



# **IRISH PONY CLUB CODE OF ETHICS & GOOD PRACTICE FOR CHILDREN'S SPORT**

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

The Irish Pony Club is fully committed to safeguarding the well being of its members. Every individual in the Pony Club should, at all times, show respect and understanding for their own and others' rights, safety and welfare. All involved should conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of the Pony Club and the guidelines contained in the Code of Ethics and Good practice for Children's Sport.



## IRISH PONY CLUB CODE OF CONDUCT

The Irish Pony Club is committed to providing the best possible environment for all young people involved in the sport. Members deserve to be given enjoyable, safe sporting opportunities, free from abuse of any kind. These members have rights, which must be respected, and responsibilities, which they must accept.

The Irish Pony Club also has a duty to care for volunteers working with its members on behalf of the organisation.

### **Members are entitled to:**

- Be treated with dignity and respect.
- Be safe and to feel safe.
- Get help against bullies.
- Say No.
- Be listened to.
- Be believed.
- Be happy, have fun and enjoy sport.
- Experience competition and the desire to win as a positive and healthy outcome of striving for best performance.
- Have a voice in the running of their branch.
- Participate on an equal basis.
- Confidentiality.

### **Members should always:**

- Avoid behaviour, conduct or language that is unseemly or offensive, or conduct injurious to the character and aspirations of the Irish Pony Club or the interests of its members.
- Treat all Instructors, Trainers, selectors, competition organisers and officials with respect.
- Abide by the rules set down by team Officials when travelling to away events.
- Respect team members even when things go wrong.
- Respect opponents, be gracious in defeat.
- Treat their pony / horse with care and consideration..
- Take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others. Abide by the Safety rules and regulations of the Irish Pony Club, in particular wear the protective riding hats, body protectors and correct footwear as prescribed by the IPC. Currently approved riding hats: PAS 015, EN 1384 both with BSI Kitemark, or SNELL E2001, or ASTM F1163 (with SEI Kitemark).
- Take care that their tack is in good condition and safe for riding.
- Abide by the rules set down by their District Commissioner and Branch Committee and Trainers when travelling to away events.

### **Members should never:**

- Use unfair or bullying tactics to gain advantage over other members or officials.
- Use bullying tactics to isolate another member.
- Use violence or physical contact that is not allowed within the rules.
- Shout or argue with officials, team members or opponents.
- Harm fellow members, opponents or their property.
- Cheat.
- Make false allegations against other members or adults.
- Use drugs, alcohol or tobacco at Pony Club activities.
- Keep secrets, especially if they cause harm to any party.



## IRISH PONY CLUB GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS:

**The Pony Club is a world wide, voluntary youth organisation, founded seventy five years ago to:**

- ❖ Encourage young people to ride and to learn to enjoy all kinds of sport connected with horses and riding.
- ❖ To provide instruction in riding and horsemanship, and to instil in members the proper care of their animals.
- ❖ To promote the highest ideals of sportsmanship, citizenship and loyalty, thereby cultivating strength of character and self-discipline.

The Irish Pony Club is committed to providing a safe and fair environment for all members. Our first priority is the welfare of Members and we are committed to providing an environment, which will allow participants to perform to their best ability, free from bullying and intimidation. The Irish Pony Club also has a duty to care for volunteers working with young people on behalf of the organisation.

The contribution of parents in this work is highly appreciated especially within the .....Branch. As riding is a high risk sport we appeal to parents to help us by observing the following rules:

- At all Pony Club activities the District Commissioner is the person in charge. In his/her absence the Secretary is in charge and may enlist the help of the Senior Instructor if needed. If neither can attend the District Commissioner will appoint an official representative who will be responsible for the activity.
- Only **hats** marked with: **PAS 015** (with BSI Kitemark), **EN 1384** (with BSI Kitemark) **Snell E 2001** and **ASTM F1163** (with SEI) are approved for Pony Club activities. Crash helmets must be worn for cross-country riding. Hats must be worn with chinstrap correctly fastened at all times when mounted. The hat should fit the head firmly but comfortably. If a hat suffers a severe blow then it should be discarded and replaced.
- **Body protectors** must be worn for all jumping (Show jumping and cross country) Level 3 compulsory for cross country.
- **Please check all tack for safety and fit** regularly, paying particular attention to stitching and places where the leather is in regular contact with metal parts. Also please check the length of the girth – there should be at least three holes spare on each side, above and below the buckles. These are always checked at rallies before riding as a matter of course, but if found to be ill fitting or unsafe it may be that the member will not be able to ride.
- Parents are always welcome at all Pony Club activities but please stay 20 meters back while riding is in progress. Please do not distract and confuse your child by talking to them or attracting their attention in any way whilst they are in the care of their instructor. If a parent cannot attend a rally/training session please designate an adult who will be present, to be responsible for your child in the event of an accident.
- All points of discussion, queries, problems and suggestions should be brought directly to the District Commissioner. Instructors are briefed to refer parents to the District Commissioner or Secretary or acting official under all circumstances.
- At the end of a riding session all riders will dismount, run up their stirrups and await their instructor's directions. With the exception of the very young group who will remain mounted and under the supervision of their instructor until ponies are safely loaded or

tied up. **NO ONE WILL RIDE AFTER THIS TIME.** This includes siblings and friends etc.

