

**PONY  
CLUB**



# **RULEBOOK 2026**



HEALTH AND SAFETY,  
SAFEGUARDING AND  
HORSE WELFARE

[pcuk.org](http://pcuk.org)

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# OBJECTIVES

The aim of The Pony Club is to encourage young people to ride and to learn to enjoy all kinds of sport connected with ponies and riding, however by its nature this inevitably involves some risk.

The Pony Club takes health and safety extremely seriously and its Members should be able to learn to ride and participate in equestrian sports in an environment that is as safe and secure as is reasonably practicable.

Taking risks, learning the limits and exploring boundaries is a crucial element in a child's development, hence it is imperative that Members are allowed to take risks in a controlled environment to assist their development and to learn how to enjoy equestrian activity safely.

These guidelines are intended to assist organisers, officials and participants to do what is reasonably practicable to ensure the health, safety and welfare of Members, volunteers and horses/ponies at Pony Club activities without unnecessarily restricting their enjoyment and learning.

This document should be used in conjunction with other Pony Club procedures, publications and instructions to create an overall structure for managing activities and events.

The Pony Club Manual of Horsemanship covers all aspects of horsemanship. When the manual is followed, risks to both horse and rider will be minimised. The Pony Club Sport Rulebooks set out rules for the conduct of competitions in each Sport and provide guidelines for rallies and training.

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# THE PONY CLUB SAFETY & WELFARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## **Chairman**

- ▶ Paul Darby (2027)

## **Committee**

- ▶ Dr. Michael Sinclair-Williams (2026)
- ▶ Robin Bower (2027)
- ▶ Abby Bernard(2028)
- ▶ Liz Mowlem (2028)
- ▶ Sue Cheape, Area Representative (2028)
- ▶ Fran Rowlatt-McCormick, Area Representative (2028)
- ▶ Diane Pegrum, Vice Chairman (Ex Officio)
- ▶ Christine Gould, Safeguarding (Ex Officio)
- ▶ Hazel Warburton, BOD (Ex Officio)
- ▶ Dr. Ted Adams, Doctor (Ex Officio)
- ▶ Ben Mayes, Veterinarian (Ex Officio)
- ▶ Health & Safety Officer (Ex Officio)
- ▶ Volunteers & Safeguarding Development Officer (Ex Officio)

## **The Pony Club**

Lowlands Equestrian Centre  
Old Warwick Road  
Warwick  
CV35 7AX

Telephone: 02476 698300  
pcuk.org

For general safety queries, please email: [safety@pcuk.org](mailto:safety@pcuk.org)

In an emergency, ring the office on 02476 698300.

In office hours, ask to be put through to the emergency phone. Out of hours the emergency phone number will be publicised as part of the pre-recorded answer phone message. The emergency phone number is manned 24/7.

Please see page 79 for Useful Contacts.

These Rules are made by the Pony Club Safety & Welfare Advisory Committee in conjunction with other Pony Club Committees.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## **AIMS:**

The Health and Safety, Safeguarding, and Equine Welfare Rulebook aims to:

- ▶ Define and explain The Pony Club's safety, safeguarding, and welfare rules and standards, along with the necessary steps to ensure compliance.
- ▶ Provide guidance and best practice advice that should be followed.
- ▶ Assist officials in organising Pony Club activities that are safe, structured, and well-managed for everyone involved.

This rulebook should be read and applied in conjunction with the Health and Safety Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Equine Welfare Policy and associated guidelines and Sport Rulebooks.

**The Health and Safety Policy** sets out the responsibilities and obligations of the Trustees. The Trustees are committed to ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the Health and Safety of its employees, of everyone who assists The Pony Club, in whatever capacity, Members and their families and members of the public who may be affected by the activities of The Pony Club. The full policy is found on the Health and Safety page of the website and in The Pony Club Handbook.

**The Safeguarding Policy** outlines the responsibilities of Branches, Centres, volunteers, coaches and staff to care for children, young people and adults at risk or who are vulnerable. The document defines the escalation process and the support available to those within The Pony Club. The full policy is found in the safeguarding section of the Website.

**The Equine Welfare Policy's** objective is to safeguard the health and well-being of all horses and ponies involved in Pony Club activities. This is achieved through the implementation of clear policies, guidance, rules, and accountability, along with the promotion of good horsemanship, through effective training at all levels, which are aligned with the core values of The Pony Club. The full policy is found on the Equine Welfare page of the website

## **1.1 HOW PONY CLUB CENTRES SHOULD USE THIS RULE BOOK**

This document is written primarily for The Pony Club Branch network;

however, it is equally applicable to Centres. Where it is written that copies of documents are to be sent to The Pony Club Office, Centres should simply retain a copy of these documents for their own records, The Pony Club will not keep records of documents relating to Centres.

The term 'Centres' refers to all organisations approved as Pony Club Linked Riding Centres.

When a rule states District Commissioner, Centre Proprietor also applies. Likewise, where Branch is stated, Centre applies.

## **1.2 GUIDANCE AND TRAINING**

Use the Pony Club website and Resource Hub as the main source of current information for Health and Safety, Safeguarding and Equine Welfare. It includes all current versions of guidance, procedures and supporting material.

### **Website**

Health and Safety: <https://pcuk.org/health-safety>

Safeguarding: <https://pcuk.org/safeguarding>

Equine Welfare: <https://pcuk.org/equine-welfare>

### **Resource Hub\***

Health and Safety: [https://resources.pcuk.org/health\\_and\\_safety](https://resources.pcuk.org/health_and_safety)

Safeguarding: <https://resources.pcuk.org/safeguarding>

Equine Welfare: [https://resources.pcuk.org/equine\\_welfare](https://resources.pcuk.org/equine_welfare)

\* Log into the Resource hub using your Pelham Number and your Branch/Centre (or Area) from the drop-down menu.

Training courses are available to support the safe conduct of activities. A list of training courses available for Branch Officials and Centre Personnel can be found in the Health and Safety and Volunteering section of The Pony Club website.

