

THE WATERFORD HUNT BRANCH OF THE 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 to 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.

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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).*

Potential Risks of Harm to Members during activities with the IPC.	Procedures for the management of Potential Risks of Harm.
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. - Neglecting or not including a member during regular activities. - Bullying. - Physical abuse. - Emotional abuse. - Allegations of sexual abuse.	Irish Pony Club Policy Statement in place. Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedure in place. SG training. Physical Contact Policy in place. SG Training. SG Policy. SG Training, Policy and Code of Ethics. SG 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.

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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.

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- 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 2027.

Branch Children's Officer / Relevant Person

Name: Winnie Shanahan

Date: 20/01/2025

Designated Liaison Person / District Commissioner

Signed: Paul O' Connor

Date: 20/01/2025

Phone no: 086-6096611 or E-mail: nco@irishponyclub.ie
For queries on this Child Safeguarding Statement.