



# IRISH PONY CLUB

**CODE OF ETHICS  
AND  
GOOD PRACTICE  
FOR  
CHILDREN'S SPORT  
AND  
SAFEGUARDING POLICIES AND  
PROCEDURES**

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## IRISH PONY CLUB CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

*In accordance with Section 11 (1) of the Children First Act 2015, we have prepared the following written assessment of the potential risk of harm to a child while availing of the activities provided by the Irish Pony Club.*

- The Irish Pony Club has approximately 3,000 members, aged from 5 to 25 years, the majority of whom are under 18 years of age.
- At present, there are 56 Branches within the twenty-six counties.
- A District Commissioner (DC) is responsible for the running of each Branch with the help and support of about 10 volunteers.
- Each Branch has a Children's Officer, a Safety Officer, a Secretary and a Treasurer. The DC is also the Designated Liaison Person.
- Each Branch of the Irish Pony Club is likely to use several locations within its geographical area when organising its activities.
- Occasionally Branches may arrange an outing which might be either socially or educationally based.
- National competitions take place at different venues throughout the country.
- There are no permanent premises.
- Realistically there could be between six and seven hundred volunteers in the Irish Pony Club.
- There are currently four members of staff. They carry out the administrative function from a rented office building.
- In the Irish Pony Club, we provide the following services to children and young people:
- We offer instruction and coaching in riding and the care of horses to all levels of ability, in a safe and fun way, through our Branches.
- The disciplines catered for include Show Jumping, Musical Rides, Tetrathlon, Dressage, Mounted Games, Eventing and Hunter Trials.
- Competition, in accordance with current ability, is provided by the Branches for those who wish to take part.
- When more experienced, the members may qualify at Area level and then be eligible take part in our championships.
- Successful teams from the disciplines sometimes travel overseas.
- We have a wide range of efficiency tests available, which we encourage our members to take, though none of these are mandatory.
- For those who plan to go into the equine industry achieving the higher tests allows them access to professional qualifications above the standard entry level.

We believe that:

1. Our priority, to ensure the welfare and safety of every child and young person who attends our service, is paramount.
2. Our guiding principles and procedures to safeguard children and young people reflect national policy and legislation and we will review our guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures every two years.
3. All children and young people have an equal right to attend a service that respects them as individuals and encourages them to reach their potential, regardless of their background.
4. We are committed to upholding the rights of every child and young person who attends our service, including the rights to be kept safe and protected from harm, listened to and heard.
5. Our guiding principles apply to everyone in our organisation.
6. Workers and volunteers must conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of our organisation.

## RISK ASSESSMENT DOCUMENT FOR THE IRISH PONY CLUB

This risk assessment considers the potential for harm to come to children whilst they are in **the Irish Pony Club's** care. This risk assessment precedes the Child Safeguarding Statement (Section 11 (1b) Children First Act 2015) which is developed following this risk assessment process. In accordance with the requirements of *Section 11 (1) of the Children First Act 2015 the risk is of abuse and not general health and safety risk (covered under a separate H&S policy and risk assessment).*

<b>Potential Risks of Harm to Members during activities with the IPC.</b>	<b>Procedures for the management of Potential Risks of Harm.</b>
Recruitment of instructors and coaches.	Application process in place for inclusion on the registration list of instructors and coaches. Recruitment policy in place. Garda Vetting (GV) and Safeguarding 1(SG1) compulsory.
Recruitment of officials and other volunteers.	All DCs, their Branch officials and regular volunteers have GV and SG1. GV and SG1 compulsory. Recruitment procedure in place. Generally known in the organisation. DCs should complete SG3. Children's Officers must complete SG2. Code of Conduct in place.
Recruitment of relevant person. Recruitment of chaperones.	GV and SG1 compulsory. Recruitment procedure in place. Well known in the organisation. Code of Conduct in place.
Recruitment of staff.	GV compulsory. Recruitment procedure in place. SG1 required and completed as soon as convenient. Safeguarding Statement displayed in office building.
Risk of Harm to a child by a member of staff, instructor, coach, official or volunteer.	GV and SG1 compulsory. Appreciation of the Children First Act and its application. Careful recruitment of volunteers and staff backed up by job descriptions, training, signing up to and adhering to the Code of Conduct. Policy statement in place. Understanding of the ethos of the organisation.
Inadequate supervision of members during activities. Inadequate supervision of members while travelling away.	Appropriate numbers of Branch Officials present at local activities. Stewards in place at all competitions. Supervision policy in place. Missing child policy in place. Travelling and Away Trip Policy in place and those travelling sign the Code of Conduct and have been GV, should do SG1. Missing child policy in place.
Behaviour Issues. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neglecting or not including a member during regular activities.</li> <li>• Bullying.</li> <li>• Physical abuse.</li> <li>• Emotional abuse.</li> <li>• Allegations of sexual abuse.</li> </ul>	Irish Pony Club Policy Statement in place.  Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedure in place. Safeguarding training. Physical Contact Policy in place. Safeguarding Training. SG Policy. Safeguarding Training, Policy and Code of Ethics. Safeguarding Training, Policy and Code of Ethics. Report directly to the Gardaí and to Tusla.
Online abuse through social media.	Communications and Social Media Policy in place.
Unauthorised photography.	Photography Policy in place.
Unauthorised filming.	Filming Policy in place.
Lack of reporting of concerns. Lack of knowledge of procedures.	Branch Children's Officers and the Designated Liaison Person known, active and attainable. Safeguarding Training knowledge. Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures in place. Further information on the IPC website.
Inadequate communication of opportunities.	Communications policy in place.

The Irish Pony Club provides sporting activities and opportunities for children and young people through participation in our branches and regional events and with our representative teams at national level. The Irish Pony Club is committed to safeguarding children and young people. The Irish Pony Club works under the guidance and policies of our Safeguarding Policies and Procedures. All our volunteers and staff working with children throughout the organisation,

seek to create a safe environment for children and young people to participate in equestrian sports.


We have completed a Safeguarding Risk Assessment that indicates the areas of potential risk of harm, the likelihood of the risk occurring, and give the required policy, guidance or process documents required to alleviate these risks. A list of potential risks of harm has been identified along with the management of these risks.

We have the following procedures in place as part of the Irish Pony Club Safeguarding Code in addition to our Risk Assessment outlined above:

- Procedures for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct by staff or volunteers against a child availing of our activities.
- Procedures for the safe recruitment of staff and volunteers to work with children in our activities.
- Procedures for access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm.
- Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to the Statutory Authorities.
- Appointing Children’s Officers at Branch level who are the point of contact in respect of Safeguarding for the relevant body and for this statement. Names and contact details for The Branch Children’s Officer and the Branch Designated Liaison Person (DC) will be available. A relevant person, with the appropriate background and experience, will be sourced by invitation and ratified by the Executive Committee. This person will be The National Children’s Officer.
- There is no mandated person in the Irish Pony Club.
- We recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. We are committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our services.
- Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been prepared in accordance with the legislature requirements contained in the Children First Act 2015 and the Children (NI) Order 1995 and as required by our organisation.
- The relevant procedures and documents will be available on request to all members and their families, volunteers and officials. They can be viewed on [www.irishponyclub.ie](http://www.irishponyclub.ie).
- The Safeguarding Statement will be displayed in the Irish Pony Club Office and will be circulated to be adapted by each Branch and be available on the Branch websites and at all activities where practicable.


**This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed every 2 years. Next review  
January 2021.**

**Relevant Person / National Children’s Officer**

Name:   
Tony Ennis (Acting)

Date: 18<sup>th</sup> August 2020

**Irish Pony Club Executive Chairman**

Signed:   
Michael Essame

Date: 18<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Phone no: 086-8617698 or E-mail: [nco@irishponyclub.ie](mailto:nco@irishponyclub.ie)  
For queries on this Child Safeguarding Statement.



## GLOSSERY OF TERMS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT

The meanings of words used in this document should be read as

<b>Child</b>	Means a person under the age of 18 years other than a person who is or has been married
<b>C P &amp; W Policy</b>	Child Protection and Welfare Policy
<b>Parents</b>	Refers to all parents, guardians and carers.
<b>Sports Leaders</b>	For the purpose of this Code all adults involved in children's sport are referred to as Sports Leaders. All have a role to play in ensuring that procedures as described in the Code are put in place, agreed, followed and reviewed on a regular basis. The principal leadership roles (some of which overlap) include the following: -
<b>Organisation Officers</b>	Board of Directors and Executive Committee members are appointed or elected to oversee the running of the organisation.
<b>Administrators</b>	Staff – while administrators may not be actively involved in children's sport, they may be involved in organizing activities and events.
<b>Instructor/Coach</b>	An instructor or coach is someone who assists the members in the systematic development of core skills and abilities in a progressive way.
<b>Examiner</b>	An examiner examines the members on the standard they have reached in Pony Club Efficiency Tests.
<b>Team Trainer</b>	A trainer is an individual who takes overall responsibility for a team or a group of young people and who assists them to develop their skills and abilities in a progressive way. The trainer will often have overall responsibility for a team or group of young people while competing or training – both at home and overseas.
<b>Chaperone</b>	A chaperone is an individual who takes responsibility for a team or group of young people when travelling away from home. Generally, the trainer is responsible for team members while riding and caring for their ponies and the chaperone is responsible the remainder of the time.

<b>Selector</b>	A selector is an individual who has responsibility for the selection of members for team and individual competitions.
<b>Official</b>	An official is an individual who takes responsibility for an activity or role within a branch, at Area or National level, e.g. someone appointed to represent the DC, judges, fence judges, tack inspectors, call-up stewards, Discipline Sub-Committee members etc.
<b>Branch Children's Officer (BCO)</b>	Branch Children's Officers are appointed in each branch to act as a resource for children and to represent them at Committee level.
<b>National Children's Officer (NCO)</b>	The National Children's Officer co-ordinates all branch Children's Officers and ensures the implementation of the Code in all branches and is a resource for related education programmes and materials.
<b>Branch Designated Liaison Person</b>	The District Commissioner takes on the role of Branch Designated Liaison Person (BDLP). She or he is responsible for dealing with any concerns about the protection of children in their branch. The BDLP is responsible for reporting allegations or suspicions of child abuse to the HSE or An Garda Síochána.
<b>National Designated Liaison Person</b>	The National Designated Liaison Person (NDLP) is appointed by the Executive Committee. She or he should be knowledgeable about child protection matters and undertake training re same. The NDLP is responsible for ensuring implementation of the organisation's child protection policies. She or he communicates with the HSE, parents, BCO and NCO if a child protection issue arises.
<b>The National Child Welfare Committee (NCWC)</b>	The National Child Welfare Committee is appointed by the Executive Committee. The NCWC is responsible for writing the Irish Pony Club Policies and Procedures and in conjunction with the NDLP for ensuring its implementation.

### ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The roles and responsibilities of people working in sporting environments are wide and varied. Some individuals have substantial access to children, whilst others make policy decisions that affect the young people in sport. Those working on Committees may not have regular access to children; however, they may indirectly impact on the young members in the organisation. All roles are valuable to the running of a branch, area and nationally.

Working alone with a young person should be avoided. It is the responsibility of the branch committee to ensure no adult is left in this position.

### BRANCH CHILDREN'S OFFICER (BCO)

The appointment of a Branch Children's Officer is an essential element in the creation of a child centered atmosphere in their branch. The Branch Children's Officer ensures that young people can talk freely and have a voice in the running of their branch. The Branch Children's Officers' contact details must be easily available for all members, e.g. should be displayed on a notice board at a venue regularly used by the branch and on the branch website.

The Branch Children's Officer must have attended Sport Ireland Safeguarding 1 and Safeguarding 2 courses and have an understanding of the Irish Pony Club's Child Protection and Welfare Policies and Procedures.

The Branch Children's Officer must submit a Garda vetting application form to ensure their suitability to work with children within the Irish Pony Club. The requirement for the Branch Children's Officer to maintain confidentiality as set out in the Confidentiality Statement must be respected by all.

#### Responsibilities of the Branch Children's Officer

- To act at all times with the welfare and protection of children as paramount.
- To be available for children, parents or other sports leaders who have concerns.
- To promote awareness of the Irish Pony Club Protection and Welfare Policies and Procedures within the branch, among members and their parents.
- To influence policy and practice within the branch in order to prioritize children's needs, reporting regularly to the committee, giving children a voice in their branch.
- To ensure the branch committee keep records of all members on file, including contact numbers and that each member signs an annual membership renewal form that includes signing up to the relevant code of conduct.
- To ensure that children know how to make concerns known to appropriate adults or agencies and how children can express concerns regarding their sport.
- To pass any concerns relating to child protection in accordance with reporting procedures on to the Branch Designated Liaison Person, or, if necessary, the appropriate statutory authority.
- To act as an advisory resource to the branch committee and all other sports leaders on best practice in children's sport.

- To monitor changes in membership and to follow up on any unusual dropout or branch transfers by members, officials or sports leaders.
- To be an advocate for children in a complaints or disciplinary procedure to ensure the environment is safe and the process fair for children regardless of the complaint or disciplinary action.
- To establish contact with a member of the Irish Pony Club Child Welfare Committee and the Irish Pony Club National Children's Officer.
- To work with, and act as Branch Designated Liaison Officer if necessary, e.g. if the Branch Designated Liaison Person was unavailable, unless a conflict of interest occurs where the welfare of a child takes a precedence.
- To operate with and encourage a strict code of confidentiality within the branch, including any matters concerning a child occurring outside the branch environment.

## **BRANCH DESIGNATED LIAISON PERSON**

The District Commissioner takes on the role as Branch Designated Liaison Person. She or he is responsible for dealing with any concerns about the protection of children in their branch. The Branch Designated Liaison Person is responsible for reporting allegations or suspicions of child abuse to the HSE or An Garda Síochána. The Branch Designated Liaison Person also provides support to the Branch Children's Officer and helps link the Branch Children's Officer with the branch committee. The contact details of the Branch Designated Liaison Person must be available with those of the Branch Children's Officer for all members. They must have a full understanding and knowledge of the Irish Pony Club Protection and Welfare of Children Policies and Procedures and abide by and sign up to the Code of Conduct for Officers of the Irish Pony Club. She or he must have attended Safeguarding 1 and Safeguarding 3 courses and submits a Garda vetting application form to ensure suitability to work with children within the Irish Pony Club.

### **Responsibilities of the Branch Designated Liaison Person**

- Be familiar with and carry out the reporting procedures as contained in this document.
- Consult informally with the local duty social worker in the HSE to clarify areas of concern regarding children.
- To inform the local duty social worker in the HSE or An Garda Síochána of concerns about individual children.
- Be aware of the local contacts and services available in relation to child protection.
- Communicate with statutory agencies and parents as appropriate.
- Assist with the implementation of this document in their branch, liaising with the Branch Children's Officer where required.
- Report persistent poor practice within the branch and the Irish Pony Club to the National Children's Officer.
- Act as advisory source for matters of confidentiality, record keeping and data protection.

