

# EQUITABLE ACCESS AND USAGE POLICY



## Background

St Marys Rugby League Club has a rich history entrenched in camaraderie, respect, shared purpose, and core values. We are committed to promoting rugby league and enhancing the social and economic wellbeing of our community. We provide a safe environment where individuals of all ages and genders can participate in social activities and rugby league. We take immense pride in our esteemed reputation within the local and broader rugby league communities.

St Marys Rugby League Club Ltd  
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## Policy

St Marys Rugby League Club acknowledges:

- The disadvantaged position some individuals have had in rugby league due to their gender.
- Achieving gender equality requires diverse approaches for women and girls to achieve similar outcomes for all genders.
- Achieving equality requires diverse approaches for men, people with disabilities, First Nations peoples, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities to achieve similar outcomes for all.

St Marys Rugby League Club will:

- Engage fairly and equitably with participants, community stakeholders, staff, members, volunteers, officials, supporters, and members of the Penrith & District Junior Rugby League and NSW Rugby League, in a positive, respectful, and constructive manner, regardless of gender.
- Engage with the broader rugby league community to assess the implications for women, men, people with disabilities, First Nations peoples, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds of any planned action, including policies, programs, and communications.

## Purpose

This policy aims to promote inclusivity, diversity, and equity in all aspects of our operations and applies to all persons associated with St Marys Rugby League Club.

St Marys Rugby League Club recognises that most rugby league facilities in our community are not designed with female participation in mind. As a key community stakeholder, we are committed to ensuring that women and girls have equal access to rugby league facilities and resources. Our goal is to provide every opportunity for females in our community to participate in rugby league and reach their full potential, whether as NRLW players, officials, spectators, or active members of the rugby league community.



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## Commitments

St Marys Rugby League Club is committed to:

- Providing a welcoming and inclusive environment for women and girls.
- Ensuring equal access to training, facilities, and resources.
- Promoting the participation of women and girls at all levels of rugby league.
- Addressing and preventing discrimination, harassment, and bullying.

## Mission

Our mission is to:

- **Increase Participation:** Actively encourage and support the participation of women and girls in rugby league.
- **Equal Opportunities:** Ensure that women and girls have equal opportunities to leadership roles, to train and compete in rugby league, and to reach their full potential.
- **Safe Environment:** Provide a safe and supportive environment where women and girls feel valued and respected.
- **Recruitment and Retention:** Implement targeted recruitment strategies to attract women and girls to the club and develop retention programs to keep them engaged and motivated.
- **Facilities and Resources:** Ensure that facilities and resources are accessible and meet the needs of women and girls, including appropriate changing rooms, equipment, and convenient training session times.
- **Leadership and Representation:** Encourage women and girls to take on leadership roles within the club and ensure their representation in decision-making processes.

- **Training and Development:** Offer coaching and development programs specifically designed for women and girls and provide mentorship opportunities to support their growth and development.
- **Community Engagement:** Collaborate with local schools, community groups, and other organisations to promote rugby league among women and girls and organise events and activities that highlight their achievements and contributions.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Regularly review and assess the effectiveness of the policy, collect feedback from members, and make necessary adjustments to improve access and equity.
- **Coaches and Officials:** Promote inclusivity and equity in their interactions with players, ensuring that training and competition environments are safe and supportive.
- **Members and Participants:** Respect and support the rights of women and girls within the club and report any incidents of discrimination, harassment or bullying.
- **Reporting:** Encourage all members to report any concerns or incidents related to access and equity and provide clear and confidential reporting mechanisms.
- **Resolution:** Address reported concerns promptly and fairly and implement appropriate measures to resolve issues and prevent recurrence.



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### Key Strategy

Construct a purposefully designed female amenities building and dressing sheds with areas for the future development of a female only gymnasium & educational centre.

### Initiatives implemented to help us achieve our mission and support our key strategy include:

- A key objective in the Club's constitution is to propagate the game of rugby league, ensuring our ongoing commitment.
- Employing a full-time Community & Development Manager to aid in propagating the game, working with schools and community groups.
- Implementing the Emerging Female Saints Development Program in 2020 to support our pathway system and ensure the education and development of aspirational female players.
- Employing a full-time female Rugby League Administrator.
- Appointing two female members to the Junior League Executive Committee.

- Appointing NRLW Player Sarah Togatuki as the Club's official Female Rugby League Ambassador in 2023. Sarah promotes the game through school visits, attendance at training sessions, club games, meet and greet sessions, and club functions.
- Launching the Sarah Togatuki Academy for female players in 2024, providing training sessions led by Sarah for female players aged Under 14 to Under 18.
- Introducing perpetual trophies specifically for junior and senior female players.
- Conducting surveys with female participants and community stakeholders.



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### **Monitoring and Review**

This policy and the Club's initiatives will be constantly monitored and reviewed to ensure their effectiveness and relevance. Amendments will be made as necessary to reflect changes in legislation, best practices, and the needs of the Club and the community.

### **Statement of Intent**

This Statement of Intent establishes the expectation that gender equality is considered and prioritised in all current and future planning, policies, and practices. St Marys Rugby League Club understands that gender equality is:

- The attainment of equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities for women, men, trans, and gender-diverse people. Equality does not mean that everyone will become the same, but that their rights, responsibilities, and opportunities will not depend on their gender.
- The provision of fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities.