



Reviewed: April 2011

## **Overview of Safeguarding Children Policy** *(extract from IHSGB Ltd Governance & Health & Safety Policy)*

All sporting organizations which make provision for children and young people must ensure that:

- the welfare of the child is paramount
- all children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse
- all suspicions and allegations of abuse and poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- all staff (paid/unpaid) working in our sport have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer.

Staff/volunteers are not trained to deal with situations of abuse or to decide if abuse has occurred.

**Our Policy:** IHSGB Ltd has a duty of care to safeguard all children involved in our Society from harm. All children have a right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account. The IHSGB Ltd will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in our Society through adherence to the Child Protection guidelines adopted by the IHSGB Ltd.

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989).

**Our Aims:** The aim of the IHSGB Ltd Safeguarding Children Policy is to promote good practice:

- providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of our Society
- allow all staff /volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

In more detail, including good practice guidelines:

### **IHSGB Safeguarding Children Policy**

The IHSGB Board recognise that they have a responsibility to promote the health and welfare and safeguarding of children taking part in activities organised by IHSGB. This policy shall apply to IHSGB, its volunteers and members when organising events on behalf of IHSGB, parents, guardians and young people themselves. Children and youth members are defined as those under the age of eighteen.



## **Responsibilities:**

IHSGB and those involved in IHSGB events have a responsibility to:

- Ensure the health and welfare of children whilst participating in IHSGB activities.
- Respect the rights, wishes and feelings of children.
- Implement procedures to safeguard the well-being of children and to protect them from harm and abuse.
- Ensure that Youth Leaders are trained to safeguard and protect children from abuse and to minimise the risk to themselves.
- Youth Leaders to adopt and abide by this policy.
- Respond to all allegations of misconduct or abuse of children or vulnerable adults with discretion and thoroughness.

## **Principles:**

- The welfare and safeguarding of children is the primary concern.
- All children or vulnerable adults, regardless of their age, culture, disability, gender, racial origin, social background, religious belief or sexual identity have the right to protection from harm and abuse.
- It is the responsibility of all volunteers involved in IHSGB to report any concerns to the relevant person (Youth Leader).
- All incidents of alleged poor practice, misconduct and abuse must be taken seriously and responded to in a timely fashion and appropriately with the relevant authorities.
- The privacy of all persons involved must be respected.

## **Summary:**

The IHSGB takes child safeguarding very seriously. By promoting good practice and addressing the subjects of bullying, emotional, physical and sexual abuse, all members of IHSGB are working to ensure that children and vulnerable adults will be able to pursue their chosen sport in a safe, happy and enjoyable environment.

**It is the responsibility of child protection experts (within local authorities) to determine whether or not abuse has taken place, but it is everyone's responsibility to report concerns.**



## Procedures:

### Good Practice

All should adhere to the following principles:

- Ensure experience at Equestrian Events is fun and enjoyable; promote fairness, confront and deal with bullying and never condone rule violations or the use of prohibited substances.
- Be an excellent role model.
- Treat all young people and vulnerable adults equally; this means giving both the more and less talented in a group similar attention, time, respect and dignity.
- Respect the developmental stage of each young person and place their welfare before winning, club or personal achievements. This means ensuring that the training intensity is appropriate to the physical, social and emotional development stage of the rider. Ensure training and competition schedules are based on the needs and interests of the child, not those of the parents, instructors or club.
- Wherever possible conduct all training and meetings in an open environment; and endeavour to avoid one-to-one coaching in unobserved situations.
- Maintain a safe and appropriate relationship with riders; it is inappropriate to have an intimate relationship with a young person. One adult should never share a room with one young person. Occasionally situations may occur when a number of young people and adults share a common sleeping area i.e. Camp - although this is not recommended. Always ensure that parents' permission is gained in writing beforehand and riders are given an opportunity in advance to discuss this, air any concerns and agree the logistics of the sleeping arrangements.
- Build relationships based on mutual trust and respect in which young people are encouraged to take responsibility for their own development and decision-making. Avoid situations in which the instructor or team manager uses their position and power to dictate what the rider should and should not do.
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with young people; if contact is required in teaching technique, follow the specific guidelines laid down by that sport governing body. Touching can be okay and appropriate as long as it is neither intrusive nor disturbing and the rider's permission has been given.
- Ensure separate changing facilities are available for riders. Where supervision is required, involve parents wherever possible and ensure that adults work in pairs.
- Communicate regularly with parents, involve them in decision-making and gain written consent for travel arrangements. Secure their consent in writing to act in loco parentis, if the need arises to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.
- Be aware of any medical conditions, food intolerances, existing injuries and medicines being taken. Keep a written record of any injury or accident that occurs, together with details of any treatment given. Ensure you are qualified and up to date in first aid or that there is someone with a first aid qualification in attendance.
- When riders travel away from home, ensure the guidance contained in the NSPCC publication: Safe Sports Events is understood and followed. In particular, if mixed teams are taken away, ensure they are accompanied by a male and female member of staff and safeguard them from the potential of same gender abuse. Adults should not enter children's rooms or invite children on their own into their own rooms. (If possible)



## Poor Practice

The following is deemed to constitute poor practice and should be avoided by all:

- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with one child away from the others.
- Avoid taking children to your home where they will be alone with you.
- Never engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Never share a room with a child.
- Never allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Never allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Never make sexual suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- Never reduce a child to tears as a form of control.
- Never allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Never do things of a personal nature for children or vulnerable adults that they can do for themselves.
- Never invite or allow children to stay with you at your home unsupervised.
- Taking children alone on car journeys.

If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable, they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of the person in charge or the child's parent.

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If any of the following incidents should occur, you should report them immediately to another member, make a written note of the event and inform parents of the incident:

- If you accidentally hurt a rider.
- If a child seems distressed in any manner.
- If a child appears to be sexually aroused by your actions.
- If a child misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

## Do

Maintain a safe and appropriate distance with riders; do not allow an intimate relationship to develop and avoid horseplay and sexually suggestive language.

Always work in an open environment; try to avoid private locations and/or one-to-one teaching in unobserved situations. This may be unavoidable and effort should be made to ensure the instructor/pupil has a companion.

Involve parents whenever possible; when travelling ensure adults work in pairs and never share a room with a child.

Gain further child protection awareness and knowledge

K Carson  
Trustee, June 2011