## 2. HEALTH & SAFETY

The Pony Club takes health and safety extremely seriously and will comply with UK Health & Safety Law. The law requires the organiser to do what is reasonably practicable\* to ensure the health, safety and welfare of anyone who might be affected by the activity they are organising.

\*Reasonably Practicable refers to taking steps to reduce risks by balancing the level of risk against the time, effort, and cost required to mitigate it.

In legal and safety contexts, this means that actions should be taken to ensure safety unless the effort, expense, or difficulty of those actions is disproportionate to the risk being addressed.

In other words, you are expected to do what is feasible and sensible to ensure safety, but not to go beyond what is reasonable based on the assessed level of risk. For example, if a particular safety measure is simple and cost-effective, it should be implemented. However, if the measure is extremely costly or impractical in relation to the level of risk, it may not be considered "reasonably practicable."

### **2.1 BRANCH/CENTRE HEALTH & SAFETY**

Each Branch and Centre should appoint a Health & Safety Officer (H&SO) to offer support and guidance within the Branch/Centre. The H&SO role is to provide advice to the District Commissioner and Branch Committee, to ensure organisational decisions reflect the requirements for health, safety and welfare of anyone affected by the activities organised by the Branch. The proprietor may take on this role within a Centre.

The Health & Safety Officer should support the organiser in completing appropriate risk assessments prior to all Pony Club activities and ensure that all incidents and accidents are correctly recorded, reported and investigated.

The Health & Safety Officer or a nominated branch official or Steward should attend all major competitions and events.

It is strongly advised that Health & Safety Officers attend Branch Officials Training, Risk Assessment training and also Health and Safety Officers training, as and when it is made available.

The job description for Health and Safety Officers can be found in the recourse hub.

## 2.2 ORGANISING A SAFE EVENT OR ACTIVITY

To ensure an activity is planned and undertaken safely it can be structured into six stages:

### a) Purpose

What is the purpose of your event? Be clear about what is, and isn't, going to happen, what the aim is and who is participating.

### b) Place

Once it is decided that an event will take place, the facilities and equipment required can be determined. It is important to ensure that the facilities and equipment comply with The Pony Club health and safety practices and the Sport specific rules.

### c) Plan

Once the purpose and the place have been agreed, the activity can be planned. To run smoothly, there needs to be a clear plan:

- ▶ Identifying each task that needs to be completed
- ▶ Who is assigned to which task
- ▶ When the tasks need completing

A structured organisation checklist, giving clear responsibilities to each volunteer, is an effective way of achieving this. When a plan for the activity has been created, a risk assessment can be undertaken. The risk assessment is a core component in preventing and/or reducing injuries. This is detailed separately in this document (Section 3: Risk Assessments).

### d) Personnel

Individuals should be assigned specific tasks during both the planning stages and on the day of the activity. It is essential that everyone involved:

- ▶ Understands their role,
- ▶ Is familiar with any relevant guidance and procedures,
- ▶ Is aware of any critical safety concerns they need to address or communicate to others.

## **e) Prepare**

Effective planning will ensure that the day is well organised, but the involvement of young people and horses inevitably involves some risk. For all activities there must be an emergency plan in place (see Section 6. Emergency Planning and Management of a Serious Incident).

## **f) Paperwork**

It is important that all paperwork relevant to the event is kept afterwards. The organiser must retain the following documentation:

- ▶ The event organisation checklist
- ▶ The risk assessment(s)
- ▶ A schedule and programme for a competitive event
- ▶ Any accident reports completed (online form must be submitted)
- ▶ Copies of any concussion forms
- ▶ Incident report logs (online form must be submitted)

## **2.3 DOCUMENT STORAGE**

Where possible, all documents should be stored electronically in Pelham.

Information should be stored, either on persons Pelham contact record or in the Branch Documents folder in Pelham. If you need help, contact [Pelham@pcuk.org](mailto:Pelham@pcuk.org)

### **Paper Documents**

Copies of paper documents should be scanned and uploaded into the documents section of the Branch Profile in Pelham.

If paper documents can only be stored locally, they should be kept in a secure location that only the Branch Officials can access. All paper documents relating to an accident or incident need to be retained for 3 years after the date of the incident. Where an injured person is under 18 years, all accident forms should be kept until the person reaches their 21st birthday.

Unless specifically requested, no paper documents should be sent to PCHQ.

### 3. RISK ASSESSMENTS

Risk Assessment is the cornerstone of good health and safety management and is a vital tool in preventing and/or reducing the risk of injuries.

**RULE: A documented risk assessment must be completed before any organised Pony Club activity goes ahead.**

Risk Assessment is:

- ▶ *Necessary for compliance with the law,*
- ▶ *A Pony Club rule,*
- ▶ *A condition of insurance,*
- ▶ *Vital for effective safety management.*

Risk Assessment training: It is strongly advised that all Branch/Centre committee members and anyone else organising rallies and events, who are responsible for creating and/or reviewing risk assessments, attend Risk Assessment training. For further information, and to book on, please visit the Health and Safety page on the website.

Link: [Risk-Assessment-Training](#)

Risk assessments identify:

- ▶ Any hazards that may cause an injury,
- ▶ Who may be injured,
- ▶ The control measures that are already in place,
- ▶ Any additional measures that will be taken/implemented to reduce the risks to an acceptable level.

It is a matter of judgement to decide what the hazards are, and what should be done about them.

All accessible areas of a venue/site should be considered in the risk assessment, not just the activity or arena.

The risk assessment should be carried out by someone who is directly involved in organising the activity and knows the plan. If the risk assessment is carried out by someone else, on behalf of the organiser, it is essential that the organiser makes themselves and others it affects, aware of its contents.

All guidance, documents, and forms can be found in The Pony Club's Resource Hub. To view them, log in using your Pelham Number and your Branch/Centre (or Area) from the drop-down menu.

Link: [https://resources.pcuk.org/health\\_and\\_safety/risk\\_assessments](https://resources.pcuk.org/health_and_safety/risk_assessments)

A range of example risk assessment templates are available, which should be used in conjunction with the supporting guidance. It is important to understand that these are templates and do not cover every hazard and risk that may be encountered. Likewise, the templates may include some hazards and risks that are not present or relevant to your event. In either case, it is crucial that the template is altered accordingly by adding or deleting information.