Branch Children's Officers and Branch Designated Liaison Persons can seek advice from the National Children's Officer or the National Designated Liaison Person. It is not the remit of either role to investigate or validate child abuse concerns originating from within or outside

the branch and they have no counseling or therapeutic role. These functions are filled by the statutory authorities, as outlined in Children First and Our Duty to Care.

## **NATIONAL CHILDREN'S OFFICER**

The National Children's Officer shall develop, manage and implement the national programme including the Irish Pony Club Child Protection and Welfare Policies and Procedures in conjunction with the Irish Pony Club Child Welfare Committee. The National Children's Officer will ensure the promotion of values, attitudes and structures which make equestrian sport enjoyable for young people and will be the voice of young people within the organisation.

### **Responsibilities of the National Children's Officer**

- Act as a point of contact for child welfare and protection enquiries.
- Be available to Area Representatives, Chairmen of Disciplines, instructors, Branch Children's Officers and advice and support all sports leaders within the organisation.
- Be informed and respond to child welfare concerns arising within the Irish Pony Club at branch, Area and National level including concerns arising from other processes, e.g. trips away, competitions, etc.
- Act as an advocate in complaints and disciplinary processes at Area and National level to ensure a safe and fair environment for children regardless of the complaint or disciplinary action.
- Communicate with Branch Children's Officers to ensure the implementation of the Child Protection and Welfare Policies and Procedures and the promotion of related education programmes, materials and events.
- Co-ordinate training in child welfare for branches and related personnel.
- Liaise with branches to ensure drop-out rates and transfers are monitored so that unusual developments or trends can be addressed, including transfer of sports leaders.
- Assist in the development of a system of record keeping which maintains confidentiality allowing appropriate information to be passed to relevant authorities where necessary.
- Review and revise the Irish Pony Club Child Protection and Welfare Policies and Procedures on a regular basis.
- Work with the National Designated Liaison Person and, where necessary, carry out the role and responsibilities of the National Designated Liaison Person.

## **NATIONAL DESIGNATED LIAISON PERSON**

The National Designated Liaison Person is responsible for liaising with the statutory authorities regarding any areas of concern that arise at branch, Area or National level. This may involve informally consulting with the duty social work department of the HSE or reporting any allegations or concerns of abuse to the statutory authorities. Where allegations or concerns are brought to the attention of the National Designated Liaison Person these will be referred to the local statutory authorities. In the absence of an Administrator the Executive Committee will appoint a member of the National Child Welfare Committee as a replacement.

## **Responsibilities of the National Designated Liaison Person**

The National Designated Liaison Person will: -

- Be familiar with and carry out the reporting procedure as contained in the Irish Pony Club Child Protection and Welfare Policies and Procedures.
- Consult informally with the local duty social work department of the HSE to clarify areas of concern regarding children.
- Inform or report to the local duty social worker in the HSE or An Garda Síochána, in emergency, of concerns about individual children.
- Liaise with the National Children's Officer on matters of concern regarding child welfare and safety at Area and National Level.
- Liaise with the Chairman of the Executive Committee where an officer is required to step aside; see Allegations against a Sports Leader with the Irish Pony Club.
- Maintain a record of action taken by the Irish Pony Club for any concern or allegations of abuse made to the statutory authorities.
- Communicate with the statutory agencies and parents as required.
- Assist with the implementation of the child protection training requirements for the Irish Pony Club, liaising with the National Children's Officer when required.
- Support the National Children's Officer with the implementation of procedures within the Irish Pony Club to deal with persistent poor practice.
- Act as an advisory source on matters of confidentiality, record keeping and data protection.
- In agreement with the National Children's Officer, the National Designated Liaison Person may also act and carry out the role and responsibilities of the National Children's Officer where considered appropriate.

## **THE NATIONAL CHILD WELFARE COMMITTEE**

The Committee's aim is to ensure a child centered approach and that children will be kept safe and have fun while taking part in Irish Pony Club activities. The Committee in conjunction with the appointed National Designated Liaison Person is responsible for writing the Irish Pony Club Child Protection and Welfare Policies and Procedures and for overseeing its implementation. The Committee will be appointed by the Executive Committee.

## **Responsibilities of the Child Welfare Committee**

The Child Welfare Committee, in conjunction with the appointed National Designated Liaison person shall: -

- Ensure that the welfare of children is of paramount importance in all dealings with the Irish Pony Club.
- Act in an advisory capacity to the Irish Pony Club on child welfare issues.
- Review on an annual basis the Irish Pony Club's child welfare documentation and the implementation of child welfare practices and procedures.
- Advice on the contents of any communications or newsletters with Branch Children's Officers.

- Advise on the maintenance of the child welfare section of the Irish Pony Club website.
- Review and disseminate relevant child welfare information from Sport Ireland.
- In their role as Child Welfare Committee members be informed by the National Children's Officer of regional concerns and ask for their input.
- Should they receive any general concerns, pass these on the National Children's Officer.
- Pass on concerns of possible abuse to the National Designated Liaison Person.
- Maintain confidentiality in all of their dealings.

## IRISH PONY CLUB – CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

The welfare of the child is paramount. No guarantees of secrecy or confidentiality can be given to information regarding a child as the child's welfare and safety supersedes all other consideration. Information should only be passed on to individuals who are in appropriate positions to safeguard a child's welfare and safety.

Information regarding children and young people should therefore be managed in a respectful, professional and purposeful manner. Confidentiality must be a priority for all persons involved in suspected poor practice, or the subject of a concern or an allegation of abuse within The Irish Pony Club.

The rights of both the child and the person about whom information has been obtained or where a complaint or allegation has been made should be protected with consideration given to the following points: -

- Information disclosed on a need to know basis, with care and sensitivity. This means that there will be certain people that need to know information about a child in order to provide a safe and secure environment. This includes passing on information about poor practice and or an allegation of abuse to the appropriate persons in order to deal with the matter, e.g. Children's Officer, Designated Liaison Person, complaints committee, statutory authorities. Information should not be disclosed to any individual who does not need to be involved.
- The parents must be given any information relating to their child unless to do so would endanger the child. In cases of an allegation or disclosure of abuse, this information should be passed on to a parent by the statutory authorities. Advice should be taken from the statutory authorities if there is any concern.
- Passing of information to individuals on a need to know basis for the purpose of protecting a child is necessary to safeguard a child's welfare. Passing on any information concerning complaints, allegations of abuse, personal or other details related to any person is breach of confidentiality and would be considered a disciplinary offence, e.g. where a complaint involves a child only, the persons relevant only to dealing with the complaint need to be given details. In this example, these persons would include the complaints committee, the Children's Officer and parties involved in the complaint.
- The Branch Children's Officer and Branch Designated Liaison Person, as with all persons involved with children within the Irish Pony Club, are bound by confidentiality. However, due to the nature of the role of the Branch Children's Officers and the Branch Designated Liaison Persons they may be in possession of more information pertaining to a child and this should be viewed as a resource in order to determine the well-being of any child. It is important that all information relating to any child at risk is passed on to the appropriate authorities.
- Giving information to others **for the protection of a child** is not a breach of confidentiality.
- Anyone who receives information from colleagues about possible or actual child abuse must treat it as if having being shared in confidence.



- Branch Children’s Officers, Branch Designated Liaison Person, National Children’s Officer, National Designated Liaison Person and any Pony Club sports leader must co-operate with the HSE Children and Family Services on the sharing of records where a child welfare or protection issue arises.
- The relevant officers and or sports leaders must attend and share information, as required, at formal child protection and welfare meetings as organised by the HSE Children and Family Services.

## RECORD KEEPING – DATA PROTECTION

The Irish Pony Club complies with the requirements of the relevant legislation, namely the Irish General Data Protection Regulation Act 2018, known as GDPR. Branch Children’s Officers, Branch Designated Liaison Persons, National Children’s Officer, National Designated Liaison Person and any sports leader who suspects child abuse or to whom a report of actual abuse is made should record: -

- Dates, times, locations, context and any other relevant information.

This information constitutes ‘sensitive personal data’ and must be stored securely, i.e. in a locked filing cabinet in a secure place with access restricted to a small number of authorised personnel, e.g. Branch Children’s Officer, Branch Designated Liaison Person, National Children’s Officer, National Designated Liaison Person and or the Complaints Committee.

The information recorded should be reported to the appropriate authorities. Any sensitive personal data held on file by the Branch Children’s Officers or the Branch Designated Liaison Person should be transferred to the National Designated Liaison person for safe keeping. When the National Designated Liaison Person retires any sensitive personal data held by them should be assessed for retention. Where relevant, e.g. a case is closed, data should be destroyed.

## IRISH PONY CLUB CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

The Irish Pony Club is committed to ensuring that young people are safeguarded in their participation within our organisation. It is essential that we as an organisation take steps to ensure that the experience of members in our sport is positive and enjoyable, irrespective of their ability, gender, social or ethnic background. The welfare of our young people in the Irish Pony Club is our first priority and we are committed to providing an environment that will allow participants to perform to the best of their ability, free from abuse, neglect, bullying and intimidation.

The Irish Pony Club is fully committed to creating and maintaining the safest environment possible for all young people and vulnerable adults who wish to participate in Pony Club activities. This Policy is in accordance with Children First Act 2015 and National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (DYCA 2011) and Our Duty to Care – The Principles of Good Practice for the Protection of Children and Young People (DOHC 2002).

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**.

We will ensure the careful recruiting and selecting of all of our instructors and volunteers and that they are aware of the responsibility to safeguard children in their care.

We will ensure that parents and guardians and children are given the appropriate opportunity to voice concerns they may have at any given time.

We will ensure a continuous review by the Irish Pony Club of the effectiveness of our child protection policies, procedures and codes. This continuous review will be carried out by our National Children's Officer.

We undertake to respond quickly and appropriately to protect the welfare of our members who participate in our activities.

We will ensure that members, parents and guardians, coaches, mentors and volunteers are aware of and adhere to our Code of Ethics.



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 respect. Interaction between children should be conducted in a spirit of mutual respect and fair play.

The Irish Pony Club also has a duty of care for volunteers and all sports leaders 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 or 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 Irish Pony Club.
- 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, instructors, trainers and chaperones 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.
- Take or allow others to make you, try or take banned substances to improve your performance.
- Keep secrets, especially if they cause harm to any party.



## IRISH PONY CLUB - CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

The Pony Club is a worldwide, 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 instill in its 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. As riding is a high-risk sport we appeal to parents and guardians to help us by observing the following rules: -

- At all Pony Club activities, the District Commissioner is the person in charge. In his or 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.
- Tack Sheets – See current Tack Sheets for approved protective equipment.
  - 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 be comfortable. 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 twenty 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 the instructor. If a parent cannot attend a rally or 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 parents' responsibility and history has shown this is one of the high-risk times for members and their ponies or 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 or 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 and maintaining cross-country courses, 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, officials and organisers.
- Encourage your child to abide by the rules of the Irish Pony Club. Teach your child that honest endeavor is as important as winning and do all that you can to encourage good sportsmanship.
- Always recognize the value and importance of the volunteers who provide sporting and recreational opportunities for your child. Do not publicly question the judgment or honesty of judges, stewards, instructors or other officials.
- Parents should understand the complaints process and follow the proper procedure, if you feel unjustly treated, with the knowledge that any complaint will be dealt with effectively and confidentially.
- Be punctual for rallies and other activities and accept that it is your responsibility to deliver and collect your child on time. Parents should ensure they do not leave their children waiting unsupervised at any time.
- Abide by the procedures and policies in this document especially with regard to the use of mobile phones or any type of camera and videoing equipment.
- Parents should support all efforts to remove abusive and bullying behaviours in all of its forms.
- Ensure appropriate leaders are informed regarding any medical conditions, learning needs or other relevant matters concerning your child.



**PARENTS CODE OF CONDUCT – THE IRISH PONY CLUB**

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 and officials with respect.
3. I/We will respect the officials and their authority during rallies, team or individual training, camp, and 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, needs and welfare of all animals.

Names (Parents or Guardians)

.....  
.....  
.....

Signed .....

.....

Member’s Name..... Date .....



## IRISH PONY CLUB - CODE OF CONDUCT FOR OFFICIALS, INSTRUCTORS AND EXAMINERS, TEAM TRAINERS, SELECTORS, CHAPERONES, GROOMS AND SPORT LEADERS

- All officials and leaders 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 and 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 must not use alcohol or any banned substance before teaching or coaching, during events, or on trips away with members.
- Be generous with praise and never swear, ridicule or shout unnecessarily at members. 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 or her family.
- Physical punishment or physical force must never be used. Never punish a mistake – by verbal means, physical means or exclusion.
- Co-operate with the recommendations from medical and ancillary practitioners in the management of a members' medical or related problems. You may request a certificate of medical fitness to ensure **safe** continued participation.
- Keep any information in relation to a member of a personal or medical nature strictly confidential unless the welfare of the child requires the passing on of this information.
- 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 behaviours. Familiarize yourself with the Irish Pony Club Anti-Bullying policy and ensure its implementation while you are responsible for a group of members. (See the Irish Pony Club Anti-Bullying Policy).
- 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 import to realize that certain situations or friendly actions could be misinterpreted by the participant or by outsiders. Avoid working alone and ensure that there is adequate supervision for all activities.
- Leaders must not interact with any under 18-year-old members in any social media communications. (See the Irish Pony Club Social Media Policy).
- 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, unless a family friendship existed prior to the sporting association.

- When travel or 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, or undertake any form of therapy (hypnosis etc.) in the training of children.
- Where an official/instructor or sports leader is concerned about a colleagues' behaviour with regards to a child or children, they must report these concerns to the District Commissioner or, if necessary, to the National Children's Officer.

#### **Physical Contact – Sports Leaders should: -**

- Avoid unnecessary physical contact.
- Any necessary contact should be in response to the needs of the child and not the adult.
- It should be in an open environment with the permission and understanding of the participant.
- It should be determined by the age and development stage of the participant. Don't do something that the child can do for itself.
- Never engage in inappropriate touching.

An official and or an instructor or sports leader may be required to assist a member in the course of their duties with the following: -

Leg-up, opening or closing a body protector, tightening a girth etc. thus requiring physical contact. These actions should always be performed in an open environment, in full view of others and with the permission and understanding of the member.

Inappropriate physical contact includes, but is not limited to, the following: touching the thigh, buttock, breast or any part of the body that would be deemed inappropriate.

#### **Supervision: -**

Where possible, instructors, officials and sports leaders should not be alone with one child. The Branch Committee should ensure that there is adequate supervision in place for all activities. The accepted ratio of children to adults is eight to one. The maximum ration is ten children to one adult.

#### **Accidents/Incidents**

An instructor/examiner should complete: -

- An Incident Report Form where a member falls but is not injured. The instructor should complete the form, pass it on to the District Commissioner who should retain these forms and review them monthly to ascertain if one member is involved in a high level of incidents and if the training regime or level of competition is safe. The District Commissioner is responsible for informing the organisation's insurers of these incidents and also copies their correspondence to the Irish Pony Club office.