- Only paid up members of the Pony Club, Instructors or nominated helpers may ride at Pony Club activities.
- At the finish of a rally (or finish time at camp), the parents will please collect their children promptly as they are then officially the parent's responsibility and history has shown this is one of the high-risk times for members and their ponies/horses.
- If you bring unmounted siblings, friends or relatives to a rally please ensure that they are properly supervised and where appropriate understand the above rules of safety.
- **Pony Club Tests:** The District Commissioner with advice from the Instructor will decide when a member is ready to take the Pony Club Standards of Efficiency Tests.
- **Team Selection:** is the responsibility of the District Commissioner. He/she will appoint a Selector's Panel for the purpose of selecting teams. Any person who has an interest in a competitor should stand down for that particular selection.
- **Parents help is needed with the running of Pony Club activities** i.e. finding venues for Pony Club rallies, camp and competitions, Fund-raising, Building/Maintaining cross country course, Maintaining show jumps / Mounted Games equipment, Stewarding fences etc. when we host competitions and most important with Catering at rallies, camp and for competitions.
- Be a role model for your child and maintain the highest standards of conduct when interacting with children, other parents, with officials and organisers.
- Encourage your child to abide by the rules of the Irish Pony Club. Teach your child that honest endeavour is as important as winning and do all you can to encourage good sportsmanship.
- Always recognise the value and importance of the volunteers who provide sporting/recreational opportunities for your child. Do not publicly question the judgement or honesty of judges, stewards, instructors or other officials.
- Parents should support all efforts to remove abusive and bullying behaviour in all its forms.

Irish Pony Club  
Parents Code of Conduct:



1. I/We will respect the rules and procedures set down in the Irish Pony Club's Code of Ethics for Children's Sport.
2. I/We will respect branch members, branch officials, instructors, all officials and members throughout the organisation. I/We will encourage my child to treat other participants, instructors, selectors, officials with respect.
3. I/We will respect the officials and their authority during rallies, team/individual training, camp, competitions and at all Pony Club activities.
4. I/We will never demonstrate threatening or abusive behaviour or use foul language.
5. I/We will respect and encourage my child to respect the rights and needs of all animals.

Names: ..... (Parents/Guardians)

Signed: .....

Member's name: .....

Date: .....

## **IRISH PONY CLUB COMPLAINTS, DISCIPLINARY AND APPEALS PROCEDURES**

The Code of Ethics adopted by the Irish Pony Club includes a Policy Statement and a Code of Conduct for Members, Parents and Officials. The Irish Pony Club is committed to providing the best possible environment for all young people involved in sport. The Irish Pony Club also has a duty to care for volunteers working with its members on behalf of the organisation. The Irish Pony Club expects appropriate behaviour from all members, parents and others participating in any Pony Club activity.

Without prejudice to the generality to the foregoing the following shall be deemed to be inappropriate behaviour:

- Possession, use or distribution of any illegal drugs or alcohol
- Profanity, base &/or vulgar language or gestures
- Harassment/Bullying — using words or actions that intimidate, threaten or persecute others before, during or following Pony Club activities.
- Failure to follow rules and or obey instructions.
- Cheating (deliberate attempt to circumvent or undermine the spirit or letter of the rules as is deemed by the Committee, in accordance with accepted good practice and in conformity with the written rules).
- Abusing a horse/pony, and or any other animal.
- Dishonesty (statement or endorsement of an untruth) and or theft.

*Any conduct/action not befitting or in breach of Pony Club ethos by a member, parent, instructor, official or committee member can be considered by the Disciplinary Committee.*

Under this Code the Irish Pony Club has developed a Complaints, Disciplinary and Appeals Procedure. This Procedure covers three distinct areas:

Difficulties or disputes which arise regarding the behaviour of members, officials, parents and others.

Complaints by members, their parents, and/or officials regarding any issue about which they are in dispute.

Difficulties or disputes which arise at competitions or as a result of competition. (These are covered separately in each Competition Rule Book).

### ***Disciplinary Procedures***

Irish Pony Club Officials are instructed to abide by the following procedure:

*1. First incident of inappropriate/unacceptable behaviour/breach of IPC Code of Conduct or Rules:*

▪ ***This incident should be reported to the DC or Chief Steward or Member of the Executive Committee who may issue a verbal warning and catalogue same in Branch records or Chief Steward competition report.***

*2. Second Incident*

▪ ***Issue a formal, witnessed, second verbal warning. This action should be reported to the District Commissioner who in turn reports the matter to the Area Representative concerned, and formally records this fact.***

3. *Third incident*

▪ ***A written warning is issued by the District Commissioner or Member of the Executive Committee referring to this and previous incidents. Area Representative, Executive Committee and HQ to be advised.***

4. *Fourth incident*

▪ ***Incurs suspension from Irish Pony Club activities. This action will be decided upon by the Executive Committee of the Irish Pony Club on advisement from the Disciplinary Committee.***

▪ ***Before such action (No. 4 above) is taken, the conduct of the member or adult or other person shall be inquired into by the District Commissioner and the Branch Committee and he/she shall be given a full opportunity to defend himself/herself, and to offer explanation for his/her conduct. There must be seven or more of the Branch Committee present when the matter is discussed. If they are of the opinion that the member, adult or other person in question has been guilty of misconduct and that such member, adult or other person has failed to offer a reasonable and acceptable explanation, the majority of the Branch Committee shall forthwith inform the Executive Committee who may enforce the expulsion as in No. 4 above.***

▪ ***The Executive Committee shall within one week, notify such member, adult or other person of its decision in writing. Such notification to be sent by registered post to the last known address of such member and his or her parent, adult or other person, and shall also register a copy with the Secretary of the Irish Pony Club.***

▪ ***Any person who is dissatisfied with the decision of the District Commissioner and Branch Committee or Disciplinary Committee or Executive Committee shall have the right to appeal to the Executive Committee of the Irish Pony Club. Such Notice of Appeal shall be in writing, setting out the grounds of appeal and shall be sent by registered post to the Secretary of the IPC within seven days of the receipt by such person of the decision.***

▪ ***In the event of a member being expelled, such member shall forthwith forfeit all privileges and membership rights.***

The Disciplinary Committee is appointed by the Executive Committee, who will consist of three of the following:

The President of the Irish Pony Club

The Chairman of the Irish Pony Club

Member of the Executive Committee

Branch District Commissioner

IPC Sub Committee Member (SJ, Dr. Tetrathlon, Mounted Games, Horse Trials, Hunter Trials etc.)