Risk assessments for Pony Club Camps should also include activities such as swimming, travelling off-site, cooking, feeding, mucking out, storage of hay bales, camping, accommodation etc.

Please see [Guidelines for Arranging Residential Camps Including Excursions and Visits](#) for more detailed information on camps.

For Centres, the list of risk assessments should be expanded to include subjects such as shoeing, grooming, fire, building maintenance, the facilities, etc.

It is important to remember that when writing risk assessments you consider factors such as:

**Communication:** The organiser must ensure there is an effective means of communication, e.g. mobile phone with signal, should the emergency services need to be contacted.

**Location** Reference: To aid the emergency services, the grid reference or postcode should be readily available. What3Words is a useful app for sharing exact locations within a 3 metre radius and can be shared with emergency services if on a larger site. Location information should be included on the risk assessment.

**Important Contacts:** Make the contact details of anyone who might need to be contacted in the event of a serious incident is noted on the risk assessment. See later.

### 3.1 USING HIRED VENUES AND FACILITIES

Hired venues should have their own risk assessments and have their own site-specific controls and written emergency procedures for accidents and other incidents such as a fire drill.

An assessment of Hired Facilities checklist is available in The Pony Club's Resource Hub that should be used to ensure that adequate procedures and

arrangements are in place. Link: [Assessment-of-hired-facilities](#)

If the venue risk assessment for their facilities and procedures are adequate and cover all aspects of the planned Pony Club event, then there is no need to complete an additional risk assessment. However, activity or sports risk assessments still need to be completed for the actual Pony Club activity.

Remember to ask for evidence of insurance for all hired facilities. If the limit of liability is less than £5,000,000, The Pony Club's insurers should be consulted. Email [safety@pcuk.org](mailto:safety@pcuk.org) for advice.

## **3.2 USING SPECIALIST CONTRACTORS AND THIRD PARTIES**

Contractors who do specialist work associated with events such as catering, trade stands, construction work, cross country course building or the erection of temporary stables must carry out their own risk assessment covering their own activities, and it is important that you ask to see a copy.

The questionnaire for the Assessment of Contractors is available in The Pony Club's Resource Hub and should be used to ensure that adequate

procedures and arrangements are in place. Link: [Contractor-assessment](#)

A Pony Club risk assessment will normally be required to cover those aspects of the work that are controlled by or involve Pony Club officials and/ or volunteers.

Remember to ask for evidence of insurance for all Contractors. If the limit of liability is less than £5,000,000, The Pony Club's insurers should be consulted. Email [safety@pcuk.org](mailto:safety@pcuk.org) for advice.

## 4. ACCIDENT REPORTING

The Pony Club is committed to the continuous improvement of health and safety management, with a strong focus on preventing injuries and ensuring the well-being of everyone involved.

This is achieved by:

- ▶ Understanding current health and safety related accidents and incidents,
- ▶ Monitoring accident information and identifying trends,
- ▶ Having clear prevention and risk reduction rules and guidance,
- ▶ Continually reviewing safety processes and procedures,
- ▶ Reviewing training syllabuses to ensure that accident prevention is integrated into training.

The analysis of safety statistics is crucial. This data helps prevent recurring accidents and allows The Pony Club to effectively identify and address trends and causes of injuries.

In order to achieve this, the following rule applies:

**RULE: All Accident and injury information, damage to property and serious near misses for everyone\* who attends Pony Club organised events must be recorded using the online accident report form.**

\*Everyone who attends the Pony Club organised event: Parents/Guardians, Family members, Friends, Officials, Volunteers, Coaches, Staff and members of the public.

It is the responsibility of local Branch/Centre Health & Safety Officer and/or District Commissioner/Centre Proprietor to ensure relevant procedural and legal reporting requirements are met. If you need further support, contact the Safety Team [safety@pcuk.org](mailto:safety@pcuk.org).

All guidance, documents, and forms can be found in The Pony Club Resource Hub:

[https://resources.pcuk.org/health\\_and\\_safety/accident\\_reporting](https://resources.pcuk.org/health_and_safety/accident_reporting)

### 4.1 DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of The Pony Club Accident Reporting procedure, the

following definitions apply:

**Incident:** An unplanned or uncontrolled event that does not cause injury or damage. See below for an example of an incident.

**Accident:** An unplanned or uncontrolled event that results in injury or damage.

**Near Miss:** An unplanned or uncontrolled event that did not cause injury or damage but had the potential to or narrowly avoided a serious accident.

It is important that in the event of any incident, accident, loss or damage occurring to a third party or to the property of a third party (including the general public and competitors) that no liability should be admitted.

## **4.2 ACCIDENT REPORTING PROCEDURE - NEW for 2026**

Please refer to Appendix C- Accident Recording Process

The organiser, coach or appointed person named in the Risk Assessment or Serious Incident Management (SIM) Plan, who is responsible for the recording of accident and incident information, should record all information as soon as possible after it took place.

All incidents, accidents, damage to property and serious near misses must be recorded using the [Online Report Form](#).

A paper copy of the form can be printed and used to record everything, but this must be uploaded onto the online portal as soon as possible afterwards. Paper copies should be scanned and uploaded onto Pelham or stored securely, locally where only Branch officials can access it.

Link to printable form: [Printable-Accident-Form](#)

Note: Centres should inform their own insurers in the event of a serious incident.

### **4.2.1 Information to be Recorded on the Online Report Form**

The following should be recorded:

**a) Non-Injury Incidents** - An example of an incident is, if a child falls from their pony, but gets up straight away, uninjured. They are assessed by a first aider, and once cleared, they continue with the riding activity.

**b) Injury Accidents\*** - Any accident that results in any injury, regardless of

severity, including all very minor injuries, serious injuries and fatalities.

### **\*Types of injury accidents**

- ▶ **Minor** – any injury, whether first aid is given or not, where the injured person does not receive professional medical treatment.
- ▶ **Serious** – a significant injury which requires professional medical treatment.
- ▶ **Major/Very Serious** – a very significant injury that may cause substantial, life-changing injuries.