- An Accident Report Form where a member is injured and requires medical assessment or assistance. When completed the accident report form should be given to the District Commissioner who should keep a copy, inform the organisation's insurers, and copy their correspondence to the Irish Pony Club office.

The District Commissioner must inform parents when their child has a fall and of the action that was taken.

### **Behavioural Problems**

It is advisable to record attendance at training. Where behavioural problems arise and a member has to be disciplined, a brief record of the problem, action and outcomes should be kept. The District Commissioner or Branch Official should be informed. Warn the member (with witness where possible) about their behaviour, verbally twice. If a third incident occurs, send the member to the District Commissioner or Branch Official who will deal with the matter.



## IRISH PONY CLUB – OFFICIALS, INSTRUCTORS AND SPORTS LEADERS CODE OF CONDUCT FORM

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.
- Encourage fair play, treat participants equally.
- Recognize development 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 of all Pony Club activities.
- Keep a brief record of injuries and action taken. Any incidents requiring medical attention must be recorded on an Irish Pony Club Incident or Accident Report form (available from the District Commissioner).

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 familiarize themselves with the Code of Conduct of Children's Sport and with the Irish Pony Club Rules, the Irish Pony Club Safeguarding Policies 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 Here: \_\_\_\_\_

## IRISH PONY CLUB – SAFEGUARDING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Irish Pony Club has a number of policies to assist and support Branches and Areas to implement the best practice in relation to keeping children safe. Some of these documents are published as separate documents, e.g. Complaints, Disciplinary Policy and Procedures, Health and Safety Policy and Risk Assessment, and are subject to review and update at different times. For these policies, a summary is given below with reference given to the full documentation. These documents are available in the Child Welfare section of the Irish Pony Club website and from the Irish Pony Club office.

The principle policies adopted by the Irish Pony Club are: -

- Recruitment Procedures
- Travelling and Away Trip Policy
- Hosting Policy
- Garda Vetting Policy
- Complaints and Disciplinary Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- General Risk Assessment Policies
- Communications and Social Media Policy
- Photography and Videoing Policy
- Physical Contact Policy
- Substance Misuse Policy
- Health, Safety and Welfare Policy

## IRISH PONY CLUB – SAFEGUARDING

Children First Act 2015. All persons working with children should make themselves familiar with the Children First Act 2015 and conduct activities in accordance. 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 and organisation and with parents and guardians and others concerned with children's progress or welfare.
- Willingness to co-operate with the Statutory Authorities; An Garda Síochána, Health Service Executive or Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, 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 and Child Protection issues of Sport Ireland's Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport. Sports leaders with responsibility for children's welfare should attend Sport Ireland Safeguarding courses. District Commissioners must attend courses in Safeguarding 1 and Safeguarding 3. Instructors and trainers must attend Safeguarding 1. Branch Children's Officers must attend Safeguarding 1 and 2. All Executive Committee and Disciplinary Sub-Committee members must attend Safeguarding 1.

It is considered best proactive that all other branch officials or those acting in a supervisory capacity at any branch activity, sport or social, should attend Safeguarding 1.

## DEFINITIONS OF THE FOUR CATEGORIES OF CHILD ABUSE

Child abuse can be categorized into four different types; neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. A child may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time. More details on each type of abuse can be found in Children First National Guidance.

### DEFINITION OF NEGLECT

Neglect can be defined in terms of omission, where the child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, and or medical care.

Harm can be defined as the ill-treatment of the health or development of a child. Whether it is significant is determined by the child's health and development as compared to that which could reasonably be expected of a child of similar age.

Neglect generally becomes apparent in different ways over a period of time rather than at one specific point. For example, a child who suffers a series of minor injuries may not be having his or her needs met in terms of necessary supervision and safety. A child whose on-going failure to thrive or whose height is significantly below average may be being deprived of adequate nutrition. A child who consistently misses school may be being deprived of intellectual stimulation. The **threshold of significant harm** is reached when the child's needs are neglected to the extent that his or her well-being and or development are severely affected.

## DEFINITION OF EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Emotional abuse is normally to be found in the relationship between and parent, guardian or carer and a child rather than in a specific event or pattern of events. It occurs when a child's developmental need for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met. Unless other forms of abuse are present, it rarely manifests in terms of physical signs or symptoms.

Emotional abuse can be manifested in terms of the child's behavioural, cognitive, affective or physical functioning. Examples of these include insecure attachment, non-organic failure to thrive, unhappiness, low self-esteem, educational and developmental underachievement and oppositional behaviour. The threshold of significant harm is reached when abusive interactions dominate and become typical of the relationship between the child and parent.

## DEFINITION OF PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical abuse of a child is that which results in actual or potential physical harm from an interaction, or lack of interaction, which is reasonably within the control of a parent or person in a position of responsibility, power or trust. There may be single or repeated incidents.

Examples of physical abuse include: -

- Shaking, hitting or throwing
- Use of excessive force in handling
- Deliberate poisoning
- Suffocation or drowning
- Munchausen's Syndrome by proxy, where parents fabricate stories of illness about their child or cause physical signs of illness
- Allowing or creating a substantial risk of significant harm to a child

## DEFINITION OF SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal, or for that of others. It should be noted that the definition of child sexual abuse presented here is not a legal definition and is not intended to be a description of the criminal offence of sexual assault. It should be noted that child sexual abuse may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at pornographic material or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or involving children in online sexual exploitation.

## GROOMING

The child abuser usually spends some time 'grooming' his child victim and the child's parents and or adults in the club to gain their trust, i.e. the abuser gives the impression of becoming the best, most helpful and accommodating volunteer or coach. This enables him or her to then create a justifiable reason for getting the child alone.

Steps to ensure children are best protected in a sports club environment against grooming y potential abusers are: -

- Recruitment and selection of all adults involved with children
- Ensure adequate supervision of activities involving children
- New volunteers should be supported and supervised in their role
- Avoid circumstances where an adult is alone with a child

## INDICATORS OR SIGNS OF ABUSE

Indicators of abuse can be developmental, physical or behavioural and any signs that are cause for concern should be noted. It is important to remember that indicators can have other relevance where abuse is not a factor for consideration, e.g. a child may be having difficulty with school work or upset about a family bereavement – the concern should still be noted. No one indicator should be seen as conclusive in itself or abuse. It may indicate conditions other than abuse.

Concerns should be passed on the Branch Children's Officer (BCO) or to the Branch Designated Liaison Person (BDLP) who is the District Commissioner. The Branch Children's Officer may raise these concerns with the child and or the Branch Designated Liaison Person who may consider an informal consultation with a social worker. All signs and symptoms will be examined by the social worker in the total context of the child's situation and family circumstances.

## GUIDELINES FOR RECOGNISING CHILD ABUSE

There are commonly three stages in the identification of child abuse: -

1. Considering the possibility
2. Looking out for signs
3. Recording information

## REPORTING PROCEDURES

### Stage 1 – Considering the Possibility

The possibility of child abuse should be considered if a child appears to have suffered a suspicious injury for which no reasonable explanation can be offered. It should also be considered if the child seems distressed without obvious reason or displays persistent or new behavioural problems. The possibility of child abuse should also be considered if the child displays unusual or fearful responses to parents or older children.

## Stage 2 – Looking out for Signs of Abuse

Signs of abuse can be physical, behavioural or developmental. They can exist in the relationships between children and parents or between children and other family member or other persons. A cluster or pattern of signs is likely to be more indicative of abuse. Children who are being abused may hint that they are being harmed and sometimes make direct disclosures. Disclosures should always be believed. The child should not be interviewed in detail about the alleged abuse without first consulting with the HSE. Less obvious signs could be gently explored with the child, without direct questioning. Some signs are more indicative of abuse than others. These include: -

- Disclosure of abuse and neglect by a child or young person
- Age-inappropriate or abnormal sexual play or knowledge
- Specific injuries or patterns of injuries
- Absconding from home or a care situation
- Attempted suicide
- Underage pregnancy or sexually transmitted disease
- Signs in one or more categories at the time. For example, signs of developmental delay, physical injury and behavioural signs may together indicate a pattern of abuse.

It is important to always be open to alternative explanations for physical or behavioural signs of abuse. Also, care should be taken as to how such information is stored and to whom it is made available.

## Stage 3 – Recording of Information

If abuse is suspected, it is important to establish the grounds for concern by recording as much detailed information as possible. Observations should be accurately recorded and should include dates, times, names and locations, context and any other information that may be relevant.

### Important Points

- The severity of a sign does not necessarily equate with the severity of the abuse.
- Neglect is as potentially fatal as abuse.
- Child abuse is not restricted to any socio-economic group, gender or culture.
- It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between indicators of child abuse and other adversities suffered by children.
- The child's welfare must be the primary consideration.
- Society has a duty of care towards children.

## WHAT CONSTITUTES REASONABLE GROUNDS FOR A CHILD PROTECTION OR WELFARE CONCERN

- An injury or behaviour that is consistent both with abuse and an innocent explanation, but where there are corroborative indicators supporting the concern that it may be a case of abuse.



- Consistent indication over a period of time that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.
- Admission or indication by someone of an alleged abuse.
- A specific indication from a child that he or she was abused.
- An account from a person who saw the child being abused.
- Evidence, e.g. injury or behaviour that is consistent with abuse and unlikely to have been caused in any other way.

## WHAT TO DO IF REASONABLE GROUNDS FOR CONCERN EXIST

Examine the report you receive by looking at the information that has been reported to you and asking open-ended, non-leading questions, if necessary, to give further clarity.

**It is recommended that a referral to Children and Family Services should always be made in the following circumstances: -**

- Any concern about a child at risk of sexual abuse.
- Physical injury caused by assault or neglect which may or may not require medical attention.
- Incidents of physical abuse that alone are unlikely to constitute significant harm, but taken into consideration with other factors may do so.
- Children who suffer from persistent neglect.
- Children who live in an environment which is likely to have an adverse impact on their emotional development.
- Where parents' own emotional impoverishment affects their ability to meet their child's emotional and or physical needs, regardless of material or financial circumstances and assistance.
- Where parents' circumstances are adversely affecting their capacity to meet the child's needs because of domestic violence, drug and or alcohol misuse, mental health problems, intellectual disability.
- A child living in a household with, or having significant contact with, a person at risk of sexual offending or with previous convictions for offenses against children.
- An abandoned child.
- Children left at home alone.
- Bruising or injury to a pre-mobile baby.
- Pregnancy where children have previously been removed.
- Suspicion of fabricated or induced illness.
- Where a child under one year is present in a home where domestic violence is a concern.

Please note that the above are examples of circumstances that may occur. There are other circumstances under which a referral should be considered. If you are in doubt, discuss with the Branch Children's Officer of Designated Liaison Person or District Commissioner or call the Duty Social Worker in your local HSE.

## HOW TO RESPOND TO A CHILD MAKING A DISCLOSURE

When a young person discloses information of suspected abuse you should:-

- Deal with any allegation of abuse in a sensitive and competent way through listening to and facilitating the child to tell about the problem, rather than interviewing the child about details of what happened.
- Do not question the child unless the nature of what she or he is saying is unclear. Do not ask leading questions, use open, non-specific questions such as "Can you explain to me what you mean by that"?
- Avoid leading questions such as asking whether a specific person carried out the abuse. Also, avoid asking about intimate details or suggesting that something else may have happened other than what you have been told. Such questions could complicate the official investigation.
- Accept what the child has to say – false disclosures are very rare.
- Reassure the child they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Stay calm and not show any extreme reaction to what the child is saying. Listen compassionately, and take what the child is saying seriously.
- Understand that the child has decided to tell something very important and has taken a risk to do so and the child has done the right thing by telling you.
- Be honest with the child and tell them that it is not possible to keep that information a secret.
- Make no judgmental statements about the person against whom the allegation is made.
- Give the child some indication of what would happen next, such as informing the HSE. It should be kept in mind that the child may have been threatened and may feel vulnerable at this stage. If you are not sure do not say anything about what will happen next.
- Carefully record the details.
- Pass on this information to the Branch Designated Liaison Person (Branch District Commissioner).

**It is not the responsibility of the Branch Designated Liaison Person, Branch Children's Officer or any officer of the Irish Pony Club to decide whether or not child abuse has or is taking place. That is the job of the local statutory authorities. However, there is a responsibility to protect children by informing the appropriate agencies so that they can then make enquiries and take any necessary action to protect the young person.**

## CONFIDENTIALITY – DO NOT PROMISE TO KEEP SECRETS

At the earliest opportunity, tell the child that: -

- You acknowledge that they have come to you because they trust you.
- You will be sharing this information only with people who understand this area and who can help. There are secrets, which are not helpful and should not be kept because they make matters worse. Such secrets hide things that need to be known if people are to be helped and protected from further ongoing hurt. By refusing to make a commitment

to secrecy to the child, you do run the risk that they may not tell you everything or indeed, anything there and then. However, it is better to this than to tell a lie and ruin the child's confidence in yet another adult. By being honest, it is more likely that the child will return to you at another time.

At the earliest possible opportunity: -

- Record in writing, in a factual matter, what the child has said, including, as far as possible, the exact words used by the child.
- Inform your Branch Children's Officer or Designated Liaison Person who reports directly to the HSE.
- The Branch Designated Liaison Person may consult with and should inform the National Children's Officer and the National Designated Liaison Officer.
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality, the matter must not be discussed at Branch or Area level.

## REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

The guiding principles in regard to reporting abuse may be summarised as follows: -

- The safety and well-being of the child must take priority. Reports should be made without delay to the HSE, Children and Family Services.

## GROUNDINGS FOR CONCERN

Any reasonable suspicion of abuse must elicit a response. The HSE should always be informed when a person has reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been abused, or is being abused, or at risk of abuse. The following examples would constitute reasonable grounds for concern: -

- Specific indication from the child that he or she was abused (disclosure).
- An account by a person who says the child is being abused.
- Evidence, such as an injury or behaviour that is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused in another way.
- An injury or behaviour that is consistent both with abuse and with an innocent explanation, but where there are corroborative indicators supporting the concern that it may be a case of abuse. An example of this would be a pattern of injuries, an implausible explanation, and other indications of abuse and or dysfunctional behaviour.
- Consistent indications, over a period of time that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.

## STANDARD REPORTING PROCEDURE

Any person reporting a child abuse concern should do so without delay to the HSE Children and Family Services. A report can be made in person, by telephone or in writing. The Standard Report form can be accessed via the HSE website: [www.hse.ie/go/childfirst](http://www.hse.ie/go/childfirst)

## **RECORDING INFORMATION**

Observe and note dates, times, locations and contexts in which the incident occurred or suspicion was aroused, together with any other relevant information following GDPR guidelines.

## **INFORMING THE BRANCH DESIGNATED LIAISON PERSON**

Report the matter as soon as possible to the Branch Designated Liaison Person with responsibility for reporting abuse. If the Branch Designated Liaison Person has reasonable grounds for believing that the child has been abused or is at risk of abuse, she or he will make a report to the HSE whose staff has statutory responsibility to investigate and assess suspected or actual child abuse. The role of the Branch Children's Officer or the National Children's Officer is to help support children where abuse is alleged or a concern.

