

Safeguarding in Riding Clubs – England, Wales & Northern Ireland

This guidance document is for Affiliated Riding Clubs to use to check they have adequate safeguarding provision within their riding club.

More advice is available <http://www.bhs.org.uk/our-charity/about-us-and-our-work/working-with-the-law/safeguarding-children>

The protection of children, young people and adults while participating in any sport is of the highest importance as they should be able to take part in a fun, safe environment and be protected from harm.

What does this mean for my Riding Club?

1. Riding Clubs will need to read, understand and implement the BHS Safeguarding policy.
2. Recruit a Club Safeguarding Officer (CSO). CSOs will need to:
 - Have a clear role description
 - Complete the BEF Safeguarding workshop or Sports Coach UK course
 - Complete a Criminal Record Check
 - Produce a welfare plan for events.

Important to remember

The role of the CSO is not to decide whether child abuse has taken place or to investigate the complaint. The role is to accurately record the details and report it to the British Horse Society and if necessary Children's Social Care or the Police.

Safeguarding Children – Good Practice

The following guidance documents have been designed to support Riding Clubs to safeguard children and to protect and advise the club. They are available on our Safeguarding page on the BHS website, please see the link above.

Physical contact

It's good practice to explain to riders and their parents about any physical contact that may occur as a part of them learning to ride or improving and furthering their skills through your coaching.

For further guidance on issues such as 'What can I do if a child is distressed?' 'What can I do if a child I teach has done well?' Check out our guidance on our safeguarding page listed above.

E-safety

Many members, volunteers and instructors already use sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. It is essential that you keep both your club and young people safe online and, as an adult, you have a key role to play in actively promoting safety measures. We have produced guidance for all organisations, coaches and young people on how to stay safe online.

Running an event/attending team events

Running or attending an event with young people can already seem quite onerous. In order to make sure those in your care are safe the following principles should be adhered to:

- Children and young people should be supervised by their parents or guardians at all times. A Riding Club should not be involved in a situation where parents have made private arrangements with other parents regarding the supervision of their children whilst at an event. There may be exceptions where junior teams are taken to events and in this instance parental consent forms should always be completed. Templates are available.

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- Overnight stays require special consideration regarding the legislation around criminal record checks and overnight supervision, please see our checklist for further information.

To help riding clubs consider what they will need to implement the Safeguarding Officer should write a welfare plan for each major event including children and young people. A template is available.

Codes of conduct

It is important in a riding club that all individuals know what their responsibilities are, codes of conduct will raise awareness of certain issues such as behaviour of young people and their parent/guardians. There are a variety of codes of conduct available on our website.

Photography and images

British Horse Society guidance states:

- No rider should be photographed or videoed without consent*
- No pictures and video should be shared, used for marketing purposes or posted online without consent (*parent and guardian consent if under 18)

One to one situations

One to one situations may occur but a riding club will need to consider reducing the risk and protecting those involved.

For example young people writing for judges – this situation should be avoided unless another adult can be present or the judge is in earshot and eye sight of other officials.

What to do if you are worried about a child

- If there are concerns that a **child** may be subject to harm these concerns must be noted and referred to the **Safeguarding / Welfare Officer or BHS Lead Safeguarding Officer** immediately
- If there is an immediate concern a referral must be made to the Local Social Care Services or Police (preferably Police Child Protection Unit). The Safeguarding Lead Officer must be informed of the case as soon as is possible and practicable.

What to do if there is an allegation against your club

If there is a concern regarding inappropriate behaviour or possible abuse you must report this to your Safeguarding Officer or chairperson even if it may not become an allegation. Depending on the nature of the concern you may need to inform Local Social Care Services or the Police immediately. The BHS Safeguarding Lead Officer must be informed of the case as soon as is possible and practicable.

Spectators

Spectators are subject to the Rules of the sport. They can be cautioned, reported or sent away from the competition if the Code of Conduct is breached.

Criminal Record Checks

All riding clubs (in England, Wales & Northern Ireland) are required by law to check their volunteers or coaches if they are teaching, training or supervising children on a regular basis and are in regulated activity. This is known as a DBS check or Access NI Check.

Who needs to be checked?

Enhanced DBS Checks can only be made on those who are over 16 who are working or volunteering in a 'Regulated Activity' with children (under 18s) on a regular or overnight basis.