**c) Statutory Authority Reportable Incidents** – Incidents and Accidents that are reported to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) under the RIDDOR regulations. This is normally someone involved in 'work' activities, like a Coach or Volunteer. Participating in amateur sports, like riding, is normally exempt. If you are unsure, please ask [safety@pcuk.org](mailto:safety@pcuk.org) for further advice.

**d) Vehicle Accidents** – An injury involving a driven or stationary vehicle.

**e) Property Damage** – Damage to equipment, fixed objects like fencing or the fabric of buildings.

**f) Injuries to Horses/Ponies** – Any injury sustained to a horse/pony during a Pony Club activity.

**g) Third Party Accidents** – Any damage or injury to a third party involving a Pony Club Member.

**h) Injuries to Members of the Public** – Any incident where a member of the public is injured through Pony Club activities.

**i) Serious Near Misses** – A serious incident where someone could have been seriously injured or killed. (E.g. unfixed XC fences that move when hit by horse or rider).

## **4.2.2 Process Following the Submission of the Report Form**

Once submitted, a copy of online form is sent, via email, to:

- ▶ The person who completed the form
- ▶ The Branch DC
- ▶ The Pony Club Safety Team
- ▶ Howden Insurance Brokers (Accidents, Damage only)

Howden and the Safety Team will review the details on the form and take action as necessary. If they want to investigate further, Howden will either contact the Pony Club Safety Team and/or instruct a Loss Adjuster to investigate the accident. The District Commissioner will be notified and must support as required.

It is vital that The Pony Club has a clear and accurate understanding of all accidents and incidents. Howden or the Safety Team may contact the person who submitted the report to seek clarification if an injury is listed as “unknown” or if the outcome is unclear.

If any injuries, damage, or other significant information were not included on the original form, please either submit an updated form, or contact [safety@pcuk.org](mailto:safety@pcuk.org) with the additional details.

For example, if a Member falls from their pony and reports a sore arm, the accident form may be completed with the injury listed as “unknown” while the parent takes them to hospital. If the Branch later learns that the arm is fractured, this updated information should be reported to [safety@pcuk.org](mailto:safety@pcuk.org).

Providing these updates ensures that The Pony Club maintains a complete and accurate record of accidents and their outcomes.

### 4.3 REPORTING ACCIDENTS ESCALATION

The Pony Club Accident Reporting and Serious Incident Flowchart must be followed (Appendix D).

	Human Accident				Horse/ Pony Accident				Property
	Minor Injury	Serious Injury	Major Injury	Fatality	Minor Injury	Serious Injury	Major Injury	Fatality	Property & Vehicles
Online Report Form	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
District Commissioner	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Area Representative		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Head Office Emergency Number			✓	✓			✓	✓	

#### **If in doubt, report it.**

At any point, if the District Commissioner, (or Area Representative) are unsure whether to report an accident, always err on the side of caution.

Note: When an online form is completed, the Head Office Safety Team will be sent a copy, so will be notified about all incidents and accidents.

In the event of a very serious accident, The Pony Club Head Office will work

closely with the Branch/Centre and offer advice and support.

Head Office will also manage any official communications with the media and other relevant personnel.

In the event of a fatality or serious accident all contact regarding the accident must be directed to The Pony Club Head Office.

**The Pony Club Emergency Number:** In an emergency, ring the office on **02476 698300 (option 9)** or **02476 698349 (direct line)**. Your call will be answered by any of the following Senior Management:

1. CEO
2. Vice-Chairman
3. Head of Operations
4. Chairman
5. Head of Support Services

In office hours ask to be put through to the emergency phone. Out of hours the emergency phone number will be given as part of the pre-recorded answer phone message. The emergency phone number is manned 24/7.

#### **4.4 STORING THE INCIDENT/ACCIDENT REPORT FORMS**

All online report forms are automatically uploaded into Pelham by PCHQ. A copy of the online report form is saved in the Accident Reports section, found in the Member/Volunteer/Coach's Pelham contact record. If they do not have a Pelham contact record it will be saved in the documents folder for the Branch/Centre.

Any paper copies and any other relevant documents should be scanned and uploaded into the Pelham or stored securely locally where only Branch Officials can access.

See Section 2.3 for more details.

# 5. MEDICAL AND FIRST AID

The level of medical provision required at each event will depend upon several factors. The event risk assessment should be used primarily to establish the level of cover needed.

This should take into consideration the following:

- ▶ The number and age of participants
- ▶ The types of activity being undertaken
- ▶ The level of activity (rallies, training, or competition), based on the level of difficulty
- ▶ The complexity of the site layout
- ▶ Phone signal strength
- ▶ Potential time for the county ambulance to get to site
- ▶ Proximity of nearest hospital

This list is not exhaustive, other factors may also need to be considered.

## 5.1 FIRST AID PROVISION MATRIX

Located in Appendix A1, the **First Aid Provision Matrix** is designed as a useful tool to use alongside the risk assessment. It should be used as supporting guidance only, because **ultimately, the risk assessment should decide the level of cover for each event.**

## 5.2 MULTI-ACTIVITY EVENTS

At events where different sports or activities are running concurrently, the appropriate cover is required for each phase.

Where the phases are happening in close proximity, one first aid team may be able to cover both phases. However, in such cases all phases must stop if the first aid team are attending a casualty or if they leave the ground to transport an injured person to hospital.

## 5.3 EMPLOYING FIRST AID PROVIDERS (INCLUDING PARAMEDICS AND DOCTORS) AND AMBULANCES

After conducting a risk assessment for the event and consulting the First Aid Matrix, if it is determined that a professional first aid provider is needed, it is essential to have a detailed discussion with them about the specific requirements of the event. This ensures they can provide the appropriate level of medical cover for the event.

The following documents are in The Pony Club Resource Hub, to provide support to organisers when recruiting professional first aid providers:

- ▶ Letter for First Aid Provider – This is an appointment letter to the First Aid Provider
- ▶ Ambulances and Personnel - If Ambulances are also required, the organiser would also need to provide information for the medical team

### 5.3.1 Checking Registrations

Prior to booking a First Aid Provider, Organisers must ensure that the First Aid Providers are registered with their relevant regulatory body. Confirmation can be done by requesting the personal identification number for each professional attending the event and then check each against the register available on the regulatory body's website.