## **INFORMATION CONSULTATION**

If the Branch Designated Liaison Person, or appointed person, is unsure whether reasonable grounds for concern exist she or he can informally consult with the Duty Social Worker in their local HSE. She or he will be advised whether or not the matter requires a formal report. It is essential that no investigation of child abuse is carried out by anyone other than the statutory authorities.

The Branch Designated Liaison Person should give an outline of the concerns, it is not necessary to give identifying details of those involved at this stage. The Duty Social Worker will advise whether or not the nature of the matter requires a formal report. This advice may be sought during working hours. In emergency cases An Garda Síochána should be called.

## **EMERGENCY SITUATIONS**

Under no circumstances should a child be left in a situation that exposes him or her to harm or to risk of harm pending HSE intervention. In the event of an emergency where you think that a child is in immediate danger and you cannot get in contact with the HSE, you should contact An Garda Síochána. This may be done through any Garda station.

## **RESPONDING TO A CONCERNED PARTY**

If the Irish Pony Club or a Branch Designated Liaison Person cannot find reasonable grounds for reporting a concern, the person who raised the concern should be given a clear account outlining the reasons why no action is being taken. If the person remains concerned about the situation they are free to consult with or report matters of concern to the HSE.

## **INFORMING THE FAMILY**

The Branch Designated Liaison Person should let the Social worker know if the family is aware of the report being submitted.

Any professional Social Worker within the HSE who suspects child abuse should inform the parents if a report has been submitted to the Children and Family Services of the HSE or to An Garda Síochána unless doing so is likely to endanger the child.

The HSE will respect the wishes of non-professionals reporting concerns in good faith who ask to remain anonymous as much as possible, but cannot give a guarantee that the information would not be sought and given within judicial proceedings. The Data Protection Acts offer protection under privacy, but should the information be sought directly within legal proceedings, there is no guarantee.

## **SUBMITTING THE REPORT FORM**

The Standard Report Form should be used by all volunteers when reporting child welfare and protection concerns to the Children and Family Social Services of the HSE. If a report is made by telephone this form should be completed and forwarded subsequently to the HSE. A copy must be kept by the Branch Designated Liaison Person in a secure location.

## **INFORMATION REQUIRED WHEN MAKING A REPORT**

The ability of the HSE to assess suspicions or allegations of child abuse will depend on the amount and quality of information conveyed to them by the people reporting concerns, hereafter called 'reporters'.

### **Accurate Identifying Information**

As much as possible detail should be provided on the form.

Important details are: -

- Name, address and age of the child or children for whom the report is being made
- Name and address of the reporter
- Contact number and occupation of the reporter
- Relationship of the reporter to the child
- A full account of what constitutes the grounds for concern in relation to the welfare and protection of the child or children, e.g. details of the allegation, incident, dates, description of any injuries, etc.
- All known full names and surnames, alias and addresses of the parents of the child or children
- Disability, if applicable, ethnicity, first language, need for interpreter, if known
- Names of other children in the household
- Name, address and details of the person allegedly causing concern in relation to the child or children.

### **Details of the Concern, Allegations or Incident**

Outline the exact nature of concern; include dates, times and names of persons present. It is important to describe any observed injuries or behaviours that may be linked to the incident. In cases where abuse or neglect is indicated over time, the reporter should be encouraged to provide a chronology of the evidence or symptoms in the child that give rise to concern.

### **Views of the Parent or Carer and Views of the Child, where age appropriate**

The reporter must provide any accounts of the parents' or child's views about the concern that are known to them.

Keep a copy for your own records.

## ALLEGATIONS AGAINST SPORT LEADERS WITHIN THE IRISH PONY CLUB

If an allegation of abuse occurring within the Irish Pony Club is made against an Irish Pony Club Sports Leader or a member of the Irish Pony Club, (employees of the Irish Pony Club are subject to the conditions within their employment contract), these procedures should be followed: -

- The reporting procedure in respect of suspected child abuse should be followed. The welfare of the child making the allegation is paramount. Other children who may be at risk should also be considered. The Irish Pony Club should take any steps that may be necessary to protect children in their care.
- The role of the National Children's Officer and or the Branch Children's Officer is to help support children where abuse is alleged or a concern.
- The National Designated Liaison Person is responsible for reporting the alleged abuse or concern to the statutory authorities, however, the sports leader involved must be informed of the allegation, advice must be taken from the statutory authorities in order to safeguard any other children at risk.
- The National Designated Liaison Person should contact the sports leader concerned who should be confidentially informed of:
  - Than an allegation has been made against him or her
  - The nature of the allegation. The sports leader should be afforded the opportunity to respond and this response should be recorded and passed on to the HSE.
- The sports leader must be asked to step aside from any involvement with children pending the outcome of the investigation. When a person is asked to step aside it should be made clear that it is only a precautionary measure and will not prejudice any later disciplinary proceedings.
- Other than following the above procedures, the Irish Pony Club and the relevant branch or branches concerned must not deal with the complaint or concern while the statutory authorities' investigation into the concern or complaint is on-going.
- The National Designated Liaison Person in the Irish Pony Club should be informed in confidence by the Branch Designated Liaison Person that a sports leader has been asked to stand aside. They should keep in touch until there is a definite outcome from the salutatory authorities. The National Designated Liaison Person will inform the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors regarding the nature of the allegations only.
- The issue of confidentiality is very important. Information should only be shared on a need to know basis and the sports leader should be treated with respect and fairness. It is important that the rights of both the child and the person about whom the allegation has been made are protected.
- Information on a need to know basis means that those who need to be informed for the protection of any children must be told in confidence. The Irish Pony Club and the

relevant branch should ensure only the necessary people are informed. Passing on information to others on this 'need to know' basis for the protection of a child or other children is not a breach of confidentiality, e.g. obtaining advice from the National Designated Liaison Person or the National Children's Officer on welfare and protection of any children involved.

- Following the outcome of the investigation by the statutory authorities the Irish Pony Club will commence a hearing to determine the suitability of the sports leader to resume activities involving children.
- All contact with the sports leader involved throughout the process must be confirmed in writing.
- All information should be stored in a secure place, with access restricted to authorized personnel.

## EXTERNAL ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST SPORT LEADERS WITHIN THE IRISH PONY CLUB

If an allegation of abuse or concern is made against an Irish Pony Club sports leader whereby the abuse occurs externally to the Irish Pony Club the above process must be followed with consideration given to the following points: -

- The details must be passed on to the National Children's Officer or the National Designated Liaison Person. It will be the responsibility of the National Children's Officer or the National Designated Liaison Person to liaise and verify the information with the organisation or body responsible for raising the concern.
- The adult against whom the allegation has been made can be contacted by the National Designated Liaison Person and asked to step down in accordance with the above process.
- In order to safeguard and protect children, branch and Area personnel should be informed on a need to know basis, e.g. if the adult has been operating in a branch, then the Branch Designated Liaison Person should be informed that a member has stepped aside to ensure the branch do not engage the adult until the matter has been resolved.
- Vigilance should be observed in any group that the adult may have been in contact with to ensure there has been no impact.
- As with the procedure above, all contact with the sports leader should be confirmed in writing and any information should be stored in a secure place with access restricted to authorised personnel.

**Following the outcome of an investigation** by the statutory authorities the **Irish Pony Club Recruitment and Selection Policy** to determine the suitability of Irish Pony Club Officials, comes into effect where an individual is assessed on their suitability to resume activities involving children.

All communication with the sports leader throughout the process must be confirmed in writing.

All information should be stored in a secure place, with access restricted to authorised personnel.

## CONCERNS OR CASES NOT REPORTED

In those cases where the Irish Pony Club or a branch cannot find reasonable grounds for concern and decides not to report the matter to the statutory authorities, the individual who raised the concern should be given a clear written statement of the reasons why the organisation or branch is not taking such action. The person should be advised that if they remain concerned about the situation, they are free as individuals to consult with, or report to, the statutory authorities. The provisions of the protection for persons reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 apply once they communicate 'reasonably and in good faith' where applicable.

## ANONYMOUS COMPLAINTS

Anonymous complaints can be difficult to deal with but should not be ignored. In all cases the safety and welfare of the child or children is paramount. Any such complaints relating to inappropriate behaviours should be brought to the attention of the National Designated Liaison Person. The information should be checked out, not an investigation, and handled in a confidential manner.

## RUMOURS

Rumors should not be allowed to hang in the air. Any rumour relating to inappropriate behaviour should be brought to the attention of the Branch Designated Liaison Person who should decide whether there is substance to the rumors or not and whether it should be reported to the HSE. Informal consultation with the Duty Social Worker can be sought if required.

## PROTECTION FOR PERSONS REPORTING CHILD ABUSE ACT 1998 (IRL)

The Protection for Persons Report Child Abuse Act 1998 provides immunity from civil liability to persons who report child abuse 'reasonably and in good faith' to the HSE or An Garda Síochána.

The main provisions for 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 the 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 criminal offence designed to protect innocent persons from malicious reports.

This protection applies to organisations as well as to individuals. This means that even if a communicated suspicion of child abuse proves unfounded, a complainant who took an action



would have to prove that the person who communicated the concern had not acted reasonably and in good faith in making the report.

**A person who makes a report in good faith and in the child's best interests may also be protected under common law by the defense of qualified privilege.**



## IRISH PONY CLUB POLICIES

The principle policies adopted by the Irish Pony Club are: -

- Recruitment Procedures
- Travelling and Away Trip Policy
- Hosting Policy
- Garda Vetting Policy
- Complaints and Disciplinary Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- General Risk Assessment Policies
- Communications and Social Media Policy
- Photography and Videoing Policy
- Physical Contact Policy
- Substance Misuse Policy
- Safeguarding Training Policy

## IRISH PONY CLUB - RECRUITMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR OFFICIALS, INSTRUCTORS, EXAMINERS, SELECTORS, TEAM TRAINERS, CHAPERONES AND STAFF

Children First Act 2015. All persons working with children should make themselves familiar with the Children First Act 2015 and conduct activities in accordance. The Irish Pony Club recognises the key role that officials, instructors, selectors, team trainers and 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 and 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 Code of Conduct for sports leaders, instructors and examiners.

Officials, instructors, selectors, team leaders and chaperones must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every child and must treat everyone equally, regardless of sex, ethnic origin, religion or ability.

The recruitment process includes a sign-up process whereby the officials and instructors agree 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.

Before recruitment, terms of reference should be drawn up and these should clearly state: -

- The responsibilities of the role
- The level of experience and qualifications required
- The Irish Pony Club's commitment to the Irish Sports Council Code of Ethics

### **Who should be Recruited?**

A standard application process should be followed for all adults, working as volunteers or employed, with access to or involved in the management for policies concerning children.

These positions at all levels would include, but are not limited to: -

- District Commissioner
- Branch Children's Officer
- Instructors and Examiners
- Team Trainer, including Mounted Games and Tetrathlon (Swim, Run, Shoot)
- Team chaperone
- Officials where there is a direct involvement or responsibility for making decisions concerning children.
- Committee members
- Host families

## **GARDA VETTING, CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING TRAINING**

All of the above sports leaders must successfully complete Garda Vetting. The invitation to complete Garda vetting is available on the Irish Pony Club website. All sports leaders must also have attended a Sport Ireland Safeguarding Course. It is the responsibility of the branch to ensure that anyone involved with young people are suitable with regard to the requirements for the welfare and protection of children.

### **References**

All newly recruited officers and instructors must provide two acceptable references which must:

-

- Not be from family members
- Received in writing and signed
- Verified by telephone or personal visit

For National positions, the requirements will be issued by the Irish Pony Club Executive Committee.

There are certain positions where there is no unsupervised involvement or direct responsibility for children, e.g. tack inspectors at competition, timers, fence stewards and show-jumping judges where a recruitment process may not need to be enforced. For such roles, all personnel should complete an application form with the self-declaration. This form should be held by the branch secretary, Area representative or Chairman of Discipline.

The decision to appoint sports leaders within a branch are the responsibility of the District Commissioner and the branch committee and 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, instructor, swimming, running, shooting, mounted games and polo trainer etc. All references should be held on file by the branch secretary or District Commissioner.

Every effort will be made to manage and support appointed sports leaders. Adequate supervision should always be provided. A leader should not have to work alone.

### **Newly elected District Commissioners must: -**

- Complete a new District Commissioner sign-up form including signing the Leader's Code of Conduct
- Successfully complete a Garda vetting application
- Send a copy of the Safeguarding course certificate to the Irish Pony Club office
- Send two acceptable references to the Irish Pony Club office

District Commissioners are not deemed official until two acceptable references are received at the Irish Pony Club office and are approved by the Executive Committee of the Irish Pony Club and they have received a letter from the Chairman of the Irish Pony Club confirming their appointment. The outgoing District Commissioner continues to be responsible for the branch until the newly elected District Commissioner is ratified.

### **Irish Pony Club Instructors must: -**

- Complete an application form in inclusion in the Irish Pony Club Instructor's Register which will be considered by the Irish Pony Club Training Committee. Application forms are available on the Irish Pony Club website.
- Sign the Instructor's Code of Conduct
- Successfully complete Garda vetting
- Send a copy of their Safeguarding course certification to the Irish pony Club office
- Send a copy of the First Aid course certificate to the Irish Pony Club office
- Send two acceptable reference to the Irish Pony Club office

### **Host Families must: -**

- Complete a sign-up form.
- Sign the Leader's Code of Conduct
- Successfully complete Garda Vetting
- Attend, or agree to attend, a Safeguarding course before hosting Pony Club members
- Send two acceptable references to the Irish Pony Club office

### **Sports Leaders, including International Mounted Games Trainer, International Tetrathlon Trainer, Away Trip Chaperones and Grooms, Branch Swim, Run and Shoot Trainers must:-**

- Complete a sign-up form.
- Sign the Leader's Code of Conduct
- Successfully complete Garda vetting
- Attend, or agree to attend, a Safeguarding course before travelling away with Irish Pony Club members
- Send two acceptable references to the Irish Pony Club office

### **Safe Management of Volunteers**

All new branch committee members will be invited to attend an induction training evening where their individual roles and responsibilities will be addressed. The Irish Pony Club Child Protection Policy and Procedures will be distributed and discussed.

Where an officer or sports leader has to deal with a child protection and welfare concern or disclosure they will be provided with support by the National Children's Officer and or the National Designated Liaison Person.

While it is a requirement that the District Commissioner, Branch Children's Officers and instructors attend Safeguarding training, it is 'best practice' that all other officers and sports leaders that have substantial access to children should also attend these training courses.