- **What is 'Regulated Activity' with children?**
Regulated Activity is defined as unsupervised contact with children which includes teaching, training, instructing, carrying out intimate care, supervising children overnight and driving a vehicle only for children.

- **What is considered to be a regular, frequent or overnight?**

3 times or more in one month
Overnight between 2am – 6am

If the above criteria are met, then the person must have an Enhanced DBS check. The Safeguarding Team at the BHS can complete checks for you, please contact us on 02476 840746.

Roles likely to require an Enhanced Disclosure Check: Chairperson, Instructor, Team Trainer, Junior Team Manager, Coach, Club Safeguarding Officer, Child Protection Officer, First Aid Officer, Camp/Team Supervisor

General Roles which are not likely to require a DBS Check; Office Staff, One-off supervised helpers (refreshments, etc), Competition Judges/ Jump Judges/ General Stewards, Parents who help only their own child

DBS will only send the DBS certificate to the applicant

Riding Club Chairperson or Club/Centre Safeguarding Officer will need to see sight of their employee/volunteer's DBS certificate.

My Employee/Volunteer has a criminal record

In the event of the Disclosure indicating a relevant conviction or other information the Riding Club Chairperson or Club Safeguarding Officer may seek advice from the BHS Safeguarding Team (02476 840746) and the BEF Safeguarding Case Management Group, to make a risk assessment of the employee/ volunteer's suitability to work with children.

Having a criminal record does not necessarily mean that the employee/volunteer cannot work with children.

Can we accept a criminal record check from elsewhere?

The BHS recommends that the certificate is less than 3 years, is the correct level of check i.e. an enhanced check with the children's barred list and it completed by a British Equestrian Federation member body e.g. pony club. It is also important to make a note of the role on the certificate and make sure this is similar to the role the individual has within your club e.g. teacher, sports coach, supervisor of children.

Most Accredited Professional Coaches (APC) will have the appropriate level of check but in all cases please see their certificate. The DBS Update Service enables individuals to complete a one-off check that can be used in other roles within the Equine Industry.

How often do checks need to be completed?

Checks should be renewed every three years unless the individual is signed up to the update service.

Who makes the decision regarding who needs to be checked?

The BHS has offered guidance on the roles that may need to be checked but the Riding Club committee is responsible for making sure they complete the appropriate checks on the individuals they are employing as either volunteers or paid.

Finding out who to check

DBS (England and Wales) Eligibility tool – use this to find out what type of check is most relevant for your staff and volunteers <https://www.gov.uk/find-out-dbs-check>

Basic DBS Checks

As an employer you can ask your staff to have a Basic DBS Check. Basic DBS Checks can be used for any job role you may have which **does not meet the criteria for an enhanced DBS check** and can be used for any purpose. This check will contain details of convictions and conditional cautions considered to be unspent under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

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The cost of the check is £25.

- If you're living or working in England or Wales the Disclosure & Barring Service provides this service. You can apply directly through DBS using their [online application route](#). As part of your application you'll need to prove your identity through [GOV.UK Verify](#)
- If you live or work in Scotland, you should apply to [Disclosure Scotland](#).
- If you live or work in Northern Ireland, you should apply to [AccessNI](#).

Other Employment and recruiting volunteers information

Best practice would include but not limited to:

Pre-employment

- Make job/volunteer applicants aware that they will be required to obtain a disclosure certificate for the role which they are applying
- Referencing, both personal and professional – preferably including the applicants suitability to work with children
- Interviewing applicants.
- Completing self-declaration forms – to ensure that each applicant is aware they must notify you of any possible future convictions, reprimands or warnings specifically but not limited to their suitability to work with children (template attached 'Self Declaration Form Updates')

During employment/recruiting volunteers

- Codes of conduct for employees to sign – you may like to include guidance around social media use especially with junior clients.
- Signing up to the DBS update service, a service for portable DBS certificates that allows employers to regularly check an employee's status. (19 day window to sign up, for more information please see <https://www.gov.uk/dbs-update-service>)

You should also provide applicants with a copy of your recruitment of ex-offenders policy. You will also need to have a policy on the secure handling, retention and disposal of disclosure information; templates of these can be sent to you on request.

BHS Safeguarding Team

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