- ▶ **Nurses** - Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) - [www.nmc.org.uk](http://www.nmc.org.uk)
- ▶ **Paramedics** - Health Care Professions Council (HCPC) – [www.hcpc-uk.org](http://www.hcpc-uk.org)
- ▶ **Doctors** - General Medical Council (GMC) – [www.gmc-uk.org](http://www.gmc-uk.org)
- ▶ **Ambulance Transport Providers** - Care Quality Commission\* (CQC) – [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)

\*CQC registration only applies to providers who are responsible for transporting a person from the event ground to an NHS hospital using an ambulance on public roads. It does not apply to providers using vehicles to move a person within the confines of an event site.

**A professional who, or organisation which cannot provide these details (HPC or GMC registration numbers) must not be used.**

### 5.3.2 Response Vehicles

The type of 'ambulance' or 'medical response vehicle' to be used for an event should be considered in the risk assessment. It may be that a specially adapted 4-wheel drive vehicle may be more appropriate than a 'land ambulance' for certain types of events, e.g. cross country/hunter trials where driving across rough terrain is a requirement.

It is important to discuss this with the First Aid Provider and let them know the terrain they will be covering. They can advise on the most appropriate vehicle to use.

If the ambulance is required to leave the ground for any reason, the activity that requires the presence of an ambulance must stop unless there is another ambulance with suitably qualified personnel is present. At large

competitions (e.g. Area or National events), organisers may wish to consider having two or more vehicles present

### 5.3.3 Treatment Areas

It is important to consider where and how casualties will be assessed and treated during the event. A designated area must be identified for this purpose. The First Aid Provider may supply their own treatment space, but this should be confirmed in advance. The designated area could be a marquee, an ambulance, or another suitable place; but it must provide adequate protection from the weather and always ensure the casualty's dignity and privacy.

### 5.3.4 Site Briefing and Paperwork

When the First Aid Provider arrives on-site, they should be given a full induction to the site and should be present at the pre-event briefing.

They should then be provided with a **“First Aid Information Pack”**, as outlined in Appendix B, which should be made up by the organiser. **It is very important that The Pony Club provides paperwork for paramedics and doctors to complete and return to the organiser.**

At the end of each event day, the First Aid Provider should report details of any incidents or accidents that occurred, along with any issues encountered. At the end of the event, the **First Aid Provider must return the First Aid Information Pack to the organiser, including all completed incident and accident forms. It is vital that all accident paperwork is handed back so it can be uploaded onto the online report form by the organiser or someone they nominate. It is very important that the requirement to hand back the paperwork is made clear at the point of engagement.**

### 5.3.5 Non-Attendance

If the medical cover fails to arrive on the day, an assessment must be conducted to determine the available resources (or those that can be arranged) on-site, along with the risks associated with the activity. This evaluation will help decide whether it is safe for the activity to proceed. If further guidance is required, the Area Representative's opinion should be sought. **The non-attendance, the decision taken, and the reasoning behind it, should be recorded.**

## 5.4 FIRST AID TRAINING AND QUALIFICATIONS

**As a minimum requirement there must be a Trained First Aider at all**

## Pony Club Organised events.

All First Aid courses must be attended in person, given the life-saving potential of the topics covered. **Online, virtual courses are not accepted.**

Type of Course	Length of Course	Re-qualification Period
Emergency First Aid at Work (EFAW)	The training and assessment should be at least six hours (not including breaks) over a minimum period of one day	3 years
First Aid at Work (FAW)	The training and assessment should be at least 18 hours (not including breaks) over a minimum period of three days	3 years
BHS First Aid	Gained at a two-day course OR one-day re-fresher course.	2 years

**Trained First Aider** – A person who has an EFAW or BHS First Aid qualification.

**Qualified First Aider** - A person who has a FAW qualification.

All courses must include the mandatory first aid course content required by the First Aid at Work Regulations 1981. The Pony Club also recommends that the training of all first aiders includes an element of paediatric basic life support and injury training, however this is not essential.

All first aid training must be delivered by a credible/reputable organisation that is able to demonstrate that:

- ▶ Their trainers meet the required standards
- ▶ The course meets the HSE content requirements
- ▶ It is delivered over the minimum teaching time
- ▶ A quality assurance process is in place

Credible organisations should be able to demonstrate this compliance when asked.

**All first aiders must hold an up-to-date enhanced disclosure check (DBS, PVG or Access NI) with a check of the barred list, as per Regulated Activity/ Work.**

Coaches are required to have the Emergency First Aid at Work qualification (EFAW) as a minimum.

All records of training for First Aid, as well as all other necessary qualifications should be recorded against the person's Pelham contact record. This includes Coaches, Volunteers and Officials.

## **5.8 FIRST AID KITS**

There should be a first aid kit present at all Pony Club activities.

There is no specific guidance on what the kit must contain; however, it is advised that the contents must comply with the requirements of the HSE code of practice.

The first aid kit should be appropriately sized for the size of the Branch/ Centre and events it will be used at. When purchasing kits, it may be practical to buy a few smaller ones that can be combined for larger events as needed.

Kits should be checked regularly, as their contents do go out of date. It is good practice to label each kit with the date on which the first item expires, so you know when it needs to be updated.

Instant ice packs and eye baths don't always come in standard kits but can be useful additions.

Also consider putting accident reporting paperwork and concussion guidance into each kit, so it's always to hand.

Remember that paracetamol and other pain reducing drugs must never be given without the express permission of the parent/guardian.

# 6. EMERGENCY PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF A SERIOUS INCIDENT

A serious incident can happen at any time and at any type of event, not just during large competitions. Therefore, it's essential to have an emergency plan in place, no matter the size of the event.

No one ever wants to have to deal with a serious incident, but should the worst happen, it is important that you are prepared and that the incident is dealt with in an organised and professional way. This means some prior thought and planning is needed.