## IRISH PONY CLUB – TRAVELLING WITH CHILDREN AND AWAY TRIP POLICY FOR INSTRUCTORS, SELECTORS, TRAINERS, CHAPERONES AND 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 or teams – those who use their own vehicles to transport members must ensure that they have adequate insurance cover and must 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 or advising in a closed off room. If necessary leave the door open and be in earshot of others.
- Leaders should avoid offering regular journeys or lifts to a child. This can only be arranged by the parent and should only be undertaken with specific permission of the parent.
- 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 understand of the child concerned and his or her parents.
- Remember that casual comments can be open to misconstruction.

### AWAY EVENTS INCLUDING HOSTING

Travelling and staying together for an event or activity helps to develop branch and team spirit together with an open, honest and inclusive team atmosphere.

There are a number of options for national teams and branches to consider when staying away:-

- The travel and accommodation arrangements can be the sole responsibility of parents. This does not encourage the concept of the team and not allow for the development of a team spirit, however, it does remove the branches' responsibility for children.
- The travel and accommodation are the responsibility of the branch and the Irish Pony Club. In this instance the branch and the Irish Pony Club need to assume the Irish Pony Club protocol for away events as being the best practice for travelling and staying away with children. The travel and accommodation is a combination of the branches' responsibility. Clear boundaries need to be stated for the benefit of the members and the parents. In these situations it can be difficult to encourage team spirit.
- The branch or the chairman of the discipline involved, e.g. mounted games, Tetrathlon, Eventing, show-jumping, dressage etc. consider using host families for the accommodation. The protocol described below must be in place to ensure the welfare and protection of children and young people staying with host families.

## HOSTING

The host families should undergo a recruitment and selection procedure including Garda vetting and provide two acceptable references. If the family is abroad the host organisation should provide the vetting service where these may be available.

The host family should agree to abide by the codes of conduct and this document. Host families should be provided with this information prior to the event and a formal agreement should be made.

The host family should be provided with as much information about the child or children staying with them and the details of the competition.

Where possible, two children of the same gender should be placed with the same family.

Single parents acting as a host family should be of the same gender of their guest.

## PROTOCOL FOR AWAY EVENTS

- Provide a programme or plan for the event, camp or competition.
- Recruit and appoint the required personnel, e.g. trainers, instructors, chaperone, groom and any support staff necessary. All voluntary personnel must complete and application form.
- Ensure that all forms are completed and signed by the parent and returned, including any information applicable to a child being away.
- Any travel abroad may require additional insurance cover.
- Observe rooming restrictions for over 18s and under 18s and ensure separate accommodation for leaders. 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.
- Adults should not enter a members' room or tent without first knocking.
- All group socialisation should take place in communal areas, i.e. not boys in girls' rooms and vice versa.
- Any form of drug misuse, drinking alcohol or smoking is forbidden for all children and team personnel on duty at any time during camps and compactions.
- The behaviour of the group should at all times be such that the good name of the Irish Pony Club is upheld.
- Extracurricular activities are the responsibility of the team trainer and chaperone or the District Commissioner if in a residential camp.
- Any complaints or disciplinary matters should be dealt with through the complaints and disciplinary procedure.
- Issues concerning the welfare of children during the event should be raised on return with the Branch Children's Officer and or the National Children's Officer.
- A team report should be submitted to the District Commissioner if a branch event or to the Chairman of the Discipline involved if an away team event.

## ACCIDENT OR INJURY

The team trainer should complete: -

- An **Incident Report Form** where a member falls but is not injured. The trainer should give these forms to the District Commissioner. The District Commissioner should send these forms to the Irish Pony Club insurers copying the Irish Pony Club office into their correspondence. The District Commissioner should also review these forms on a monthly basis to ascertain if one member is involved in a high level of incidents and if the training regime or level of competition is safe.
- An **Accident Report Form** where a member is injured and requires medical assessment or assistance. These accident report forms should be reviewed by the team trainer, the Chairman of Discipline and the District Commissioner. The District Commissioner should send these forms to the Irish Pony Club insurers copying the Irish Pony Club office into their correspondence.
- **Behavioural Problems:** Make a brief record of the problem, action and outcome.
- Familiarise yourself with the Irish Pony Club's Complaints, Disciplinary and Appeals Procedures. Submit the report on return home.

Instructors, selectors, trainers and authorised volunteers asked to travel with the group in a supervisory capacity must sign up for each trim. 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 PERMISSION FORM**

**EVENT** \_\_\_\_\_

**VENUE** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATES** \_\_\_\_\_

**TRAVELLING OFFICIALS**

I hereby agree to abide by the guidelines and regulations in the Irish Pony Club Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Young People in Sport

**Signature 1** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signature 2** \_\_\_\_\_

**Print Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Print Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**PARENTS or GUARDIANS OF PARTICIPANT (Under 18)**

I have read and accept the conditions and rules set down by the Irish Pony Club for children travelling to competitions and events

**Signature 1** \_\_\_\_\_ **Contact No.** \_\_\_\_\_

**Print Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature 2** \_\_\_\_\_ **Contact No.** \_\_\_\_\_

**Print Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency Contact:**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Contact No.** \_\_\_\_\_

**YOUNG PARTICIPANT**

I have read and accept the conditions and rules set down by the Irish Pony Club for children travelling to competitions and events. I agree to abide by the rules.

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Print Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_



## IRISH PONY CLUB GARDA VETTING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

### INTRODUCTION

The National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 to 2016 provides the legislative basis for persons working in **relevant** work or activity to undergo a vetting check prior to working with children or vulnerable persons.

From January 2018, all Garda Vetting through the Irish Pony Club **must be** completed through the e-Vetting process. Please refer to the e-Vetting step by step process within for further information.

The decision to engage in Garda Vetting is part of the recruitment and selection process and this practice is in line with the best safeguards available to protect the welfare of children within our organisation. E-Vetting will allow applicants to be vetted in a quicker and easier manner than before (usually in the region of 5 working days once the completed online application has been reviewed and submitted by the Irish Pony Club to the National Vetting Bureau).

All information and relevant forms relating to E-Vetting will be available on [www.irishponyclub.ie](http://www.irishponyclub.ie) from January 2018 which applicants can then fill out and submit online.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

The Irish Pony Club is a Registered Organisation with the National Vetting Bureau and as per IPC rules all our individuals who work with our young members (U18) and vulnerable adults must comply with completing the vetting process, in line with the legislation set down in the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 and 2016.

The Irish Pony Club has one Designated Liaison Person, Christina Cullen. The Designated Liaison Person is: -

- Appointed and registered with the National Vetting Bureau
- Acts as liaison between the National Vetting Bureau and the Irish Pony Club
- Responsible for all vetting application forms, submissions to and receiving information from the Vetting Bureau
- Responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of information received from both the individual and the Vetting Bureau
- Keep this information only for explicit and lawful purposes
- Keep information safe and secure

### VETTING CHARGES

At present, there is no cost to the applicants undergoing the process.

### WHO WILL NEED TO BE VETTED?

Those involved in 'any work or activity which is carried out by a person, a necessary and regular part of which consists mainly of the person having access to, or contact with children'

All District Commissioners, Branch Children's Officers, Instructors, Team Trainers and Chaperones **must** be vetted. It is considered best practice that anyone with access to children

and those making decisions regarding the welfare of children at local, Area and National level will be vetted.

These positions are regarded as regulated positions:

- Employees
- Board Members and Executive Committee Members
- All Sub-Committee members
- Instructors, Coaches, Mounted Games Trainers, Tetrathlon (Swim, Run Shooting) Trainers and Team Chaperones, Managers and Host Families
- Children's Officers and Designated Persons
- District Commissioners

The responsibility for ensuring branch committee members, instructors and trainers used by a branch have completed and returned the Garda vetting application lies with the District Commissioner.

The responsibility for ensuring all other committee members, team managers etc. complete and return the required form lies with the Administration and the National Designated Liaison Person.

The relevant forms are available on the Irish Pony Club website.

## VETTING OF MINORS

If a person under the age of 18 is identified as one requiring vetting, the applicant will also need to complete a Parental Consent Form (NVB3) which must be submitted along with the Irish Pony Club Garda Vetting Invitation. Applicants who are under 18 must be over 16 to be suitable for vetting even with parental consent.

## EXEMPTIONS UNDER LEGISLATION

Within the National Vetting Bureau Act 2012 to 2016 certain exemptions from vetting are outlined in Sect. 3 (1) (c) which states:

*Persons giving of assistance on an **occasional basis** and for no commercial consideration at an event would not be required to be vetted.*

## IRISH PONY CLUB - DEFINITION OF OCCASIONAL WORK

An individual not previously vetted can carry out an occasional role on the following basis:

- The individual must be known to the Branch
- The occasional role can only be carried out one or less times per month
- The person carrying out the occasional work must at all times be supervised by a vetted person
- The person must sign a Code of Conduct relevant to the level of the organisation

## IRISH PONY CLUB E-VETTING PROCEDURE

### Step 1

The applicant must log on to the Irish Pony Club website, [www.irishponyclub.ie](http://www.irishponyclub.ie) and download an **Invitation to Complete Garda Vetting**, manually complete the form and forward the form to the Irish Pony Club head office, providing proof of identity.

### Step 2

The Irish Pony Club will validate the proof of identity and create an online application. An e-mail with a link attached inviting him/her to complete their online **Vetting Application Form** will come from An Garda Síochána. The applicant has a 30-day window to complete the online application form, otherwise it will automatically expire.

### Step 3

The applicant completes a Vetting Application Form online and submits it to the Irish Pony Club.

### Step 4

The Irish Pony Club will review the Vetting Application Form and, if correct, submit it to the National Vetting Bureau.

### Step 5

The National Vetting Bureau processes the application and issues a vetting disclosure\* directly to the Irish Pony Club.

### Step 6

The Irish Pony Club will review the vetting disclosure and assess the suitability of the applicant to do relevant work with the Irish Pony Club. As soon as is practicable the Irish Pony Club will provide a copy of the disclosure to the applicant.

\* A Vetting disclosure is defined in Section 14(4) of the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 – 2016 which can be found here:

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2012/act/47/section/14/enacted/en/html#sec14>

## MISCELLANEOUS

- All applications received by the Irish Pony Club will be entered on the IPC database. All data is kept in accordance with the Data Protection Acts 1988/2003 by the Designated Liaison Person on behalf of the Irish Pony Club. All information is kept in a secure cabinet at the Irish Pony Club Head Office. The Authorized Signatory is the only key holder for the secure cabinet.
- Irish Pony Club Garda Vetting is valid for a five-year term. All individuals will undergo re-vetting after this five-year period.

**Failure by any individual who is required to complete a vetting form and forward to the Irish Pony Club may compromise the future role of the applicant as per legislation in the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 to 2016.**

## RESIDENCY ABROAD

Individuals who carry out certain roles and who have been resident in the Republic of Ireland for less than one year may be asked to undergo a re-check after 12 months.

## COMMUNICATION WITH THE APPLICANT

When the Liaison Person is required to communicate with the applicant for any reason the following protocol **will** be adhered to:

- Communication should be by phone or in person if convenient
- The Liaison Person will verify the person is the applicant
- No messages will be left
- No discussion will take place with any other person, spouse or partner

## IRISH PONY CLUB GARDA VETTING COMMITTEES

The Irish Pony Club will have two committees to administer the Garda vetting process:-

- Vetting Referrals Committee (VCR)
- Vetting Referrals Appeal Committee (VRAC)

Each committee will be appointed on a yearly basis by the Board of Management of the Irish Pony Club. The Board will delegate full authority to the Vetting Referrals Committee and the Vetting Referrals Appeal Committee to make decisions on vetting disclosure issues advised by the National Vetting Bureau regarding a person's suitability for the role. No one member can sit on both committees at the same time. Under the Irish Pony Club Garda vetting procedures the Irish Pony Club Vetting Referrals Committee will sit and consider an individual's suitability for an Irish Pony Club role should they get a statement with convictions or prosecutions in relation to an applicant? Where the information disclosed by the National Vetting Bureau by the applicant deems the individual to be unsuitable, the applicant should be informed of such. The applicant should not be allowed to withdraw their application.

The assessment of suitability will depend on the nature of the position applied for.



## COMPLAINTS AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

All complaints and disciplinary matters occurring within the Irish Pony Club must be dealt with in accordance with the Irish Pony Club Complaints and Disciplinary procedures.

It must be noted that any complaint or issue concerning suspected child abuse is not covered by the complaints and disciplinary procedures and must be referred to the relevant authorities.

### COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Complaints should be raised within the branch or where the incident or activity occurred. The following is the process which should be followed: -

#### **Branch Complaints Officer: -**

- The District Commissioner or a person appointed by the District Commissioner received the complaint in writing and acknowledges it within 48 hours, in writing or by phone.
- Ascertains the full details of the complaint and the desired outcome – ‘what does the complainant want’?
- Make a decision as to whether or not the matter complained about is within the scope of those available to investigate or hear the complaint. Consult with the Area Representative if unsure. Ensure that those appointed to hear and investigate the complaint can be impartial. Do they know the complainant or those accused?
- Passes the complaint to the Branch Investigating Committee.
- Where deemed appropriate the complaint should be passed on to the Area Representative and heard at a higher level.

#### **Branch Complaints Committee: -**

- The investigating committee should consist of three designated people from outside the current branch committee, e.g. past District Commissioner or secretary, past senior instructor, a respected member of the community, the Area Representative, etc. appointed from a panel of suitable people who have been identified by the committee at the beginning of the year.
- Investigates the complaint and reports back to the complaints officer within two weeks.
- The complaints officer discusses the result of the investigation with the complainant leading to resolution or progression to the next stage.

#### **Area Representative: -**

- The Area Representative is informed of the complaint and of the result of the branch investigation and offers to mediate.
- If mediation is unsuccessful, the complaint progresses to the next stage.

#### **Executive Committee Complaints Sub-Committee: -**

- The complaint is passed on the complaints officer appointed by the Executive Committee.

- The complaint is investigated by the complaints committee and a report issued within two weeks.
- Complaint is resolved or appealed.

**Appeals Committee: -**

- Complainant must be able to establish grounds for appeal.
- Complaint is investigated by a separate appeals committee.
- Report to be completed within two weeks.
- Decision is final.

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR IMPARTIALITY**

Where a complaint is made at branch level, the District Commissioner or complaints officer must ensure that those appointed to investigate or hear the complaint are not influenced by a previous relationship with either the complainant or the accused. Both parties are entitled to a fair and impartial hearing. Where there is doubt, the matter should be handed over to the Area Representative or Executive Committee Chairman.



### **What is Bullying?**

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

Bullying and harassment should be prevented by anticipation of an occurrence and having a planned course of action.

Bullying 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, and hitting and extortion behaviour by one or more children against a victim.

Traditionally bullying would take place where the bully would meet the victim face-to-face, e.g. in a changing room, going to or from school or sports club, travelling on a bus. Unfortunately today the technological advances in methods of communications have meant that people are more accessible through the use of mobile phones, e-mail, social networking sites, etc. This means that a victim can be targeted by a bully without being physically present. Bullying need not be solely physical where a victim is physically harmed. Bullying can be verbal, involve the use of gestures, by exclusion and using extortion.

