

Horse Sport Ireland - Safeguarding Department

Safeguarding Circular February 2018

Children First Act 2015 Compliance

As you will be aware from previous updates, on December 11th last, the Children First Act 2015 commenced. This new law puts Children First: the National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, on a statutory footing. The Act provides for a number of key child protection measures.

Most notably for Horse Sport Ireland, following the commencement, the immediate requirements include;

- Adopting all provisions in relation to mandatory reporting of child abuse,
- Ensuring the appointment of child safeguarding officers which include;
 - Designated Liaison Persons
 - Children's Officers
 - National Organisation's Mandated Person
 - ***Horse Sport Ireland Mandated Person is Ciara Gorman, National Safeguarding Officer***
- Provide Child Safeguarding Training Programmes
 - ***Horse Sport Ireland Safeguarding Training Policy, currently in place and [viewable here](#).***
- Commence the process to agree a Child Safeguarding Statement for all Affiliate's Clubs, Branches etc.
 - ***Horse Sport Ireland Risk Assessment and Safeguarding Statement – Steps outlined below.***

Horse Sport Ireland, its Affiliates and their member bodies provide what is termed a **Relevant Service** i.e. work/activity which consist of educational, research, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities to children (see Part 2 and Schedule 1). The **Relevant Person** referenced in the Act will be the **Affiliate/Club/Branch/Region Children's Officer**.

Children First Act 2015 – Compliance Documents for implementation by March 11th 2018

Horse Sport Ireland are delighted to provide you with supporting documentation and instructions on how your Affiliate and its Clubs/Branches/Regions can comply with the Children First Act 2015 by March 11th 2018. **This is a mandatory process that all organisations providing services to children must complete.** The following are the four steps to compliance:

STEP ONE - REVIEW THE RISK ASSESSMENT DOCUMENT

- The risk assessment has been pre-populated for you to review at your Affiliate and your Clubs/Branches/Regions meeting.
- Each risk identified must be ranked; High, Medium or Low. The supporting policies and guidance have been indicated for you
- Once each risk is ranked, you must consider the factors in place to reduce the risk and any further action you can take to lower it.
- You can include other risks of potential harm that are specific to your Affiliate and or Clubs/Branches/Regions.
- After you review your Risk Assessment, minute it at your meeting and get your Chairperson and Children's Officer to sign and date it.

STEP TWO - YOUR CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

- When step one is completed review your Child Safeguarding Statement and sign and date the document (Attached).

STEP THREE – DISPLAY YOUR CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

- As per Section 11 of the Children First Act 2015, you are required to display your Child Safeguarding Statement in a prominent place in your Affiliate and your Clubs/Branches/Regions (notice board, public area, website etc.).
- We suggest that you also distribute your signed Child Safeguarding Statement to all parents by mail/email/web or social media on an annual basis. (Perhaps as a part of membership process)
- If you do not have a premises or website/social media page to display and distribute your Child Safeguarding Statement, you should display it at your events as a temporary sign or poster.

STEP FOUR - CONFIRMATION OF COMPLIANCE TO HORSE SPORT IRELAND

- Please send a one line email to cgorman@horsesportireland.ie to advise that steps 1 to 3 have been completed.

It is the responsibility of every Affiliate and your Clubs/Branches/Regions board to comply with the Children First legislation by completing the above steps.

Children First Compliance Workshop

For any Affiliate who feel they will need assistance in completing the Risk Assessment, Horse Sport Ireland will be holding a workshop to assist our Affiliate National Children's Officers. If the Affiliate

National Children's Officer is not able to attend, please nominate an alternative Affiliate representative. Please confirm by return email to myself, on or before, **Tuesday 13th February 2018**, the name and contact number for the person who will be attending from your Affiliate.

Workshop Details:

Date: Monday, 19th February 2018

Time: 7.00pm – 8.00pm

Venue: Horse Sport Ireland Offices, Naas, County Kildare

Children First Guidance Document

Finally, we have copies of the Children First Guidance for all our Affiliated Bodies and their member bodies for collection at the workshop. Each Safeguarding Officer in each Affiliate and each Safeguarding Officer in Affiliate member bodies should have a copy of this. Please let me know an estimated number you require for your Affiliate so we can prepare for distribution.