(Although guidance is designed with Branches in mind, it can also support Centres. Centres should notify The Pony Club Office of any serious incidents so that appropriate support can be provided with any resulting publicity and investigations).

For smaller events, this can be done as part of the risk assessment, but for bigger, more complex events, a separate Serious Incident Management (SIM) plan should be made.

For further details on Serious Incident Management visit The Pony Club Resource Hub: [Management-of-Serious-Incident](#)

The Serious Incident Management Support Summary can be found in Appendix H.

All emergency arrangements should be shared with all officials, organisers and volunteers so everyone knows the plan and understands their role and responsibilities.

## 6.1 PRE-EVENT BRIEFING

It is strongly recommended for all events, especially competitions, to hold a pre-event briefing with key personnel. This ensures that everyone is aware of the day's schedule, knows who's in charge, understands their

responsibilities, and what's expected of them. The meeting doesn't need to be lengthy, just a quick conversation to confirm everyone is prepared, share any last-minute changes, and ensure the event runs smoothly. This can be done in person on the day or online via zoom or Teams in preceding days.

## 6.2 RIDER FALLS

As a training organisation, The Pony Club promotes resilience, so after a fall, riders are encouraged to continue whenever possible. However, a rider must not be allowed to remount after a fall if there is any uncertainty about their fitness, regardless of the wishes of their parents, trainer, or others. Further participation should only be considered after an evaluation by the on-site first aider. The First Aider's decision is final.

For Competition, Sport Rulebooks must be studied to ascertain individual sport rules on falls.

## 6.3 MEDICAL SUSPENSION

If a Member has been suspended from taking part in any activity/competition/sport for medical reasons, this suspension also applies to all Pony Club activities until such time as the Member is passed fit by a medical professional to take part. It is the Member's and parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure adherence to this rule.

Medical letters are required, following a suspension for medical reasons, to allow a Member to take part in any activity again. The letter should be issued by the either the hospital or specialist(s) involved in treating the injury.

Please notify The Pony Club Safety Team at [safety@pcuk.org](mailto:safety@pcuk.org) if you are informed that a Member has been medically suspended. This ensures that the suspension is appropriately recognised and applied across all Pony Club activities in line with the requirements above.

# 7. CONCUSSION ADVICE

This advice should be read in conjunction with: [UK-wide Concussion Guidelines for Grassroots Sport](#)

Please contact [safety@pcuk.org](mailto:safety@pcuk.org) for further support and advice.

Head injuries and concussion can be very serious and life changing. Serious head injuries are usually obvious, but concussion can be very subtle. It may not be immediately apparent but should be taken very seriously. Recovery from concussion should be managed carefully.

## **What causes concussion?**

Concussion can be caused by a direct blow to the head or an impact to other areas of the body that can cause a whiplash type injury to the brain.

## **The Effects of Concussion:**

- ▶ Physical: Headaches, dizziness, and vision problems.
- ▶ Mental Processing: Slowed thinking, difficulty processing, and blank moments.
- ▶ Mood: Emotional instability, sadness, irritability, or temper issues.
- ▶ Sleep: Changes in sleep patterns, including sleeping more or less than usual.

## **Consequences of Concussion:**

- ▶ Increased Risk: Previous concussions raise the likelihood of sustaining another concussion, and recovery may take longer.
- ▶ Vulnerability in Children: Children are particularly susceptible to concussions and take longer to recover. They also face a higher risk of severe neurological complications if they don't fully recover before resuming activities.

Ensuring proper recovery time is critical for reducing long-term effects and preventing further injury.

Continuing vigorous activity or an activity that increases the risk of concussion in the aftermath of a concussion can worsen symptoms, delay recovery, and may lead to serious injury or even death due to second impact syndrome, where another head injury occurs before full recovery.

**“When in doubt, sit them out.”**

### **Initial Response:**

Any person involved in an incident that could have caused an injury including a head injury or a concussion must be assessed by the on-site first aid provider, whether that is a volunteer first aider, a medical practitioner or another health care professional.

### **Diagnosis:**

Although First Aiders cannot formally diagnose a concussion, they are empowered to prevent a person from continuing any activity if they suspect a concussion or head injury could have occurred.

A suspicion of concussion will be treated as a confirmed concussion, and as such any first aiders officiating at a Pony Club activity can stop someone from continuing if they have any suspicions of a concussion, this includes:

- ▶ Trained First Aiders who have completed an Emergency First Aid at Work course
- ▶ Qualified First Aiders who have completed a First Aid at Work course
- ▶ Health care professionals e.g. nurse or paramedic
- ▶ Medical Professionals in attendance, a doctor.

Any suspicion of concussion needs to be referred to a hospital or a doctor off site for formal diagnosis, and they must not ride again or take part in any Pony Club activity until they have been seen by a doctor/hospital.

Note: Even if a person does not lose consciousness (is not “knocked out,”) that person may sustain a concussion. Any loss of consciousness should be treated as a concussion.

### **Diagnosis by an on-site volunteer First Aider or Paramedic:**

If a first aider or paramedic suspects a head injury or a concussion, the parents/guardians or next of kin should be advised to take them to hospital, or an ambulance should be called if there are concerns about a serious injury.

### **Diagnosis by a Doctor:**

Whether on site or at hospital, a doctor can diagnose concussion or head injury. If suspected, it is usual that an on-site doctor will refer to hospital for continued monitoring or investigation.

### **Confirmation of no concussion or head injury on-site:**

In the event of a minor accident an assessment may make it immediately obvious that there is no risk of head injury or concussion.

When a minor accident takes place and the person performing the examination is 100% satisfied that the person who underwent the assessment did not sustain a head injury or a concussion or any other injury, the rider can be considered well enough to resume the activity they were performing at the time of the accident.

If there are any concerns about fitness to continue, then the rider should stop the activity and further health advice should be sought.

### **During Competitions:**

First Aid providers and other healthcare professionals will strive to assess competitors promptly. However, as head injuries can develop over time, officials or healthcare professionals may need to perform several assessments. During this process, a Member may miss part or all of an event. In such cases, the relevant Sport Rules for missing phases or part of the competition will apply.