### **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 an activity, going different routes, asking to be driven.
- Frequent loss 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.

This list is not exclusive to a victim of bullying. There may be other reasons for many of the signs above.



## FORMS OF BULLYING

<b>Child to Child</b>	Includes physical aggression, verbal bullying, intimidation or isolation.
<b>Adult to Child</b>	Includes the use of repeated gestures or expressions of a threatening or intimidating nature, or any comment intended to degrade a child.
<b>Adult to Adult</b>	Includes verbal aggression towards other adults in order to achieve a beneficial outcome for own self or own child.
<b>Child to Adult</b>	Includes repeated gestures or expressions of a threatening or intimidating nature by an individual child or a group of children.

### How can bullying 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 that they are causing, and so make the problem a 'shared concern' of the group.
- Reinforce that there is a 'permission to tell' culture rather than a 'might is right'.
- Encourage young people to negotiate, co-operate 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 cannot ignore it, and 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.

## WHAT THE BRANCH CAN DO

Each branch should display a statement, in their branch newsletter and or on their branch website, stating that 'bullying is not accepted behaviour towards anyone in the branch or organisation in general, whether they are a child, instructor, leader, other volunteer or parent'. Anyone found to be bullying others will be dealt with seriously. The possibility of people being bullied should be discussed openly within the branch and all young people, officials and parents informed of both the organisation's views on bullying and ways in which bullying can be prevented and stopped.

## ACTION TO BE TAKEN

All young people should be given time and the opportunity to say how and if they are being bullied and who they are being bullied by and reassured that they were right to tell. The Branch Children's Officer should keep the young person informed of the proposed action and to take the young person's feelings into account.

The child's parents should be informed and guided as to how the bullying will be dealt with. The complaints procedure may be used as a mechanism to deal with the issue.

## **DEALING WITH BULLYING – CHILDREN**

Where bullying is between children there generally is always a reason for a bully to behave in a bullying way. This does not mean the behaviour is acceptable. It needs to be dealt with immediately. Bullying is a breach of the Code of Conduct which is a disciplinary offence; however, this may not be the most effective way to deal with the bullying behaviour.

A useful tool for resolving bullying behaviour is the 'No Blame Approach'. This has the advantage of bringing all parties together under adult supervision and affords the bully the chance to understand the destructive nature of their behaviour without apportioning blame directly. If there is no resolution through the 'No Blame Approach' advice should be sought from the National Children's Officer and the possibility of resolving the matter through a complaints process must be considered. It is also important to provide support for any child who is a victim of bullying and obtain the co-operation of parents to help with preventative measures. Bullying should never be ignored.

## **DEALING WITH BULLYING – ADULTS**

Where the alleged bully is reported as being an adult the matter may be dealt with through an informal process or a formal complaints procedure. However, the feelings of the young person involved must be considered. The Branch Children's Officer should approach the young person to establish what is happening and how they are being bullied.

An informal approach can be used with the adult concerned where they can reply to the issued raised by the child. It is imperative that the child feels protected in all these actions, especially where the adult is in a position of authority or power over the child. It may be necessary to observe the adult interaction with young people to establish if their behaviour is breaching the codes of conduct.

If an informal approach does not resolve the bullying as perceived by the young person the Branch Children's Officer should direct the matter to the complaints process, observing the boundaries of confidentiality.

## **WHO SHOULD DEAL WITH BULLYING?**

Dealing with bullying which occurs in any aspect of Pony Club activities is the responsibility of all leaders within the Irish Pony Club and its branches. The Branch Children's Officer would usually be involved and may act as an intermediary in a resolution. Bullying can also be dealt with formally through the complaints process.

More extreme forms of bullying may be regarded as physical or emotional abuse and should be reported to the HSE or An Garda Síochána. The Designated Liaison Person should consult informally with the statutory authorities if any concerns arise.

The 'No Blame Approach' can be managed with the Branch Children's Officer.

## THE 'NO BLAME APPROACH'

### Step 1 – Meet with the Victim

If you find that there has been an incident of bullying, first talk to the victim. At this stage find out who was involved and what the victim is now feeling. Try asking the following questions:-

- Was it verbal or physical intimidation?
- How hurt is the victim?
- Was it within his or hers own peer group?
- Reassure him or her that the truth will come out in the investigation.
- Actively listen.
- Advise the victim of the next steps that will be taken.

### Step 2 – Meet with all Involved

- Arrange to meet all those involved. This should include some bystanders, those who may have colluded, those who joined in and those who initiated the bullying.
- Have a maximum of six to eight in the group, keep the number controllable.
- Make a point of calling a special meeting.
- Ensure the severity of the meeting is understood by all.
- Speak only of the hurt caused in general terms with no reference to the victim.
- Play on the conscience of all. Ask questions like: How would you feel? Would you like to be done to you?

### Step 3 – Explain the Problem

The distress being suffered as a result of the bullying incident is explained. At this stage, the details of the incident or the allocation of the blame is not discussed. Explain the feelings of loneliness, feeling left out, rejected, laughed at. Try asking questions: -

- Would they like if it happened to them?
- Someone here in this group was bullied by someone within the group; what could we do to see it does not happen again?

Listen and watch out for reactions and pick up on any without isolating anyone. This is an opportunity to find out how the others in the group feel about bullying.

### Step 4 – Share the Responsibility

Explain what steps or controls may have to be introduced to prevent further incidents and how everyone will lose out as a result. This could range from: - less free time or social activities, i.e. less opportunity to interact individually allowing the bullying behaviour to continue, to removal of the means, e.g. if involved, mobile phones removed for certain periods. Any steps introduced must be in the ethos of prevention and not punishment. Parents of the children involved should be informed.

### Step 5 – Ask the group for their ideas

At this stage, the group is encouraged to suggest ways that would make a victim feel happier. All positive responses are noted. Use phrases like: "If I were you" to encourage response. Listen to all suggestions and note them.

### **Step 6 – Leave it to them**

Now that the problem has been identified, solutions suggested, the problem is now handed over to the group to solve. Arrange to meet again in a week's time. Pass responsibility over to the group and give a time frame within which something must be done.

### **Step 7 – Meet them again**

Meet everyone, including the bully. Discuss who things are going, who is doing what and has there been other incidents. This allows for continual monitoring and also keeps all involved in the process.

Again, enforce the idea of the team looking after each other at regular intervals.



## THE IRISH PONY CLUB – RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY

All organisations and branches should have a safety statement, including specific and potential risks attached to their sport. A risk assessment must be carried out on all venues used by the branch for both training and social activities. They should also have procedures in place for safeguarding against such risks. In addition, branches 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 or guardians. This must not be freely available outside those required to have access to this information, for data protection purposes.
- Ensure any necessary protective gear is used.
- Ensure First Aid kit is close at hand with access to a qualified first-aider.
- Keep First Aid kit stocked up.
- Know the contact number of emergency services.
- Ensure easy access to medical personnel if needed and have an emergency plan.
- If an incident occurs, make a brief record of injury and action taken. Make a brief record of the problem, action and outcome. Contact the member's parents and keep them informed of all detail.
- 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 by informing the Irish Pony Club office of all branch organised activities.
- Ensure parents or guardians are present at finishing time of sessions or events.
- Leaders responsible for the activity should be sufficiently skilled and competent to train, instruct and examine members for the specific activity.
- There must be adequate supervision in place for any event or activity or training session.

### IRISH PONY CLUB RISK ASSESSMENT DOCUMENT

This risk assessment considers the potential for harm to come to children whilst they are in the Irish Pony Club care. This risk assessment precedes the Child Safeguarding Statement (Section 11 (1b) Children First Act 2015) which is developed following this risk assessment process. In accordance with the requirements of Section 11 (1) of the Children First Act 2015 the risk is of abuse and not general health and safety risk.

**Section 11 (1) of the Children First Act 2015 states that where a person proposes to operate as a provider of a relevant service, he or she shall, within 3 months from the date on which he or she commences as such a provider: -**

Undertake an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while availing of the service, in this section referred to as a "risk".

Potential risk of harm to children	Likelihood of harm happening	Required Policy, Guidance and Procedure document	Responsibility Branch/Area	Mitigating Factors presently In place /adhered to	Further Actions
<b>BRANCH &amp; COACHING PRACTICES</b>					
Lack of coaching qualification		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Safeguarding Training Policy</li> <li>▪ Recruitment policy</li> </ul>			
Supervision issues		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Supervision Policy</li> <li>▪ Code of Conduct</li> </ul>			
Unauthorised photography & recording activities		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Photography and Use of Images policy</li> </ul>			
Behavioural Issues		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Code of Conduct</li> <li>▪ Safeguarding Training Policy</li> <li>▪ Complaints &amp; Disciplinary Policy</li> </ul>			
Lack of gender balance amongst coaches		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Recruitment Policy</li> <li>▪ Supervision policy</li> </ul>			
No guidance for travelling and away trips		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Travel/Away trip Policy</li> <li>▪ Code of Conduct</li> <li>▪ Permission Forms</li> </ul>			
Lack of adherence with misc procedures in Safeguarding policy (i.e. mobile, transport)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Safeguarding Policy</li> <li>▪ Complaints &amp; disciplinary policy</li> </ul>			

COMPLAINTS & DISCIPLINE					
Lack of awareness of a Complaints & Disciplinary policy		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Complaints &amp; Disciplinary procedure/policy</li> <li>▪ Communications procedure</li> </ul>			
Difficulty in raising an issue by child & or parent  Reason: Covered above		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Complaints &amp; Disciplinary procedure/policy</li> <li>▪ Communications procedure</li> </ul>			
Complaints not being dealt with seriously		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Complaints &amp; Disciplinary procedure/policy</li> </ul>			
REPORTING PROCEDURES					
Lack of knowledge of organisational and statutory reporting procedures		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reporting procedures/policy</li> <li>▪ Coach education policy</li> <li>▪ Code of Conduct /Behaviour</li> </ul>			
No Mandated Person appointed		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reporting procedures/policy</li> </ul>			
No DLP Appointed		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reporting procedures/policy</li> </ul>			
No NCO Appointed		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reporting procedures/policy</li> </ul>			
Concerns of abuse or		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reporting procedures/policy</li> </ul>			

harm not reported		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safeguarding Training Policy</li> </ul>			
Not clear who young people should talk to or report to		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Code of Ethics Document</li> <li>Safeguarding Training Policy</li> </ul>			
<b>FACILITIES</b>					
Unauthorised access to designated children's play & practice areas and to changing rooms, showers, toilets etc.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supervision policy</li> <li>Coach education</li> </ul>		<i>Clarify responsibilities before session starts</i>	
Unauthorised exit from children's areas		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supervision policy</li> <li>Coach education</li> </ul>		<i>Clarify responsibilities before session starts</i>	
Photography , filming or recording in prohibited areas		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Photography policy and use of devices in private zones</li> </ul>		<i>Enforce policy in private changing and wet areas</i>	
Missing or found child on site		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Missing or found child policy</li> </ul>		<i>Refer to policy and inform Gardaí</i>	
Children sharing facilities with adults e.g. dressing room, showers etc.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safeguarding policy</li> </ul>		<i>Plan with facilities management to create a suitable child centered environment in shared facilities</i>	



RECRUITMENT					
Recruitment of inappropriate people		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment policy</li> </ul>			
Lack of clarity on roles		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment policy</li> </ul>			
Unqualified or untrained people in voluntary roles		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment policy</li> </ul>			
COMMUNICATIONS AND SOCIAL MEDIA					
Lack of awareness of 'risk of harm' with members and visitors		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child Safeguarding Statement</li> <li>Training policy</li> </ul>		<i>Communicate Child Safeguarding Statement</i>	
No communication of Child Safeguarding Statement or Code of Behaviour to members or visitors		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child Safeguarding Statement – display</li> <li>Code of Behaviour - distribute</li> </ul>		<i>Communicate Child Safeguarding Statement</i>	
Unauthorised photography & recording of activities		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Photography and Use of Images policy</li> </ul>			
Inappropriate use of social media and communications by under 18's		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Photography and Use of Images policy</li> <li>Code of conduct</li> </ul>			
Inappropriate use of social media and communications with under 18's		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Photography and Use of Images policy</li> <li>Code of conduct</li> </ul>			
GENERAL RISK OF HARM					
Harm not being recognised		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safeguarding policy</li> <li>Child Safeguarding Training</li> </ul>			

<b>Harm caused by</b> - child to child - coach to child - volunteer to child - member to child - visitor to child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Code of Ethics</li> <li>▪ Safeguarding Training Policy</li> </ul>			
<b>General behavioural issues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Code of Conduct</li> </ul>			

This Risk Assessment document has been discussed and completed by The Irish Pony Club in February 2018. \*The risk assessment for purposes of the Children First Act 2015 and the organisations Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed every two years.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: Name:

Role: *National Children’s Officer* Role: *Chairperson*

Date: Date:

**Explanation of terms used:**

- **Potential risk of harm to children** – these are identified risks of harm to children whilst accessing activities in the Irish Pony Club
- **Likelihood of harm happening** – the likelihood of the risk occurring in the Irish Pony Club measured by you as Low, Medium or High.
- **Required Policy, Guidance and Procedure document** – indication of the policy required to alleviate the risk.
- **Responsibility** – provider should indicate where the responsibility for alleviating the risk lies.
- **Further action** - indicates further action that might be necessary to alleviate any risk ongoing.
- **Mitigating Factors presently In place /adhered to** - The steps you take to alleviate risks presently
- **NGB** – National Governing Body
- **NCO** – National Children’s Officer
- **MP** – Mandated Person (Appointed by the NGB as a requirement under the Children’s First Act 2015)

Please see below three examples of how we might complete the relevant sections within the risk assessment table, identifying the level of risk, which is responsible, what action may be needed and what actions we are already taking:

Example 1

Potential risk of harm to children	Likelihood of harm happening L-M-H	Required Policy, Guidance and Procedure document	Responsibility Branch/Area	Mitigating Factors presently In place /adhered to	Further Actions
<b>CLUB &amp; COACHING PRACTICES</b>					
Lack of coaching qualification	Low to Medium Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safeguarding Training Policy</li> <li>Recruitment policy</li> </ul>		<i>Coaches must have Garda Vetting, completed Safeguarding 1 Training. References are checked.</i>	<i>Ongoing review to ensure we adhere to the recruitment guidelines</i>

Example 2

Potential risk of harm to children	Likelihood of harm happening L-M-H	Required Policy, Guidance and Procedure document	Responsibility Branch/Area	Mitigating Factors presently In place /adhered to	Further Actions
<b>COMPLAINTS &amp; DISCIPLINE</b>					
Lack of awareness of a Complaints & Disciplinary	High Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complaints &amp; Disciplinary procedure/policy</li> <li>Communications procedure</li> </ul>			<i>Immediate Action Required – Make reporting procedures available to members</i>

Example 3

Potential risk of harm to children	Likelihood of harm happening L-M-H	Required Policy, Guidance and Procedure document	Responsibility Club/Region/National	Mitigating Factors presently In place /adhered to	Further Actions
<b>RECRUITMENT</b>					
Recruitment of inappropriate people	Medium Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment policy</li> </ul>	Affiliate	<i>Rigidly follow the recruitment procedures as set out in our Code of Ethics Document</i>	<i>Ongoing review to adhere to policy</i>

Potential risk of harm to children	Likelihood of harm happening L-M-H	Required Policy, Guidance and Procedure document	Responsibility Club/Region/National	Mitigating Factors presently In place /adhered to	Further Actions



## IRISH PONY CLUB – COMMUNICATIONS AND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

The aim of the communication policy is to give guidance on conveying messages and information safely and securely to intended recipients without exposing children to risk of harm, by allowing access to their personal details by unauthorised persons.

