicable child safeguarding and Blue Card requirements.

Be fair and respectful

- treat athletes fairly and without favouritism
- respect each athlete's effort, development and individual ability
- communicate calmly and appropriately
- never ridicule or humiliate an athlete
- avoid abusive, threatening, discriminatory or inappropriate behaviour
- respect other coaches, officials, volunteers and families.

Maintain appropriate boundaries

- maintain appropriate adult-child boundaries
- avoid unobserved or unnecessary one-to-one situations with children where practicable
- ensure physical contact is appropriate and necessary for the activity
- not use their position to create inappropriate personal relationships or contact.

Act with integrity

- act objectively and impartially where their role requires it
- declare and appropriately manage conflicts of interest
- accept responsibility for their decisions and actions
- follow applicable rules, policies and authorised directions
- only undertake roles for which they have the appropriate knowledge or support.

7. BLAC committee members and operational role holders

Committee members and people holding operational roles at BLAC have additional responsibilities because they act on behalf of the Club and may hold positions of trust or authority.

- act in the best interests of BLAC and its athletes
- place child safety and athlete wellbeing at the centre of decisions
- model the standards of behaviour expected from other members
- act fairly, respectfully and in good faith
- comply with the BLAC Constitution, LAQ requirements and Club policies
- exercise their authority appropriately and not use their position for personal advantage
- declare actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest
- protect confidential, sensitive and personal information obtained through their role
- respect properly made committee decisions, even where they personally supported a different outcome
- communicate professionally with members, volunteers, external organisations and other committee members
- appropriately document and escalate significant safety, safeguarding, conduct or governance concerns
- avoid making commitments or representing BLAC externally unless authorised to do so.

8. Child safety

BLAC has zero tolerance for harm, abuse or neglect of children and young people.

Any behaviour that may involve a child-safety concern must be treated as a safeguarding matter rather than simply a Code of Conduct issue.

Where a child is at immediate risk of harm, protecting the child takes priority. Child-safety concerns must be managed in accordance with the LAQ Child Safeguarding and Young People Policy and BLAC's Child Safety Policy.

9. Raising a concern

Where possible, minor issues should be raised promptly and respectfully with the appropriate BLAC representative so they can be addressed before they escalate.

Concerns may be raised with:

- the relevant Age Marshal, coach or official for a straightforward operational matter
- the Operations Manager for a competition-night matter
- a member of the BLAC Management Committee
- the BLAC President or designated Complaint Manager for a formal conduct concern.

A person should not attempt to resolve a serious concern through confrontation, argument or social media.

Formal complaints alleging conduct covered by LAQ policies should be made and managed in accordance with the LAQ Complaints, Disputes and Discipline Policy.

10. Responding to breaches

BLAC's response will depend on the nature, seriousness, and circumstances of the behaviour.

Immediate action

Where behaviour is unsafe, disruptive, or inappropriate during a BLAC activity, an authorised BLAC representative may take reasonable immediate action to maintain safety and allow the activity to continue.

This may include:

- reminding a person of the expected behaviour
- directing the behaviour to stop
- asking a parent to address their child's behaviour
- removing an athlete temporarily from an event or activity
- asking a person to leave a particular area
- escalating the matter to the Operations Manager or Management Committee.
- Immediate action taken to manage a situation does not necessarily mean a formal breach has been substantiated.

Formal concerns

Where behaviour may constitute a breach of an LAQ policy, BLAC will follow the applicable LAQ Complaints, Disputes and Discipline Policy rather than creating a separate disciplinary system.

That process may include:

- initial assessment
- provisional action where necessary to manage a risk of harm
- investigation
- alternative dispute resolution where appropriate
- findings and a breach notice
- a hearing where required
- sanctions or other appropriate measures.

Possible outcomes

Depending on the circumstances and the applicable LAQ process, outcomes may include:

- education or guidance
- verbal or written warning
- mediation or another agreed resolution
- conditions or restrictions on participation or duties
- suspension from activities
- referral to LAQ
- referral to police, child protection or another external authority where required.

11. Serious conduct

BLAC may act immediately where conduct presents a significant safety or safeguarding concern.

Examples include:

- fighting or physical assault
- threats of violence
- an adult verbally or physically abusing a child
- serious bullying or harassment
- suspected child abuse or neglect
- conduct that may be criminal
- conduct presenting an immediate risk to an athlete or another person.

12. Related policies and documents

- LAQ Codes of Conduct
- LAQ Child Safeguarding and Young People Policy
- LAQ Complaints, Disputes and Discipline Policy
- LAQ Member Protection Policy
- LAQ Blue Card Policy

- BLAC Parent/Guardian Onsite and Athlete Supervision Policy
- BLAC Family Volunteering Policy
- BLAC Photography and Media Policy
- BLAC Child Safety Policy
- BLAC Constitution and other applicable Club rules.

13. Responsibility and review

The BLAC Management Committee is responsible for communicating, implementing, and periodically reviewing this Code. Everyone covered by this Code is responsible for understanding and complying with the standards relevant to their involvement with BLAC.

LAQ reference note

This Code has been drafted to align with the current Little Athletics Queensland Codes of Conduct, Child Safeguarding and Young People Policy, Complaints, Disputes and Discipline Policy, Member Protection Policy and Blue Card Policy.

Where there is any inconsistency, the applicable LAQ policy takes precedence.