Please refer to the specific sports rulebooks for rules and guidelines on falls, and whether a rider is allowed to continue afterwards.

### **Notification:**

If someone has sustained a suspected head injury or a concussion at an activity or competition, the organisers should inform the District Commissioner/Centre Proprietor.

If the head injury is severe, it should be treated as a serious accident, see 'Management of a Serious Incident' in The Pony Club Resource Hub for further advice.

### **Care Advice, if concussion is suspected or confirmed:**

Officials/Volunteers should:

- ▶ Remove them immediately from the activity.
- ▶ Make sure they undergo assessment by an on-site first aider/medical professional.
- ▶ Observe them for signs and symptoms of head injury/concussion.
- ▶ Call an ambulance if there are concerns about a serious injury.
- ▶ Speak to parents/guardians or next of kin, they know them best, are they concerned?
- ▶ Ensure an accident form is completed, collect all the information required.
- ▶ Return the injured person to the care of parents, guardians, or next of kin.
- ▶ Give parents/guardians/next of kin The Pony Club Concussion Advice Form.

- ▶ Notify the District Commissioner.

Parent/Guardians/Next of Kin should:

- ▶ Not leave them alone for the first 24/48 hours.
- ▶ Seek professional medical advice from NHS111, or a doctor at hospital.
- ▶ Monitor for worsening symptoms.
- ▶ Encourage rest for the first 24-48 hours.
- ▶ Stop or at least minimize smart phone, screen, and computer use for at least 48 hours, as reducing screen time has been shown to aid recovery.
- ▶ Notify Branch District Commissioner/Centre Proprietor, school, sports clubs.

The Injured person should, with the help of Parents/next of kin:

- ▶ Stop immediately if you bang your head or suffer a whiplash type accident.
- ▶ Be honest about how you feel.
- ▶ Don't delay seeking help.
- ▶ Do not return to any type of activity involving horses or strenuous activities if you still have symptoms.
- ▶ If symptoms persist, seek professional advice, from GP or NHS 111.
- ▶ If you think someone else has suffered a head injury, report it and encourage them to report it.

### **Concussion Rule:**

**If a person is diagnosed with a concussion, they must not ride or take part in any Pony Club organised activity that involves close contact/handling or riding of horses or ponies for 21 days. This may need to be extended if symptoms persist, on the advice of the treating doctor. All concussion must be reported to Head Office using the online accident report form or by email if it occurred outside of The Pony Club. Concussion advice should be followed without exception.**

### **Graduated Return to Activity:**

As stated previously, if a concussion diagnosis is confirmed, the injured person will be advised not to ride or take part in any activity that potentially involves 'hard contact' for 21 days.

The UK Government Graduated Return to activity (Education/Work) and Sport Programme should be followed:

- ▶ Stage 1: Relative Rest for 24-48 hours
- ▶ Stage 2: Gradually introduce daily activities
- ▶ Stage 3: Increase tolerance for mental and exercise activities
- ▶ Stage 4: Return to study/work and sport training (not involving riding)

horses or ponies)

- ▶ Stage 5: Return to normal work/education and full training (not involving riding horses or ponies)
- ▶ Stage 6: Return to normal riding – not before 21 days as long as there are no symptoms for 14 days.

If symptoms persist beyond 28 days, remain out of sport and seek medical advice from GP.

### **Returning before 21 days:**

If a volunteer first aider or someone NOT registered with the General Medical Council, has diagnosed a concussion and the Member or the Parents / Guardian do not agree with that diagnosis, they may request a review by a doctor with experience in assessing concussion. If the doctor is happy to certify that they are not suffering with a concussion, they may return to all Pony Club organised activities. Evidence regarding this decision is required in the form of a medical letter. If a diagnosis of concussions is given by the professional who is registered with the General Medical Council (i.e. is a registered medical practitioner), it cannot be subsequently challenged. Their decision is final – this is because concussion can have symptoms that are brief or may be seen at a specific time after the injury, and not again.

### **Concussion and Head Injuries sustained elsewhere:**

Ultimately, it is the parent/guardians' responsibility to make decisions about the health and welfare of their child. A culture of openness and honesty should be encouraged.

If a Pony Club Official becomes aware that a Member has sustained a suspected or confirmed head injury/concussion elsewhere, they should report their concerns to the District Commissioner. The Member must not be allowed to take part in any Pony Club activities that involve horses/ponies, whether mounted or unmounted for 21 days unless appropriate medical evidence of fitness to ride can be provided.

### **Notifying other Organisations:**

In the interest of safety and welfare, The Pony Club reserves the right to notify relevant organisations, such as schools, sports clubs, and other equine bodies like The Pony Racing Authority or British Eventing, if there are concerns that a Member may participate or compete within 21 days of a concussion.

### **Refusal of treatment:**

If a professional opinion is advised, because of suspected concussion, and

the parents/guardians or next of kin decide not to follow this advice or not allow the injured person to be examined, either at the activity or in hospital, the injured person must not be allowed to continue with the activity or ride. For the avoidance of doubt, at this point, it should be presumed that they have sustained a confirmed concussion until a medical professional has confirmed otherwise.

Depending on the circumstances, choosing not to allow further examination could raise safeguarding concerns.

### **Ignoring Advice:**

Someone may be asked not to carry on by an Official, including a first aider, who believes they may have sustained a concussion either at the time of injury or from a previous injury (which may not have been sustained whilst riding) and because concussion is difficult to diagnose, practitioners of all grades must err on the side of caution. Any decision must be respected, ignoring an official's advice about concussion breaches The Pony Club's Codes of Conduct.

### **Concussion Protocol:**

All concussion is a notifiable condition and must be reported using the online accident form. This will initiate the Concussion Protocol. All concussion is recorded on the persons' Pelham Contact Record.

Please see Appendix E for the Head Injury and Concussion Flowchart and Appendix F & G for the Concussion Advice Form and guidance to be given out if concussion is suspected or confirmed.