Communication with children must be in an open environment, and one to one adult to child conversations should take place in public surrounds.

Leaders must not interact with any under 18-year-old members in any social media communications.

Communication tools can be valuable in helping keep children safe, this is often the reason given for a child having a mobile phone. Branches should consider the most effective means of communicating with members and their parents including: -

- Printed newsletter, listing activities for a quarter or for one month
- E-mail, branch website and Facebook notification with perhaps group text messages used to cancel at short notice or remind parents of activities. Website notice alone is not sufficient notification of activities.
- Text message should not be the principle means of communication with members and their parents. No individual branch or instructor should communicate by text message or e-mail to an individual child on a regular basis. All such communications must be copied to the child's parents.

### MOBILE PHONES

Mobile phones may be used to text short messages but only from adult to adult. The use of group text reduces the risk of an individual message causing upset and misinterpretation.

It may be necessary to remove mobile phones from a group of members where they are being used inappropriately; such a sanction must be a clear possibility in any pre-planning for groups.

The use of camera phones or any camera in changing rooms or swimming pools is forbidden due to the possible inappropriate use of photographs that may cause upset or offence to another person.

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 an emergency situation.

### SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

As a person involved in Irish Pony Club activities you are not always using social media in a professional capacity and the Irish Pony Club respects your rights to use these media platforms in a personal capacity. The Irish Pony Club would ask you to keep in mind the following: -

- Implications that may follow if you chose to refer to the Irish Pony Club from a personal social media site
- You are responsible for your actions but remember that those actions may have consequences for the Irish Pony Club.
- You have a responsibility when using social media platforms to not do anything online that might tarnish the image of the Irish Pony Club
- Do not mix your official Irish Pony Club role with your personal life online. Not everyone will be able to make the distinction between the two. While the Irish Pony Club respects freedom of speech, remember that all online users can see everything you post. Use your judgement and common sense.

## FACEBOOK

Facebook is a valuable social media platform, which allows individuals or organisations to connect easily and directly with friends, in the case of individuals, and with fans, in the case of organisations or companies. The Irish Pony Club's Facebook page is a fan page' which means that anyone with a Facebook login can visit the Irish Pony Club page. If you wish to comment on a post on that the Irish Pony Club has made on the page, you must click 'like' to become registered and to have the access to leave a comment. Posting information on Facebook makes it easier to share news, photos and videos and to hear what one's fans have to say.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

Please be respectful at all times and understand that comments, images, videos and other material posted on our social media pages may be removed in the event that such material is inappropriate or offensive.

The Irish Pony Club's social media pages are operated in line with the Irish Pony Club Child Protection and Welfare Policies and Procedures.

Please note the Irish Pony Club will not tolerate any of the following on its social media pages and comments will be removed if found to be in breach:-

- Defamatory material
- Material infringing copyright or intellectual property rights
- Material in breach of privacy or confidentiality obligations
- Offensive, obscene or sexually violative material
- Threatening, abusive or insulting statements likely to stir up hatred

If you experience an issue or problem while using the Irish Pony Club Facebook page, please contact the National Children's Officer or the National Designated Liaison Person. Your feedback and ideas are welcome.

## BRANCH FACEBOOK PAGES

- If your branch wants to use Facebook they should set up a 'Page' and not a 'Group'. Facebook pages are designed to be set up by genuine organisations, whereas groups can be set up by anyone on a fun basis. Using a page means that the Irish Pony Club brand is represented property, and the Irish Pony Club can quickly use Facebook to remove any pages that are not official.

- Your Facebook page should be named correctly, as per your Pony Club branch. This enables the Irish Pony Club to see that the pages on Facebook are being run by the branch and not someone else. It also helps to ensure the Irish Pony Club is represented correctly.
- Do not allow your Facebook page to be littered with advertising or spam. You may allow posts from acceptable businesses that support your branch and associated organisations but ensure that posts from any products or organisations you do not know are removed. Advertising from tobacco and alcohol industries are prohibited. This means the messages you are delivering to your members are not diluted and it keeps your page looking tidy and official.

## TWITTER

Sports leaders and officials are advised to use protected Tweets thus only allow certain people, such as those from your branch who are using Twitter, to see your Tweets. This means that when people want to follow you, they have to request permission from you and you have to allow them to follow. Once allowed they will be able to see your Tweets. Choose a username which represents your branch properly but which is not too long.

## E-SAFETY GUIDANCE FOR OFFICIALS, STAFF AND ALL SPORTS LEADERS

Many members, volunteers and instructors already use sites such as Facebook and Twitter. It is essential that you keep both yourself and young people safe online, and as an adult, you have a key role to play in actively promoting these safety measures.

While social network profiles are easy to set up and use, it is important that you keep a professional distance online, just as you would in the 'offline' world. Think carefully about how digital communication, e.g. comments, photos, etc. may appear to a third party, compared with a conversation in the real world, as there is increased potential for messages to be misinterpreted and forwarded to others.

If you have a website or have set up a social networking site for your branch, bear in mind that once you place something there, it is in the public domain, which means people can access it, potentially change it and share it with others.

The Irish Pony Club considers it best practice that adults involved in any capacity with the Pony Club **must not** accept members as their friends on their **personal** Facebook or Twitter page.

## GUIDANCE OF OFFICIALS, SPORTS LEADERS AND STAFF

- Remember you are in a position of trust as a volunteer.
- Remember some sites have an age restriction, i.e. Facebook has a minimum age of 13 years.
- Only set up pages for events, activities or groups for which you are responsible.
- Do not use your personal social networking account to communicate with young people.
- Conduct yourself in an appropriate way as you would face to face. Be aware of what you say and how you say it; the use of sarcasm and innuendo are not appropriate.

- Do not engage in one-to-one conversation with young people via chat facilities. This is the same as going into a private room and closing the door.
- Do not provide personal details, such as e-mail addresses, school name etc. for young people on your website or social networking channel.
- Always ensure you have parental permission to use any appropriate photos of young people. Ensure all members sign either a new member's application form or a membership renewal form annually which includes permission for use of photos.
- Do not name members in captions.
- When e-mailing or texting young people always copy the message to another responsible adult preferably the member's parent. Use the BCC facility to avoid sharing e-mail addresses.
- Appoint a responsible adult, preferably someone familiar with Facebook etc. to manage the page. They must monitor interaction between users, members and the public's comments on photos and activities posted.
- If you are concerned about the way a young person is attempting to contact you, tell the Branch Children's Officer and or the Branch Designated Liaison Person.
- Know how to block someone online and report them to Facebook if you feel uncomfortable.

## E-SAFETY GUIDANCE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

The internet and mobile phones make it easy to talk to and communicate with your friends quickly and cheaply.

The following points are intended to keep you safe online: -

- Do not give out personal details such as your address, mobile number or location on any website or on the phone.
- Do not communicate with people on social networking sites if you do not know them.
- Do not meet up with anyone who you have only met and spoken to online.
- Make sure your social networking profile is set to private or for friends only.
- Only accept 'friends' requests from someone you actually know.
- Remember that any photos, video clips and comments uploaded on to the internet may be there forever even if you delete them. They may also be viewed by people that you may not think will see them.
- When uploading photos of yourself and friends make sure your friends are happy for you to do so.
- Never upload photos or send comments that may be hurtful to others.
- Make sure you know how to block someone on a social networking site and if necessary report them.
- If you are worried and would like help, tell your parents or a responsible adult such as your school teacher or go to: - [www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com) – Young People and Social Networking Site Guide.





## IRISH PONY CLUB FILMING AND PHOTOGRAPHY POLICY AND GUIDELINES

### INTRODUCTION

The Filming and Photography Policy is not about preventing parents or guardians and supporters from taking pictures, but rather to ensure that only those who have a right to take photography do so. Taking photographic and filming or videoing footage at Events of children or young people is a normal activity for a sporting organisation. This policy proposes safeguards as to minimize the inappropriate use of images.

**Throughout this policy the use of the work 'image' refers to all photographic and film and video footage.**

**The term 'event' may include rally, camp, competition, training session, social function or any activity organised at any level by the Irish Pony Club.**

#### 1. Permission

On joining or renewing a child's membership to the Irish Pony Club parents sign permitting the IPC to use pictures for publication which will be selected with care and respect for those shown in the images. Permission is sought by the branch or organising body to ensure that young people and parents and guardians are aware of when and how images may be used. Third party photographers, film and videographers or other organisations employed to take images must complete the Self-Declaration form.

Alternatively, parents and guardians should be advised that the branch or event that their child is attending may record and or take photographs for the promotion of the sport within the branch, area or national event. If the parent or guardian does not wish their child's image to be taken they should inform the relevant Children's Officer at the branch or event they are attending. Persons wishing to use photographic devices at events must first register with the organiser of the event. For registration, each person may be required to produce photographic identification as proof of identity.

#### 2. Types of appropriate images

Only use appropriate images of children: -

- Posed images, e.g. medal ceremonies, presentations and team shots should be of children wearing their riding gear, tracksuits or t-shirt.
- Action shots of children may be used where the focus is on the participation in sport and not the child.
- Images of children should not be taken where the pose is inappropriate, e.g. open legs, from behind, bending over, etc.
- Flash photography is prohibited for any activities where it affects the performance or may have the potential to cause harm to the participant.

#### 3. Use of Images

Images may be taken for a variety of purposes; these can include administration or personal use, publicizing the sport or enhancing skill development within the sport.

Persons taking images are reminded that some action poses may be inappropriate and not suitable for use or publication.

- Personal Images – these are images taken by parents or guardians or other family members during an event as a celebration of a young person’s attendance or achievement. This could include a professional photographer with permission to take images for the personal use of those attending. Other people may be included in an image and we expect parents and guardians and other family members to respect this by not distributing images publicly.
- Training Images – these are images or footage taken during a training session or during an event specifically to aid the development of a skill or technique for the young person. We expect these images to be taken by a qualified instructor or a person specifically appointed by the young person’s instructor. These images may be used as examples of technique or mastery of a skill for teaching purposes. These types of images should not be distributed outside teaching purposes.
- Media Images – these are images taken by an individual from the media, e.g. T.V., newspaper or professional photographer where the images are to be used for publicity or promotion of the event or future events.
- Administration Images – these are images taken for general administration purposes, including images used for membership cards, competition entries and may also include images that form part of an archive.

### **Use of Images on Social Media**

Where images of young people are used on social media then the person responsible for posting an image must be aware of the potential for an image to be used inappropriately and safeguards must be in place to protect young people: -

- Personal details of a young person should not be given
- Any caption should be in keeping with the sport represented
- The purpose of the posting should not breach the codes of conduct
- The type of image should not breach any requirements stated within this policy

### **Announcement at events regarding taking and the use of images**

The following announcement should be read out at the start and during an event to ensure everyone is clearly aware of the policy: -

“All persons, other than parents or family members photographing their own children, wishing to take photographs or film footage at this event must first register with the Children’s Officer or event organiser. Please note photographic identification will be required as proof of identity. The Irish Pony Club has been authorised to take photographs of individuals in accordance with our policy”.

#### **4. Storage of Images**

Storage includes any image stored as a hard copy or electronically including social media, photographic archives or individual personal database, e.g. personal cameras, phones, etc. Storage of personal images is a matter for the parent or guardian and the child or young

person. All other images should only be stored for defined and intended purposes, e.g. membership, promotion and or archiving.

- If storage of images is required the images must only be stored for the length of time for which they are needed.
- If possible, avoid using the names of children or any other identifying feature.

Once images are no longer required ensure that they are properly destroyed. Digital images stored on computer systems need to be fully deleted, including deletion from the cache and memory and temporary files.

#### **5. Reporting of Inappropriate Images**

If there is any concern about the nature of images being taken this should be reported to the responsible or mandated person, i.e. Irish Pony Club Designated Liaison Person or National Children's Officer, who will refer to the statutory authorities. The concerned individual may also report directly to the statutory authorities.

#### **Non-Authorised taking of Images**

If you are concerned about individuals taking images at an event you should verbally report your concerns to the relevant responsible person on the day. A responsible person may be the Children's Officer, head instructor, event manager, event controller or facility manager. This may include, if necessary, reporting the non-authorized taking of images to the appropriate statutory authorities. The responsible person will identify the person and check if their device is registered for the event. If not registered, the person must be asked to register their device, with appropriate identification. If the person is not willing to register their device they should be asked to leave. Where the event is open to the public, e.g. where only part of the facility is being used, it will be necessary to report non-authorized taking of images to the facility manager. If there is any concern about the nature of images being taken this should be reported to the responsible or mandated person who will refer to the statutory authorities.

#### **Inappropriate use of Images**

Where there is a concern about the use of images this should be reported to the responsible person who will take appropriate action. This will include reporting the alleged use to:-

- The parent or guardian of any young person involved
- The person responsible for posting the image
- The media platform, e.g. Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, print media etc.
- The statutory authorities.

Inappropriate use of images may result in a complaint or disciplinary procedure against those involved.

Where there is concern about the publication of an image in local or national newspapers you should contact the individual newspaper or the Press Council of Ireland and the Office of the Ombudsman.

## 6. Installation of CCTV in a facility

The use of CCTV is a positive step in safeguarding facility users. The knowledge of potential blind spots, access to and use of images and the procedure for dealing with incidents or misbehaviour is important for branches.

Information regarding the presence of CCTV within a facility should be available to members and parents.

The branch should have a copy of the facility's policy regarding the use of CCTV and access to images. This may form part of the branch/facility agreement. Queries regarding the use of CCTV are a matter for the facility or operating company. If a query arises during a branch session the branch may also wish to deal with this as it is the branch that has the agreement with the facility.

The following should be noted: -

- Who in the facility has day to day responsibility for the system and operation of the CCTV?
- The number of cameras located in the specified areas
- Are any spectator areas covered, i.e. can someone be misbehaving in this area, or indeed an individual regularly turning up for less than innocent viewing purposed by monitored?
- Any sections of the facility that cannot be monitored. If these areas are easily identified by anyone with intent it would be important to know in order to be extra vigilant.
- Who, during sessions, is responsible for monitoring the cameras and what is the policy for dealing with any perceived misconduct or incidents viewed at the time.
- Who has access to the password protected files?

The important fact to remember is that CCTV does not replace vigilance and proper supervision as required by the National Governing Body.



