MULLINGAR EQUESTRIAN

MEC Training & Safeguarding policies

Mullingar Equestrian recognises that in accordance with Child Protection Procedures, and in line with current legislation, any individual whose role will have regular and ongoing contact with, working with or has interaction with our young members or vulnerable persons in the provision of our equestrian activities, or who is involved in the planning/administration of activities or events with our young members must complete safeguarding training. A person assuming such role is required to attend the level which is appropriate to their role.

SAFEGUARDING TRAINING LEVELS OUTLINED

(a) Safeguarding 1 – Child Welfare & Protection Basic Awareness Course (ROI & NI) 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.

(b) Safeguarding 2 – Club Children's Officer Workshop (ROI & NI) A person appointed to the Club Children's Officer Position in a club must have completed the Safeguarding 1 workshop and should complete the NEW Club Children's Officer Workshop. The appointment of Club Children's Officer is an essential element in the creation of a quality atmosphere for young people in your club. 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 club and can talk freely about their experiences. This course will help the Club Children's Officer to carry out the function of their role in the club and support the implementation of best practice in the club. Participants will also receive a Club Children's Officer Action Planning document as part of the training.

(c) Safeguarding 3 – Designated Liaison Person Workshop (DLP) A person appointed to the Designated Liaison Person position in a club must have completed the Safeguarding 1 workshop and should complete the NEW 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 Health Services Executive or Social Services (NI) and/or An Garda Síochána / PSNI. It is recommended that this person is a senior club person.

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Code of conduct for Officials/Volunteers

Officials/Volunteers engaging in any way with children at our shows /events are required to

▪ Uphold and Respect the Rules and Regulations of Showjumping Ireland /organisation they represent

▪ Never exert undue pressure on Young Person under your care or guidance

▪ Ensure all reasonable steps are taken to protect young people from any harm, discrimination or degrading treatment

▪ Respect the rights, wishes and feelings that young people may have.

▪ Ensure Safeguarding 1 is in place and up to date

▪ Physical contact should only occur when necessary and in an open and appropriate way and always be intended to meet the needs of the young person. When touching/supporting/attending a rider, be certain the child and the parent's/guardian is on site and in full view and you have explained what you are doing and why

▪ Maintain a positive attitude ensuring that our young people have an increased level of self-esteem and personal achievement

▪ Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every child regardless of ability, age, gender, social and ethnic background, religion or political persuasion

▪ Promote a culture that ensures all young people are listened to and respected

▪ Ensuring skill development and personal satisfaction have priority over competition

▪ Avoid a situation where you are alone in an arena, stable, car or hotel room with a young rider. It is strongly advised that all coaches require a parent / guardian to remain on site to observe the young athlete during all coaching sessions.

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▪ Never exert undue influence over participants to gain personal benefit or reward.

▪ Physical punishment or physical force must never be used

▪ Maintain a healthy, positive and professional relationship with all athletes. Officials/ Judges/Volunteers/Coaches and others in positions of authority and trust in relation to athletes aged 16 and 17 years must not engage in sexual relationships with them while that unequal power relationship exists

▪ Officials/Judges/Volunteers/Coaches and others should never place themselves in a compromising position by texting or communicating via social media sites with underage athletes. All such communications should be sent via the parents or guardians of the athlete.

▪ Make adequate provision for First Aid and do not encourage or allow participants to perform while injured. (Keep an accurate record of each injury and ensure that another official is present when a participant is being attended to and can corroborate the relevant details – see Showjumping Ireland Accident form)

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▪ Ensure appropriate confidentiality to all participants, as you may be privy to information about the young person or their family ▪ Challenge bullying in any form i.e. physical or emotional. Bullying is not an accepted behaviour towards anyone in Showjumping Ireland - child, coach, volunteer, Judge, Official or paren

We recognise the rights of children attending events at Mullingar Equestrian

- Be safe and to feel safe
- Be listened to
- Be believed
- Have fun and enjoy the show/event
- Have a voice in relation to their activities
- Be treated with dignity, sensitivity and respect
- Participate in an equitable and fair manner, irrespective of ability, disability, gender, religion, social class, etc.
- Experience competition at a level at which they feel comfortable
- Make complaints and have them dealt with
- Get help against bullies
- Say No
- Protect their own bodies
- Confidentiality

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MEC Social media guidelines /policies

- **Content and privacy:**
    - Disable or use privacy settings to restrict who can view content on a social media page if appropriate
    - Never post or ask for the personal details of children online.
    - Use appropriate emojis and avoid acronyms that could be misinterpreted.
    - Ensure all content is accurate, professional, and up-to-date.
    - Remove any inappropriate or outdated content promptly.
- **Safety and reporting:**
    - Be aware of risks like cyberstalking and misuse of social media.
    - Report any inappropriate use, bullying, or suspicious behaviour to a designated Children's Officer or statutory authorities.
    - Report any content that breaks platform rules.
- **Data protection:**
    - Protect the personal data of children in compliance with data protection regulations like GDPR.
    - Store personal contact information securely.
- **Professional development and risk management:**
    - Provide training to staff on online safety and social media policies.
    - Be cautious and do not post if you are unsure about something. When in doubt, discuss it with a supervisor or the designated Children's Officer.

Complaints Procedure

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• Mullingar Equestrian is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and enjoyable environment for all your people and children who participate in our sport.

• The complaints and appeals procedure allows all athletes and the parents of young participants who are dissatisfied to register their complaint in a formal way and put an open process of investigation into action Complaints:

• Mullingar Equestrian Centre personnel **WILL ATTEMPT TO RECTIFY ANY ISSUE INFORMALLY IF INDIVIDUALS ARE AGREEABLE.**

• Complaints should be dealt with where possible verbally at source locally

▪ When referred to the Children's Officer, and said Officer is of the view that the allegation of a breach of the Code of Conduct may be appropriately dealt with in an informal manner, he/she shall be responsible for dealing with the alleged breach informally and agreeing the procedure to be followed with the parties and hopefully resolving the matter amicably and by agreement

▪ Where the Children's Officer is of the view that the allegation is serious (because of the gravity of the allegation or for some other reason) he/she shall refer the matter to the Chairman/ Safeguarding Complaints Committee/ Designated Liaison Person or the Mandated Person in Horsesport Ireland (depending on the nature of the allegation)

• Complaints may be lodged by all athletes; the parents of young participants or Officials/Volunteers/Staff involved in an event immediately & They should be received in writing by MEC /SJI and should be responded to within 5 working days.

• The complaint should outline all relevant details about other parties involved.

• The Chairman may be required to convene a Safeguarding Complaints Committee .

• If the complaint involves abuse or possible criminal offence

❖ The Children's Officer/Designated Safeguarding Children's Officer shall immediately

❖ Inform the Statutory Authorities or

❖ Inform the Mandated Person in Horsesport Ireland of the matter

Statutory Bodies:

TULSA Child and Family Agency: 01 7718500 http://www.tusla.ie

ISPCC Missing Childrens Hotline: 116 000 http://www.ispcc.ie

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Garda Confidential Number: 1800 666111 http://www.garda.ie

Emergency Services: / 999/112

To report or get advice on concerns of sexual exploitation or abuse: Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Investigation Unit An Garda Síochána National Bureau of Criminal Investigation, Harcourt Square, Dublin 2. 01 6663430, 6663436 dvsaiu@garda.ie

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