

## **Louth Hunt Pony Club/Irish Pony Club GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS:**

The Pony Club is a worldwide, voluntary youth organisation, founded seventy-five years ago to:

- Encourage young people to ride and to learn to enjoy all kinds of sport connected with horses and riding.
- To provide instruction in riding and horsemanship, and to instil in members the proper care of their animals.
- To promote the highest ideals of sportsmanship, citizenship and loyalty, thereby cultivating strength of character and self-discipline.

The *Louth Hunt Pony Club/Irish Pony Club* is committed to providing a safe and fair environment for all members.

Our first priority is the welfare of members and we are committed to providing an environment, which will allow participants to perform to their best ability, free from bullying and intimidation. The *Louth Hunt Pony Club/Irish Pony Club* also has a duty to care for volunteers working with young people on behalf of the organisation.

The contribution of parents in this work is highly appreciated especially within the *Louth Hunt Branch*. As riding is a high risk sport we appeal to parents/guardians to help us by observing the following rules:

- *At all Pony Club activities, the District Commissioner is the person in charge. In his/her absence the Secretary is in charge and may enlist the help of the Senior Instructor if needed. If neither can attend the District Commissioner will appoint an official representative who will be responsible for the activity.*
- Only hats marked with:  
**PAS 015: 1998 or 2011 (with BSI Kitemark) or  
Snell E 2001 with the official Snell label and number or  
ASTM F1163 (2004a, with SEI kitemark) or  
AS/NZS (3838, 1998, 2003 or 2006) with Australian Standard or  
VG1 with BSI Kitemark** are approved for Pony Club activities.  
*The PAS 015: 1998 or 2011 and the Snell E2001 meet higher impact criteria and therefore give more protection.* Please refer to **IPC Approved Hat Standards 2018** on the *Irish Pony Club website*  
Crash helmets must be worn for cross-country riding. Hats must be worn with chinstrap correctly fastened at all times when mounted. The hat should fit the head firmly but comfortably.  
*If a hat suffers a severe blow then it should be discarded and replaced.*
- **Body protectors must be worn for ALL jumping** (Show jumping, cross country and All jump training) **BETA Level 3** (purple 2009 standard or any later revision-correctly fitted (2cm below rib cage).
- **Please check all tack for safety and fit** regularly, paying particular attention to stitching and places where the leather is in regular contact with metal parts. Also please check the length of the girth – there should be at least three holes spare on each side, above and below the buckles. These are always checked at rallies before riding as a matter of course, but if found to be ill fitting or unsafe it may be that the member will not be able to ride.
- Parents/Guardians are always welcome at all Pony Club activities but please stay **20 metres back** while riding is in progress. Please do not distract and confuse your child

by talking to them or attracting their attention in any way whilst they are in the care of their instructor.

- If a parent/guardian cannot attend a rally/training session please designate an adult who will be present, to be responsible for your child in the event of an accident.

***All points of discussion, queries, problems and suggestions should be brought directly to the District Commissioner.*** Instructors are briefed to refer parents/guardians to the District Commissioner or Secretary or acting official under all circumstances. Please refer to the ***IRISH PONY CLUB/LOUTH HUNT PONY CLUB COMPLAINTS, DISCIPLINARY AND APPEALS PROCEDURES*** document available on the Louth Hunt Pony Club website.

- At the end of a riding session all riders will dismount, run up their stirrups and await their instructor's directions. With the exception of the very young group who will remain mounted and under the supervision of their instructor until ponies are safely loaded tied up. **NO ONE WILL RIDE AFTER THIS TIME.** This includes siblings and friends etc.
- Only paid up members of the Pony Club, instructors or nominated helpers may ride at Pony Club activities.
- At the finish of a rally (or finish time at camp), the parents/guardians will please collect their children promptly as they are then officially the parent's/guardian's responsibility and history has shown this is one of the high-risk times for members and their ponies/horses.
- If you bring unmounted siblings, friends or relatives to a rally please ensure that they are properly supervised and where appropriate understand the above rules of safety.
- **Pony Club Tests:** The District Commissioner with advice from the Instructor will decide when a member is ready to take the Pony Club Standards of Efficiency Tests.
- **Team Selection:** is the responsibility of the District Commissioner. She will appoint a Selector's Panel for the purpose of selecting teams. Any person who has an interest in a competitor should stand down for that particular selection.
- **Parent's/Guardian's help is needed with the running of Pony Club activities i.e.** finding venues for Pony Club rallies, camp and competitions, Fund-raising, Building/Maintaining cross country course, Maintaining show jumps /Mounted Games equipment, Stewarding fences etc. when we host competitions and most important with catering at rallies, camp and for competitions.
- Be a role model for your child and maintain the highest standards of conduct when interacting with children, other parents/guardians, with officials and organisers.
- Encourage your child to abide by the rules of the Irish Pony Club. Teach your child that honest endeavour is as important as winning and do all you can to encourage good sportsmanship.
- Always recognise the value and importance of the **volunteers** who provide sporting/recreational opportunities for your child. Do not publicly question the judgement or honesty of judges, stewards, instructors or other officials.
- Parents/Guardians should support all efforts to remove abusive and bullying (including cyber bullying) behaviour in all its forms.
- Please keep an eye on ***The Irish Pony Club*** website, ***The Louth Hunt Pony Club*** website and ***Its Plain Sailing*** online entry system for information with regard to activities/closing dates and times for Area competitions etc. You may also be notified by text message but the onus is on parents/guardians to familiarise themselves with activities and closing dates and times of same.

**Louth Hunt Pony Club/Irish Pony Club  
Parents/Guardians Code of Conduct:**

1. I/We will respect the rules and procedures set down in the Irish Pony Club's Code of Ethics for Children's Sport.
2. I/We will respect branch members, branch officials, instructors, all officials and members throughout the organisation.
3. I/We will encourage my child to treat other participants, instructors, selectors, officials with respect.
4. I/We will respect the officials and their authority during rallies, team/individual training, camp, competitions and at all Pony Club activities.
5. I/We will never demonstrate threatening or abusive behaviour or use foul language.
6. I/We will respect and encourage my child to respect the rights and needs of all animals.

Names:.....(Parents/Guardians)

Signed:.....

Member's name.....

Date.....