Parent of a Member of the Irish Pony Club

*The Chairman of the Irish Pony Club may appoint any additional person(s) who has in his/her opinion expertise in dealing with breaches of disciplinary procedures or disputes.*

### **Duties Of The Disciplinary Committee.**

- To deal with all matters concerning the conduct of members/parents and officials of the Irish Pony Club, or anyone else who is otherwise connected to the Irish Pony Club.
- Complaints which relate to anything occurring at a Pony Club activity or in direct connection with any activity of the Irish Pony Club.
- The disciplinary committee will deal with complaints, which must be in writing, signed by the authorised person making the complaint and either handed personally to the Chairman of the Irish Pony Club or sent by registered post to the Secretary of the Irish Pony Club. This complaint must be accompanied with any supporting evidence and names of witnesses.
- In addition any person has the right to report unseemly or unworthy conduct of a member or other adult, to the presiding officer of the Irish Pony Club activity in hand.

The Disciplinary Committee will initiate an **investigation** following a complaint into any incident of reported misconduct that does **not** relate to child abuse. It is important to note that the investigation of suspected child abuse is the responsibility of the statutory authorities and should not be undertaken by the Children's Officers or by any other Branch official. The Disciplinary Committee should inform the Executive Committee of the progress of their investigation.

The Disciplinary Committee will furnish the individual with appropriate details of the complaint being made against him/her and afford him/her the opportunity of providing a response either verbally or in writing.

Where it is established that an incident of misconduct has taken place, the Executive Committee will notify the member of any sanction being imposed. This notification will be in writing, setting out the reasons for the sanction. If the member is under 18 years of age, correspondence should be addressed to parents/guardians.

### **Appeals Committee**

If the member/official/adult against whom the complaint was made is unhappy with the decision of the Disciplinary Committee s/he shall have the right to appeal the decision to an **Appeals Committee** (independent of the Disciplinary Committee). Any appeal should be made in writing within a period of two months of the issue of the original decision of the Disciplinary Committee (such period to start from the day following that decision). The Chairperson of an Appeals Committee should be a member of the Executive Committee or a Director of the Irish Pony Club or an Appointee. The Appeals Committee shall be appointed by the Executive Committee when required. It shall be understood that any person(s) hearing an original complaint shall not form part of an Appeals Committee or be involved with the hearing of any subsequent appeal. Terms of reference of the Disciplinary and Appeals Committee will be determined and agreed by the Executive Committee.

If a member wishes to make a verbal representation to the Committee, the Committee will require the presence of a guardian over the age of 18 years.

The Appeals Committee will have the power to confirm, set aside or amend any sanction imposed by the Disciplinary Committee.

### ***Sanctions Available To The Disciplinary And Appeals Committee***

- Request an apology (whether verbal or written to be decided by the appropriate Committee).
- Eliminate the member from the competition.
- Eliminate the team from the competition.
- Suspend the adult or member for an appropriate period of time (from the Committee, Branch, or activity). Such period of time to be decided by the Disciplinary or Appeals Committee.
- Suspension or expulsion from the Irish Pony Club.

### ***Complaints by members, their parents, and/or officials***

- Complaints may be lodged by a member, parent or official.
- A Complaint must be in writing, addressed to the Secretary of the Branch concerned.
- The complaint should outline all relevant details about other parties involved and any corroborative evidence of misconduct/breach of the Code of Conduct.
- The Secretary will bring the complaint to the attention of the District Commissioner who should convene a meeting of the Branch Committee.
- The Branch Committee will investigate the matter allowing all parties involved a full hearing. They will decide if Disciplinary action is required. The District Commissioner will then inform the Area Representative and the Chairman of the Irish Pony Club and who will decide if a full Disciplinary Hearing is required.
- The Branch Committee or the Disciplinary Committee should hear the evidence from all parties involved and decide if a rule or Code has been breached. They should, inform those involved in writing of the sanctions to be imposed.
- Written notification should be given to parents if the complaint is against a member under 18 years.
- If any party does not agree with the decision of the Branch or Disciplinary Committee, they may appeal the decision within 10 days.
- The Appeals Committee may confirm, set aside or amend any sanction imposed by the Disciplinary Committee.
- The decision of the Appeals Committee is final and brings the issue in dispute to closure.



## Procedure for Dealing With Queries, Objections and Appeals At Competitions

- Competitors, and/or their parents should not approach a Fence Steward to enquire about the marking of a fence.
- Only a District Commissioner or his/her appointed Representative may query the results of a competition at the Secretary's tent. The Chairman of the Sub Committee involved or Chief Steward will explain/investigate any query or question brought to him/her.
- If the DC or his/her representative is unhappy with the explanation they must make an Objection in writing and lodge a deposit of €30, not later than 30 minutes after provisional scores have been posted.
- Queries and/or Objections will only be dealt with on the day of the competition.
- The formal Objection is dealt with by the Chief Steward and/or the Chairman of the Sub Committee.
- Each interested party must receive a fair hearing and be allowed the facility to properly state their case and present all the relevant facts.
- All relevant witnesses must be heard. Judges, Course designers/builder and Stewards who were in the area may be able to give relevant evidence.
- In the case of all formal objections the decision by the Chief Steward/Chairman of the Sub Committee should be given in writing to the Organising Committee and copies to each interested party.