## IRISH PONY CLUB – PHYSICAL CONTACT POLICY

The Irish Pony Club supports the policy of appropriate physical contact in response to the needs of a child taking into account the child's age and stage of development. This means that adults should not do what a child can do for themselves. Contact should be in an open environment and preferably with the permission of the young person.

The Irish Pony Club promotes the use of appropriate physical contact between adults and children and young people. Misleading or inaccurate information relating to physical contact can undermine the confidence of adults working with children and young people. This can also have serious implications for children.

For leaders, instructors or any adults and children to feel comfortable the following should be followed: -

### APPROPRIATE PHYSICAL CONTACT

Appropriate contact is when: -

- The aim is to teach or develop a skill or technique that the child cannot accomplish without help; the nature and the reason for the physical contact must be explained by the adult to the child and must be within the scope of the qualification of the adult.
- It is required by the nature of the activity.
- An injury requires treatment – the child should be informed about what is happening and encouraged to hold dressings etc., however for emergency first aid treatment this may not be possible.

### RESPECT FOR A YOUNG PERSON

- A child must be treated with dignity and respect with any level of physical contact required.
- A child or young person with a disability may require a greater degree of physical contact, depending on the nature of the disability and the activity. Where lifting and or support may be required the appropriate health and safety regulations must be observed.
- A young person's permission should be requested where any physical contact is required, the adult and the child involved will feel more comfortable.
- Sports leaders should convey approval with verbal encouragement and praise rather than the use of often repetitive physical contact.
- Any contact should be in an open environment and children should be encouraged to voice any concern if they feel uncomfortable or threatened.
- Children should know how to voice any concerns, through their parents and the Branch Children's Officer.
- Any form of physical contact as a form of punishment or as a response to misbehaviour is unlawful. Only necessary and appropriate restraint may be imposed to prevent a child

or young person from harming themselves, others or damaging property. Misbehaviour may need to be dealt with under breaches of the Irish Pony Club code of conduct.

## **DISTRESS AND SUCCESS**

A child in distress may require comfort and reassurance as in a manner that would be provided by a parent or guardian. A young person may also react to success with an expression of affection to an adult, a hug for example. Adults must ensure that their reaction to a child in distress or because of a success does not become unnecessary and unjustified physical contact, particularly with the same young person over a period of time. Any contact should be response to the needs of the child in an open environment.

## **MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS**

Within our sport there may be a requirement for physical contact from medical staff. This should only be undertaken by properly trained and qualified personnel who will need to follow specific guidelines and codes of practice for their profession. Any queries in this regard should be directed to the National Children's Officer.



Any form of substance misuse is contrary to the spirit of sport and every member has a duty to ensure that the sport is free from the use of alcohol, drugs and tobacco.

### General Considerations

- The use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco is forbidden as being incompatible with a healthy approach to sporting activities.
- All sports leaders and officials should promote fair competition through sound training to actively discourage the use of any substance to improve or enhance performance.
- Young people should be educated regarding the effects of long and short-term effects of substances taken to enhance performance and the changes that may occur with the use of illegal or banned substances.
- Sponsorship from alcohol and or tobacco companies is not allowed.
- Further information can be found in the Sport Ireland's Anti-Doping Programmes.  
[www.irishsportsCouncil.ie](http://www.irishsportsCouncil.ie)



This policy is a part of the Safeguarding Statement for the Irish Pony Club under the Children First Act 2015 Section 11 (3).

This policy sets out the accepted Safeguarding Workshops in Ireland for the Irish Pony Club together with any specific requirements for attendance and renewal of certification.

Under the Irish Pony Club Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures, and in line with current legislation, any individual whose role will have regular and ongoing contact with our young members or vulnerable persons in the provision of our equestrian activities **must** complete Safeguarding training.

Within this policy, a list of typical roles are outlined which require Safeguarding training. A person assuming such role is required to attend the level which is appropriate to their role.

### **SAFEGUARDING 1 – CHILD WELFARE AND PROTECTION BASIC AWARENESS COURSE- VALIDATION PERIOD 3 YEARS**

This course educates participants on the implementation of best practice in protecting the welfare of children involved in sport. The workshop provides introductory information on codes of conduct, bullying, recruitment, etc. as well as child protection guidelines. By following the principles, policy and practical guidelines contained in the Code, sports leaders are playing their part in providing a safe and enjoyable environment in which children can learn and thrive.

District Commissioners, instructors, team leaders and all sports leaders, the Branch Children's Officer, Executive Committee and Disciplinary Sub-Committees must complete a Safeguarding 1 workshop.

### **SAFEGUARDING 2 – CLUB CHILDREN'S OFFICER WORKSHOP – VALIDATION PERIOD 3 YEARS**

**A person appointed to the Branch Children's Officer Position in a branch must have completed the Safeguarding 1 Workshop and should complete Safeguarding 2 Club Children's Officer Workshop.**

The appointment of Branch Children's Officer is an essential element in the creation of a quality atmosphere for young people in your branch. They act as a resource to members with regards to children's issues and also ensure that children have a voice in the running of the branch and can talk freely about their experiences. This course will help the Branch Children's Officer to carry out the function of their role in the branch and support the implementation of best practice in the branch. Participants will also receive a Club Children's Officer Action Planning document as part of the training.



## **SAFEGUARDING 3 – DESIGNATED LIAISON PERSON WORKSHOP – VALIDATION PERIOD 3 YEARS**

**A person appointed to the Designated Liaison Person position, the District Commissioner, in a branch must have completed the Safeguarding 1 Workshop and should complete the Designated Liaison Person Workshop.**

The Designated Liaison Person will be the person responsible for dealing with any concerns about the protection of children. The designated person is responsible for reporting allegations or suspicions of child abuse to the Health Service Executive or and An Garda Síochána.

### **NOTES**

- It is the responsibility of the individual and branch to ensure that anyone working with or has interaction with or who is involved in the planning and administration of activities or events with our young member holds a valid safeguarding training certificate.
- Validation period commences from the date of the workshop which is the date on the certificate.
- A grace period after a certificate has expired, or 3 months, will be allowed for a volunteer to renew their certificate.
- A safeguarding online refresher certificate should not be accepted as suitable unless presented with a previous certificate also.
- A volunteer must also comply with Garda vetting, signing up to the relevant code of conduct along with their safeguarding training requirements.

- a. **Disclosure of Criminal Convictions and Relevant Information Form for Service Providers**
- b. **Permission form for taking and use of images**
- c. **Photographic and filming devices registration Form**
- d. **Application Form – for officials, selectors, team trainers, chaperones**
- e. **Application form for volunteers recruited to work with children**
- f. **Sample letter to person giving reference**
- g. **Irish Pony Club – Travelling away with underage members Form**
- h. **Irish Pony Club – Members Travelling away form**
- i. **Sample Reporting Form**



## DISCLOSURE OF CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS AND RELEVANT INFORMATION

### Information for Service Provider Employees

The Irish Pony Club is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for young people who participate in sport, which reflects the guidelines contained in our Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport. Part of our procedures is to ensure that all adult members working with young people complete the vetting process through the National Vetting Bureau.

However, from time to time, the Irish Pony Club may employ an individual to provide a service that would usually require that individual to be successfully vetted. We require these individuals work with our young members to complete this self-declaration form.

The Irish Pony Club requests information regarding criminal convictions or any other relevant information in respect of working with young people. Any information supplied will be treated confidentially and considered in the context of the role and the nature of the offence.

Please complete this form as accurately as possible and return it marked "Confidential" to the Irish Pony Club Officer.

Thank you for your co-operation.

## Self-Declaration for Service Providers Employees

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Service Provided \_\_\_\_\_

All answers will be treated in a confidential manner.

1. Have you ever been asked to leave a sporting organisation? Yes  No
2. Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a caution, a Bound over Order, or are you at present the subject of criminal investigation? Yes  No
3. Have you ever been known to the Statutory Authorities or Social Services department as being a risk or potential risk to children? Yes  No
4. Have you been the subject of any disciplinary investigation and or sanction by any organisation due to concerns about your behaviour towards children? Yes  No

If you have answered yes to any questions above we will contact you in confidence.

### CONFIRMATION OF DECLARATION (tick boxes below)

I agree that the information provided here may be processed in connection with my role and I understand that any role may be withdrawn or immediate dismissal from the role I provide if information is not disclosed by me and subsequently come the organization's attention.

I agree to inform the organisation with 24 hours if I am subsequently investigated by any agency or organisation in relation to concerns about my behaviour towards children and young people.

I understand that the information contained on this form and information supplied by third parties may be supplied by the Irish Pony Club to other persons or organisations in circumstances where this is considered necessary to safeguard other children.

I declare that the answers I have given above are complete and correct to the best of my knowledge and I will inform the Irish Pony Club of any changes.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Company \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



## IRISH PONY CLUB – PERMISSION FORM FOR THE TAKING AND USE OF IMAGES

### Form where additional permission is required

I confirm that I give permission for my child to be filmed and or photographed during Events or competitions run by the Irish Pony Club

No child or young person will be identified individually in any published image or film footage, except in accordance with the Irish Pony Club Photography and Filming Policy.

Member's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Number \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Member's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Note – This permission will remain valid until date

By signing this permission form, you are also confirming you are the legal parent or guardian of the named child.

Photographs and or videos will be taken by an appropriate person appointed to do so by the Irish Pony Club.

All material will be held and stored in accordance with the Irish Pony Club policy of the use and storage of photographic and video images.



**PHOTOGRAPHIC AND FILMING DEVICES REGISTRATION FORM  
EVENT:**

**EVENT** \_\_\_\_\_

**VENUE** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE** \_\_\_\_\_

Registration Process: -

1. Check ID of person wishing to register and record.
2. Ask person to complete name and phone number
3. Fill in device name and type
4. Ask person to sign

<b>Name</b>	<b>Phone No.</b>	<b>Type of ID Seen</b>	<b>Device Name/Type</b>	<b>Signature</b>
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## APPLICATION FORM FOR OFFICIALS, SELECTORS, TEAM TRAINERS, CHAPERONES

Confidential

Position Applied For

Name

Previous Surname, if any

Present Address

Current Occupation

Previous Experience of working with young children in a voluntary or professional capacity

Riding/ Horse Care Qualifications

Have you even been asked to leave a sporting organisation?

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

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

Name and address of two people who know you, but who are not related to you, and who would have experience of your working with children, whom we could contact and who would provide you with a reference

Name 1

Name 2

I agree to abide by the Irish Pony Club Child Protection and Welfare Policies and Procedures, the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children’s Sport and the Irish Pony Club Rules

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

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



APPLICATION FORM FOR VOLUNTEERS RECRUITED TO WORK WITH CHILDREN

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_

**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**

**Have you ever been the subject of a caution or a Bound over Order? Yes  No**

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

Please give the names and addresses 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 or leader of your last branch or place of involvement.

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

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

I agree to abide by the Irish Pony Club Child Protection and Welfare Policies and Procedures, the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children’s Sport and The Irish Pony Club Rules.

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



## SAMPLE LETTER TO PERSON GIVING A REFERENCE

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

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

Dear,

The above has expressed an interest in becoming an instructor and or 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 or she is offered the position. We appreciate you being extremely candid, open and honest in your evaluation.

Please risk this person on the following: -

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 \_\_\_\_\_ is suitable to work with children in a sporting capacity?                      Yes     No

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



## IRISH PONY CLUB – TRAVELLING AWAY WITH UNDERAGE MEMBERS

Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Venue: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

### **INSTRUCTORS, SELECTORS, TRAINERS, CHAPERONE**

I agree to abide by the Irish Pony Club Child Protection and Welfare Policies and Procedures, the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children’s Sport and the Irish Pony Club Rules.

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

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Role: \_\_\_\_\_

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### **AUTHORISED VOLUNTEER**

I agree to abide by the Irish Pony Club Child Protection and Welfare Policies and Procedures, the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children’s Sport and the Irish Pony Club Rules.

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

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Role: \_\_\_\_\_

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### **PARENT OR GUARDIAN OF TRAVELLING CHILD**

I have read and accept the conditions and rules set down by the Irish Pony Club for my son or daughter travelling to competitions and other away trips.

I agree to abide by the Irish Pony Club Child Protection and Welfare Policies and Procedures, the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children’s Sport and the Irish Pony Club Rules.

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

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Role: \_\_\_\_\_



## MEMBER TRAVELLING AWAY REPRESENTING THE IRISH PONY CLUB

I have read and understand the Code of Conduct of the Irish Pony Club and the rules set down for members travelling abroad and representing the organisation, and

I agree to abide by this Code of 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 causes for being. I shall at all times treat my horse with due consideration.

**Signature of Member** \_\_\_\_\_



## SAMPLE REPORTING FORM FOR USE WHEN REPORTING ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

### Recording Allegations or Suspicions of Abuse

This form is based on the 'standard reporting form' used by the Health Service Executive.

It is not necessary to answer all questions. The form should be filled out in consultation with the statutory authorities.

#### Details of Child

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Male or Female \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Mother \_\_\_\_\_ Tel No. \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Father \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. No. \_\_\_\_\_

Care and Custody arrangements regarding the child, if known:

\_\_\_\_\_

#### Household Composition

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ D.O.B. \_\_\_\_\_

Details of concerns, allegations or incidents, dates, times, who was present, description or any observed injuries, parents' views, child's views, if known (use a separate sheet)

Details of Person or Persons allegedly causing concern in relation to the child:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Male or Female \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to the Child \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Address of other personnel or agencies involved with this child

Social Worker \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Health Nurse \_\_\_\_\_

G.P. \_\_\_\_\_

Are parents or guardians aware of this referral to the social work department Yes  No

If yes, what is their attitude? \_\_\_\_\_

#### Details of person reporting concern

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. No. \_\_\_\_\_

#### Nature and extent of contact with the child or family

\_\_\_\_\_

#### Details of Person completing form

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. No. \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

#### Guidance Notes

The Health Service Executive has a statutory responsibility under the Child Care Act 1991 to promote the welfare and protection of children in their area. The Health Service Executive at local level therefore has an obligation to receive information about any child who is not receiving adequate care and or protection.

The reporting form is used for:

- Health Service Executive personnel
- Professionals and individuals in the provision of child care services in the community who have service with the HSE.
- Designated persons in a voluntary or community agency
- Any professional, individual or group involved in services to children who become aware of a child protection or welfare concern or to whom a child protection or welfare concern is reported.

Please fill in as much information and detail as is known to you. Health Service Executive personnel should do this in consultation with their line manager. This will assist the Social Work Department in assessing the level of risk to the child, or support services required. If the information requested is not known to you, please indicate by putting a line through the

question. It is likely that a social worker will contact you to discuss your report. Health Service Executive aim to work in partnership with parents. If you are making this report in confidence you should note that the HSE cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality as (a) a court could order that information be disclosed or (b) under the freedom of information act the commissioner may order that information be disclosed. You should also note that in making a 'bone fide report' you are protected under the Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998.

This form should be sent to your local duty social worker in the local Health Service Executive.