**If the competitor and his/her District Commissioner are dissatisfied with the ruling of the Chief Steward/Chairman of the Sub Committee on the objection – s/he has the right to Appeal.**

### ***Appeals At Competition***

- When the Appeals Committee is called they will first read the decision of the Chief Steward/Chairman of the Sub Committee.
- They then hear the appellant and his witnesses followed by other interested parties and other witnesses.
- The Chief Steward/Chairman of the Sub Committee and the Appeal Committee are entitled to take into account that which they have seen happen. Interested parties may be invited to comment on the facts before a decision is reached.
- The decision of the Appeals Committee should be given in writing to the Organising Committee and copies to each interested party.
- **When a complaint has been adjudicated upon by the Appeals Committee, this decision is final and the matter is closed.**

## Child Protection

The prevention and detection of child abuse depends on the collaborative effort of everyone concerned. The following factors are central to effective child protection in sport:

- Acceptance by all involved with children that abuse, whether physical, psychological or sexual is wrong, severely damages children and must be confronted.
- Awareness of the behavioural and physical indicators of various forms of abuse.
- Knowledge of the appropriate response and action to be taken where abuse is revealed or suspected.
- Vigilance and avoidance of all situations conducive to risk.
- Open, trusting and co-operative relationships within the branch/organisation, and with parents/guardians and others concerned with children's progress or welfare.
- Willingness to co-operate with the Statutory Authorities (police, health boards or social services), in relation to sharing information about child protection concerns at any time.

**District Commissioners, Instructors, Team Trainers and all Sports Leaders should be familiar with Child Abuse/Child Protection issues (see page 38 to 44) of the Irish Sports Council's Code of Ethics (blue book). And those officials with responsibility for children's welfare should attend an Irish Sports Council/BHS certified Child Protection Course.**

**Where reasonable grounds for concern exist (see section 5.13.1 in blue book) in a branch/organisation the following steps should be taken:**

- **Advice should be sought from the local health board/social services with regard to any action by the branch/organisation deemed necessary to protect the child/children who may be at risk.**
- **The matter should be reported to the local health board/social services following the standard reporting procedure contained in the ISC code of Ethics book.**
- In the event that the concern is connected to the actions of a Sports Leader in the branch/organisation, the Sports Leader involved in the concern should be asked to stand aside pending the outcome of any investigation by the Statutory Authorities. It is advisable that this task be undertaken by an appointed committee member other than the Chairperson who takes the responsibility for reporting.

When the sports Leader is being privately informed by the Chairperson of;

- a) the fact that an allegation has been made against him/her
- b) the nature of the allegation,

S/he should be afforded an opportunity to respond. His/her response should be noted and passed on to the health board/social services personnel.

All persons involved in a child protection process (the child, his/her parents/guardians, the alleged offender, his/her family, Sports Leaders) should be afforded appropriate respect, fairness, support and confidentiality at all stages of the procedure.

Confidentiality should be maintained in respect of all issues and people involved in concerns about the welfare of a child or bad practice within a club. It is important that the rights of both the child and the person about whom the complaint has been made are protected. The following points should be borne in mind:

- a guarantee of confidentiality or undertakings regarding secrecy cannot be given, as the welfare of the child supersede all other considerations.
- all information should be treated in a careful and sensitive manner and should be discussed only with those who need to know.
- Information should be conveyed in a sensitive way to the parents/guardians of the child about whom there are concerns.
- Giving information to others on a "need to know" basis for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality.

## Reporting Child Abuse

The following items should be followed in reporting child abuse to the Statutory Authorities:

- a) Observe and note dates, times, locations and contexts in which the incident occurred or suspicion was aroused, together with any other relevant information
- b) Report the matter as soon as possible to the person designated for reporting abuse (i.e. DC/National Children's Officer). If the DC/Nat. Children's Officer has reasonable grounds (see 5.13.1 ISC Code of Ethics page 41) for believing the child has been abused or is at risk of abuse, s/he will make a report to the health board/social services who have statutory responsibility to investigate and assess suspected or actual child abuse.
- c) In cases of emergency, where a child appears to be at immediate and serious risk and the DC/Nat. Ch. Off. is unable to contact a duty social worker, the Gardai should be contacted.  
**Under no circumstances should a child be left in a dangerous situation pending intervention by the Statutory Authorities.**
- d) If the DC/Nat. Ch. Off. is unsure whether reasonable grounds for concern exist or not, s/he should informally consult with the local health board/social services. S/he will be advised whether or not the matter required a formal report.
- e) A DC/Nat. Ch. Off. reporting suspected or actual child abuse to the Statutory Authorities should first inform the family of their intention to make such a report, **unless doing so would endanger the child or undermine an investigation.**
- f) It is best to report child abuse concerns by making personal contact with the relevant personnel in the Statutory Authorities.

## Protection for persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 (Irl.)

The Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998 provides immunity from civil liability to persons who report child abuse "reasonably and in good faith" to the Health Board or the Gardai (See 5.13.1 page 41). The main provision of the Act are:

- a) The provision of immunity from civil liability to any person who reports child abuse "reasonably and in good faith" to designated offices of Health Boards or any member of An Garda Síochána.
- b) The provision of significant protections for employees who report child abuse. These protections cover all employees and all forms of discrimination up to and including dismissal.
- c) The creation of a new offence of **false reporting** of child abuse where a person makes a report of child abuse to the appropriate authorities "**knowing that statement to be false**". This is a new criminal offence designed to protect innocent persons from malicious reports.

## Anti-Bullying Policy

### What is Bullying?

Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression be it verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against others.

It is behaviour that is intentionally aggravating and intimidating and occurs mainly in social environments such as schools, clubs and other organisations working with children and young people. It includes behaviour such as teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting and extortion behaviour by one or more children against a victim.

### How would you know if a child is being bullied?

All bullies operate using furtiveness, threats and fear. Bullying can therefore only survive in an environment where the victim does not feel empowered to tell someone who can help or in which it is not safe to do so. The following indicators are warning signs that a young person might be getting bullied.

- Reluctance to come to a venue or take part in activities

- Physical signs (unexplained bruises, scratches, or damage to belongings)
- Stress-caused illness - headaches, and stomach aches which seem unexplained
- Fearful behaviour (fear of walking to a meeting, going different routes, asking to be driven)
- Frequent loss of, or shortage of, money with vague explanations
- Having few friends
- Changes in behaviour (withdrawn, stammering, moody, irritable, upset, distressed).
- Not eating
- Attempting suicide or hinting at suicide
  - Anxiety (shown by nail-biting, fearfulness, tics) *There are other reasons for many of the above*

### **Who should deal with bullying?**

While the more extreme forms of bullying would be regarded as physical or emotional abuse and are reported to the health board or An Garda Síochána, dealing with bullying behaviour is normally the responsibility of all Leaders within the club / organisation.

### **How can it be prevented?**

- Ensure that all members follow the code of conduct, which promotes the rights and dignity of each member.
- Deal with any incidents as they arise.
- Use a whole group policy or 'no-blame approach', i.e., not 'bullying the bully' but working with bullies and the group of young people, helping them to understand the hurt they are causing, and so make the problem a 'shared concern' of the group, (see below)
- Reinforce that there is 'a permission to tell' culture rather than a 'might is right'.
- Encourage young people to negotiate, co-operative and help others, particularly new or different children
- Offer victim immediate support and put the 'no blame approach' into operation.
- Never tell a young person to ignore bullying, they can't ignore it, it hurts too much.
- Never encourage a young person to take the law into their own hands and beat the bully at their own game
- Tell the victim there is nothing wrong with them and it is not their fault

### **Forms of Bullying:**

**Child to Child** – includes physical aggression, verbal bullying, intimidation, or isolation.

**Adult to Child** – includes the use of repeated gestures or expressions of a threatening or intimidating nature, or any comment intended to degrade a child.

**Adult to Adult** – includes verbal aggression towards other adults in order to achieve a beneficial outcome for own self or own child.

**Child to Adult** - includes repeated gestures or expressions of a threatening or intimidating nature by an individual child or a group of children.

## **Safety**

All clubs / organization should have a safety statement, including specific and potential risks attached to their sport. They should also have procedures in place for safeguarding against such risks. In addition clubs should:

- Ensure activities are suitable for age and stage of development of participants
- Keep a record of any specific medical conditions of the participants
- Keep a record of emergency contact numbers for parents / guardians
- Ensure any necessary protective gear is used
- Ensure First Aid kit is close at hand with access to qualified first-aider
- Know the contact numbers of emergency services
- Keep first aid kit stocked up
- Ensure easy access to medical personnel if needed and have a emergency plan
- If an incident occurs, make a brief record of injury and action taken. Make a brief record of the problem/action/outcome. Contact the member's parents and keep them informed of all details
- Members should know and keep the rules of their sport, keeping in mind that many rules are there for safety
- Ensure there is adequate insurance cover for all activities
- Ensure parents / guardians are present at finishing time of sessions or events

## **Use of Photographic and Filming Equipment**

The Irish Pony Club has adopted a policy in relation to the use of images of members on their websites and in other publications as there have been concerns about the risks posed directly and indirectly to children and young people through the use of photographs on sports websites and other publications. Where possible we will avoid the use of the first name and surname of individuals in a photograph. This reduces the risk of inappropriate, unsolicited attention from people within and outside the sport.

Guidelines for use of photography:

- If a photograph is used on a website, avoid naming the member.
- Ask for the member's permission and their parent's permission to use their image (see Photographic Use Permission statement in Membership Renewal Form p. 24). This ensures that they are aware of the way the image is to be used to represent the sport.
- Only use images of members in suitable dress to reduce the risk of inappropriate use. The content of the photograph should focus on the activity not on a particular child.
- No camera allowed where members are changing i.e. swimming pools, athletic or other changing situations.
- No unauthorized photography at site of an accident.
- Use of camera phones to take pictures (at Pony Club activities) is forbidden. Phones to be switched off during rallies, camp and training sessions unless permission has been sought due to emergency situation.
- Create recognised procedure for reporting the use of inappropriate images to reduce the risks to members. Follow the child protection procedures, ensuring either the designated officer or the social service and/or Gardai are informed.

Amateur photographers/film/video operators wishing to record an event or practice session should seek accreditation with the children's officer or organiser of the event. This club / organization will display the following information prior to the start of an event to inform spectators of the policy:

*"In line with the recommendation in Irish Pony Club Code of Conduct, the organiser of this event request that any person wishing to engage in any video, zoom or close range photography should register their details with the Secretary. On no account should children be photographed or filmed without their permission and the permission of their parents".*

When commissioning professional photographers or inviting the press to an activity or event we will aim to ensure they are clear about our expectations of them in relation to child protection.

Professional photographers/film/video operators wishing to record an event or practice session should seek accreditation with the children's officer or event organiser by producing their professional identification for the details to be recorded. We will then:

- Provide a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour
- Issue the photographer with identification which must be worn at all times
- Keep a record of accreditations
- Inform members and parents that a photographer will be in attendance at an event and ensure they consent to both the taking and publication of films or photographs
- not allow unsupervised access to members or one to one photo sessions at events not approve/allow photo sessions outside the events or at an member's home.

**Videoing as a coaching aid:** Video equipment can be used as a legitimate coaching aid. However, permission should first be obtained from the member and the member's parent/carer.

Anyone concerned about any photography taking place at events or training sessions can contact the children's officer/ designated officer and ask them to deal with the matter.

- **Please find enclosed Application for membership form** and in the case of existing members a Renewal form (Renewal form page 24). Parents and members are required to sign these forms agreeing to abide by the rules of the Irish Pony Club. Please sign and return to the Secretary of your Branch with the appropriate subscription fee.



## **IRISH PONY CLUB**

### **RECRUITMENT & SELECTION**

### **POLICY & PROCEDURES**

**FOR**

**OFFICIALS  
INSTRUCTORS  
SELECTORS  
TEAM TRAINERS  
TEAM CHAPERONES  
& STAFF**



The Irish Pony Club recognises the key role Officials, Instructors, Selectors and Team Trainers/Chaperones play in the lives of children in sport. The Irish Pony Club has adopted the principles of the Irish Sports Council's "Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport".

All Officials/Instructors/Selectors/Team Trainers/Chaperones & staff should have as their first priority the children's safety and enjoyment of the sport and should adhere to the guidelines and regulations set out in The Irish Pony Club's Code of Conduct.

Officials/Instructors/Selectors/Team Trainers/Chaperones must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every child and must treat everyone equally, regardless of sex, ethnic origin, religion or ability.

IPC branch officials should take all reasonable steps to ensure that anyone working with young people is suitable and appropriately qualified. Recruitment and selection procedures are therefore necessary and these procedures apply to all persons, paid or unpaid, with substantial access to young people.

There must be a "sign-up" procedure (see form page 19 & 20), whereby the newly appointed Officials/Instructor/Selector/Team Trainer/Chaperone/Staff, agrees to abide by the "Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children in Sport" and to the policies and the rules of The Irish Pony Club. References will be needed and should be followed up.

When travel/overnight travel is involved, the Official/Instructor/Selector/Trainer/Volunteer travelling with children must sign a separate agreement (see form page 23 & 24). Parents will also be asked to sign permission forms in these instances.

All adults taking responsibility for children in sport should undergo a recruitment process. Before recruitment, terms of reference should be drawn up and these should clearly state:

- A. The responsibilities of the role,
- B. The level of experience/qualifications required.
- C. The Irish Pony Club's commitment to the Irish Sports Council Code.

References (2) (see sample letter of reference page 22) will be needed and should be followed up.

- **The decision to appoint a Sports Leader is the responsibility of the District Commissioner and the Branch Committee not of any one individual within it. The Branch Committee should ratify all recommendations for appointment at a Committee meeting (i.e. appointment of Secretary, Treasurer, Children's Officer, Instructors (new), Swimming, Running, Shooting, Mounted Games, Polo Trainer etc.). All references should be held on file by the branch Secretary or DC.**
- **Newly elected District Commissioners are not deemed official until 2 references are received at HQ and approved by the Executive Committee of IPC and they have received a letter from the Chairman of IPC confirming their appointment. The outgoing DC continues to be responsible for the branch until the newly elected DC is ratified.**
- Every effort will be made to manage and support appointed Sport Leaders. Adequate supervision should always be provided; a leader should not have to work alone.

## **Guidelines for Instructors, Selectors, Team Trainers/Chaperone:**

An Instructor must act as a role model and promote the positive aspects of sport and of horse riding and maintain the highest standards of personal conduct.

Remember your behaviour to members, other officials, and opponents will have an effect on the members in your care.

Encourage the development of respect for opponents, officials, selectors and other Instructors and avoid criticism of fellow Instructors.

The use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco must be actively discouraged as being incompatible with a healthy approach to sporting activity. Leaders should not use alcohol before teaching/coaching, during events, on trips with members.

Be generous with praise and never ridicule or shout at members for making mistakes. All members are entitled to respect. Be careful to avoid the “star system”. Each child deserves equal time and attention.

Care must be taken not to expose a child intentionally or unintentionally to embarrassment or disparagement by use of sarcastic or flippant remarks about the child or his/her family.

Physical punishment or physical force must never be used. Never punish a mistake - by verbal means, physical means, or exclusion.

Insist that members in your care respect the rules of the organisation. Insist on fair play and ensure that your members know that you will not tolerate cheating or bullying behaviour.

Remember that young people ride for fun and enjoyment and that skill and riding for fun have priority over highly structured competition. Never make winning the only objective. Set realistic goals for the participants and do not push members. Create a safe and enjoyable environment.

It is important to realise that certain situations or friendly actions could be misinterpreted by the participant or by outsiders. Avoid working alone and ensure there is adequate supervision for all activities.

Leaders are responsible for setting and monitoring the boundaries between a working relationship and friendship with members. It is advisable for Instructors and Officials not to involve members in their personal life i.e. visits to Instructors/ Officials home or overnight stays.

When travel/overnight travel is involved, the Leaders travelling with members must sign a separate agreement. Parents and members will also be asked to sign permission forms in these instances.

Avoid giving advice of a personal or medical nature – if you are not qualified to do so.

Any information of a personal or medical nature must be kept strictly confidential unless the welfare of the child requires the passing on of this information.

It is advisable to:

- Record attendance at training.
- Keep a brief record of injury(s) and action taken.
- If behavioural problems arise and a member has to be disciplined, keep a brief record of problem/action/outcomes. Inform the DC/branch official. Warn the member (with witness where possible) about their behaviour, (verbally twice, if a third incident occurs, send the member to the DC or branch official who will deal with the matter).

## Leader's / Instructor's Code of Conduct

### *Leaders should be:*

Positive during session, praise and encourage effort as well as results.

Plan and prepare appropriately.

Put welfare of members first, strike a balance between this and winning / results.

Encourage fair play, treat participants equally.

Recognise developmental needs.

Qualified and up-to-date with knowledge and the skill of their sport for young people.

Involve parents where possible and inform parents when problems arise.

Keep records of attendance at all Pony Club activities.

Keep a brief record of injuries and action taken. Any incidents requiring medical attention must be recorded on an IPC Accident Report Form (available from DC).

Keep a brief record of problem/action/outcomes, if behavioural problems arise

### *Where possible Leaders should avoid:*

- Spending excessive amounts of time with children away from others.
- Taking sessions alone.
- Taking children to your home.
- Taking children on journeys alone in their car.

### *Sports Leaders should not:*

- Use any form of punishment or physical force on a child.
- Exert undue influence over a participant in order to obtain personal benefit or reward.
- Engage in rough physical games, sexually provocative games or allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any kind, and/or make sexually suggestive comments about, or to a child.
- Take measurements or engage in certain types of fitness testing without the presence of another adult/s.
- Undertake any form of therapy (hypnosis etc.) in the training of children.

Instructors / Officials should familiarise themselves with the Code of Practice for Children's Sport and with The Irish Pony Club Rules and Code of Practice and follow the procedures if they suspect or receive complaints of abuse of any sort.

**I have read and agree to abide by the above guidelines**

\_\_\_\_\_ (Signed) \_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

Please print your name.

**Irish Pony Club**  
**Application Form: Officials/Selectors/  
 Team Trainers/Chaperone:**



**Confidential**

Position applied for:
Name
Any surname previously known by
Date of Birth
Present address
Current occupation:
Previous experience of working with young children in a voluntary or professional capacity.
Riding / Horse Care Qualifications:
Have you ever been asked to leave a sporting organisation:      Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If you have answered yes, we will contact you in confidence.
<b><i>Have you ever been prosecuted or convicted of a criminal offence    Yes <input type="checkbox"/>    No <input type="checkbox"/></i></b> <b><i>or been the subject of a caution or a Bound Over Order:</i></b> <b><i>or are you at present the subject of criminal investigations?</i></b> <b><i>If you have answered yes, we will contact you in confidence.</i></b>
Name and address of two people who know you (but who are not related to you) and who would have experience of you working with children, whom we could contact and who would provide you with a reference. Name and Address of Referee 1: _____ _____
Name and Address of Referee 2: _____ _____
I agree to abide by the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport and The Irish Pony Club Rules and Code of Practice. Signed _____ Date: _____

**Irish Pony Club**  
**Application Form: Instructors**



**Confidential**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NO. \_\_\_\_\_ MOBILE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

QUALIFICATIONS \_\_\_\_\_

EXPERIENCE \_\_\_\_\_

FIRST AID COURSE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

CHILD PROTECTION COURSE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

EFI COURSE LEVEL \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

IPC BRANCHES YOU TEACH \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF DC'S (2) WHO SUPPLIED  
REFERENCES \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF SENIOR INSTRUCTOR'S WHO SUPPLIED  
REFERENCES \_\_\_\_\_

ARE YOU AVAILABLE FOR CAMP \_\_\_\_\_

ARE YOU AVAILABLE FOR RALLIES \_\_\_\_\_

ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH IPC ETHOS, TESTS ETC. \_\_\_\_\_

**Have you ever been prosecuted or convicted of a criminal offence?**

Yes  No

**or been the subject of a caution or a Bound Over Order:**

**or are you at present the subject of criminal investigations?**

**If you have answered yes, we will contact you in confidence.**

SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_

For new entry in IPC Year Book, enclose four recommendations, two from DC's and two from Senior Instructors.  
Return completed form to: Irish Pony Club, Tinnascarty, Freshford, Co. Kilkenny. (056 8832966, fax 056 8832965) Email: mary@irishponyclub.ie

## Irish Pony Club

### Application form for volunteers, newly recruited to work with Children:



(i.e. Camp/rally helpers, supervisors etc.)

Role: \_\_\_\_\_

Branch: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Experience/or involvement in Sport: Give details:

Have you ever been asked to leave a sporting organisation in the past?

Yes:  No:

If you have answered yes, we will contact you in confidence.

*Have you ever been prosecuted or convicted of a criminal offence*

Yes  No

*or been the subject of a caution or a Bound Over Order:*

*or are you at present the subject of criminal investigations? Yes  No*

*If you have answered yes, we will contact you in confidence.*

Do you agree to abide by the guidelines contained in the Code of Ethics & Good Practice for Children's' Sport in Ireland and by The Irish Pony Club Rules and Code of Practice. Yes \_\_\_\_\_  
No \_\_\_\_\_

Please give names and address of two responsible people whom we can contact and who from personal knowledge are willing to endorse your application: If you have had previous involvement in sport, one of these names should be that of an administrator/leader of your last club/place of involvement.

1.Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

2.Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_



## Irish Pony Club

### Sample Letter to person giving reference:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear

The above has expressed an interest in becoming an Instructor/volunteer and has given your name as a referee. This post involves substantial access to children. As an organisation committed to the welfare and happiness of children, we are anxious to know if you are satisfied that this person is suitable to work with children in a sporting capacity.

*If you are happy to complete this reference, any information will be treated with due confidentiality and in accordance with relevant legislation and guidance. Information will only be shared with the person conducting the assessment of the candidate's suitability for the post, if he/she is offered the position. We appreciate you being extremely candid, open and honest in your evaluation.*

How long have you known this person?

In what capacity?

Please rate this person on the following (tick one box for each statement)

Poor                      Average                      Good                      Very Good                      Excellent

Responsibility

Maturity

Self motivation

Can motivate others

Energy

Trustworthiness

Reliability

This post involves substantial access to young people. As an organisation committed to the welfare and protection of young people, we are anxious to know if you have any reason at all to be concerned about this applicant being in contact with children and young people. If you answer no we will contact you in confidence.

Are you satisfied that: (name of applicant) \_\_\_\_\_ is suitable to work with children in a sporting capacity?

Yes  No

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_



## **Irish Pony Club Policy – Travelling with children Guidelines/regulations for Instructors/Selectors/Trainers/authorised volunteers.**

The Irish Pony Club recognises the extra responsibilities taken on by Instructors/Selectors/Trainers and authorised volunteers when they travel with children to events. This responsibility is even more onerous when overnight stays are involved.

**Cars used to transport members/teams:** Those who use their own vehicles to transport members must ensure that they have adequate insurance cover and be careful not to carry more than the permitted number of passengers.

- Avoid being alone with one member (e.g. travelling to a venue or consulting/ advising in closed off room – if necessary leave the door open and be in earshot of others).
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact outside normal Instruction. “Certain types of coaching may require a “hands on approach” i.e. it may be necessary to support a child in order to physically demonstrate a particular technique. This should only occur when necessary and in an open and appropriate way with the knowledge, permission and full understanding of the child concerned and his/her parents/guardians”.
- Remember casual comment can be open to misconstruction.

### **At residential events the following rules should apply:**

- Adults should not enter a member’s room/tent without first knocking.
- All group socialisation should take place in communal areas (i.e. not boys in girls’ rooms and vice versa).
- Alcoholic drink, smoking or other illegal substances are forbidden to members.
- The behaviour of the group should at all times be such that the good name of the Irish Pony Club is upheld
- There should be at least one authorised adult of each gender with a mixed party.
- Lights out times should be enforced.
- Members should be under reasonable supervision at all times and should never be allowed to leave the accommodation or sports area without prior permission.

**Injury(s):** Make a brief record of injury and action taken.

**Behavioural Problems:** Make a brief record of the problem/action/outcome.

Familiarise yourself with the IPC Complaints, Disciplinary, and Appeals Procedures. Submit report on return home.

Instructors/Selectors/Trainers/ Authorised Volunteer asked to travel with the group in a supervisory capacity must sign up for each trip – parents of children on the team should not be asked to accept group responsibilities.

Parents: Must sign an agreement that their children will abide by the rules laid down.

Members: Must sign a behaviour agreement.



## Irish Pony Club

### Travelling away with Underage Members:

EVENT: \_\_\_\_\_

VENUE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATES: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **INSTRUCTORS/SELECTORS/ TRAINER/CHAPERONE**

I hereby agree to abide by the guidelines and regulations contained in The Irish Pony Club Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Role \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Role \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Role \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

#### **AUTHORISED VOLUNTEER**

I hereby agree to abide by the guidelines and regulations contained in The Irish Pony Club Rules and Code of Practice.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **PARENT/GUARDIAN OF TRAVELLING CHILD**

I have read and accept the conditions and rules set down by The Irish Pony Club for members travelling to competitions and other away trips.

Parents/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **IPC MEMBER TRAVELLING**

I have read and accept the conditions and rules set down by The Irish Pony Club for members travelling to competitions/away and I agree to abide by those rules.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# IRISH PONY CLUB MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM



Surname.....First name.....

Address.....

Date of birth.....

Telephone number.....Mobile.....

Email address (if available).....

Areas of interest within Pony Club i.e. Showjumping, Games, Tetrathlon, Eventing etc  
.....

*I/We have read / understand the Code of Conduct of the Irish Pony Club and I agree to abide by this Code and the Rules of the Irish Pony Club. I agree to abide by the rules of the World Anti Doping Agency.*

*As a member of the Irish Pony Club, I stand for the best in sportsmanship as well as in horsemanship. I shall compete for the enjoyment of the sport well played and take winning or losing in my stride, remembering that without good manners and good temper, sport loses its cause for being. I shall at all times treat my horse with due consideration.*

SIGNATURE OF MEMBER \_\_\_\_\_

*Part 2 to be completed by the applicant's parents or guardians*

Name of father/mother/guardian.....

Mobile No.....

Please note or discuss any **medical condition or disability** (i.e. hearing/dyslexia etc.) that the DC or Instructor/Examiner should know about.....

I -----parent/guardian named above, understanding the IPC Use of Photographic & Film equipment guidelines (p. 13) hereby give permission for a photograph of my child to be published in a publication approved by the Irish Pony Club.

I have read the Code of Conduct and the Aims and Rules of the Irish Pony Club and I/We approve of my/our son/daughter..... Renewing his/her membership.  
I enclose my subscription of €90 per member.

Parent/Guardian Signature(s).....

Note: The annual subscription paid for members who join between November 30<sup>th</sup> and December 31<sup>st</sup> counts for the following year.