## 8. INSURANCE

The Pony Club has a comprehensive combined liability policy (Public, Products and Employers liability) which indemnifies The Pony Club and all of its branches against action that may be taken against The Pony Club or a Pony Club Branch as a result of third-party property damage or third-party injury. The same policy also includes cover for all Area Competitions and National Championships.

Further details of insurance and all the policy documents are available on The Pony Club website.

In the event of any accident, loss or damage occurring to a third party or to the property of a third party (including the general public and competitors) no liability should be admitted.

A copy of the Evidence of Insurance should be displayed at all competitions. This can be found in the insurance section of the Health and Safety page of the PCUK website.

### **EVENT SCHEDULES**

The following statements should be included in all event schedules:

#### **Health & Safety**

Organisers of this event have taken reasonable precautions to ensure the health and safety of everyone present. For these measures to be effective, everyone must take all reasonable precautions to avoid and prevent accidents occurring and must obey the instructions of the organisers, officials and stewards.

#### **Legal Liability**

Save for the death or personal injury caused by the negligence of the organisers, or anyone for whom they are in law responsible, neither the organisers of this event or The Pony Club nor any agent, employee or representative of these bodies, nor the landlord or his tenant, accepts any liability for any accident, loss, damage, injury or illness to horses, owners, riders, spectators, land, cars, their contents and accessories, or any other person or property whatsoever. Entries are only accepted on this basis.

All Branch Members, Centre and Centre Plus Members, those who are officials and volunteers helping at organised events are covered by The Pony Club third party Liability insurance. It is important to understand the

limitations of the policy and what is and isn't insured. The policy documents and FAQs should be read and digested by officials to ensure that all insurance conditions and obligations are understood and met.

All non-members competing at a Pony Club organised event, should have their own Third-Party Liability Insurance.

### **Motorised Vehicles at Events**

This applies to the use of motorised vehicles by members, parents, spectators, and other persons attending the event. All motorised vehicles are used entirely at the owner's risk. The Pony Club accepts no responsibility or liability for any injury, loss, damage, or incident arising from the use or misuse of any motorised vehicle. All vehicles must be operated safely, in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, and only by competent individuals. Dangerous, reckless, or inappropriate use is strictly prohibited and is undertaken solely at the risk of the operator. Passengers must not be carried unless the vehicle has a specifically designed and securely fitted seat for that purpose.

**It does not apply to event organisers, officials, volunteers, contractors, or persons acting under the authority of the organiser in the course of their official duties.**

## **8.1 SUMMARY OF INSURANCE DETAILS AND CONDITIONS**

Note: Full details of all policies, conditions and FAQs are available via the links on the Website.

### **8.1.1 Cover for Volunteers and Officials**

The liability policy covers the liabilities of all volunteers acting on behalf of The Pony Club at any Pony Club event. This would include any committee member, parent helper, official, judge, steward, or any other volunteer. This means that if a volunteer was held personally liable for an injury to a third party or damage to third party property, The Pony Club policy would provide indemnity to that volunteer.

### **8.1.2 Cover for Coaches**

The Pony Club liability policy covers Coaches, including trainee Coaches, who are coaching at Pony Club events at the request of the Branch providing they do not have other insurance in place.

The **policy does not cover** a coach for:

- ▶ Privately arranged coaching sessions with Pony Club Members

- ▶ Private Coaching for individuals at Pony Club competitions
- ▶ Coaching at any event not organised by The Pony Club, including practice coaching undertaken by trainee Coaches at non-Pony Club events.

Note: A team coach arranged by a branch to warm up a team or individual would be covered in this scenario.

### **8.1.3 Insurance Cover for Mounted Rallies and Training**

It should be noted that the liability insurance covers rallies and training sessions strictly for Pony Club Members only. This cover includes activities relating to the nine official Pony Club sports, as well as single "taster" days for other mounted equine sports, such as horseback archery, subject to contractor conditions noted later. However, the insurance does not extend to any other mounted activities, including regular training sessions for sports outside of the designated nine, or for anyone who isn't a fully paid Member, including Parents.

### **8.1.4 Cover for Branch Owned Land**

The Pony Club policy will only cover Pony Club activities. If the land is used or hired to third parties (including Members outside of an organised Pony Club event), the branch will need additional cover in place. The branch should also take out property owners' liability coverage in the event that someone is injured on the land outside of an organised Pony Club event and holds the branch responsible.

### **8.2.5 Branch Owned Equipment**

**No cover is in place** via The Pony Club for equipment owned or loaned to a branch. If a branch requires cover it must take out its own material damage policy for the total value of equipment that is owned or loaned to them.

### **8.1.6 Insurance for Appointed Professionals**

Practicing doctors, medical personnel and veterinary surgeons, if officially appointed by the organiser, are covered by The Pony Club's Public Liability insurance. However, it will be treated as the policy of last resort if there is other public liability insurance in place. There is no cover in place for doctors, medical personnel and veterinary surgeons for medical or veterinary negligence and all medical/veterinary practitioners must have their own professional indemnity insurance in place.

### **8.1.7 Evidence of Insurance of Hired Facilities**

If a Pony Club organised event is being held at a commercial hired facility,

evidence of the insurance of that facility should be obtained by the organising official/volunteer. See Section 3.1 Using Hired Facilities.

## **8.2 SPECIFIC POLICY CONDITIONS OF INSURANCE**

All Branches and Organising Committees MUST complete and maintain the following prior to engaging in any activities:

1. An up-to-date documented risk assessment for of ALL activities.
2. An up-to-date documented inspection/maintenance log for all Branch owned trailers, caravans, generators, marquees and equipment used by You, Your Employees, Volunteers, Officials, Parents, Members and/or any other bona fide sub-contractors engaged by You.

### **8.2.1 Branches and Organising Committees must be aware of:**

1. The Pony Club Health & Safety policy/statement – Link: [Health and Safety Policy](#). (This Policy is reviewed annually as part of the Handbook review.)
2. The Pony Club Health and Safety, Safeguarding and Horse Welfare Rulebook sets out all requirements for Health and Safety Provision and as such should be observed for all activities.
3. The Pony Club Website and Resource Hub offers advice and guidance on all aspects of Health and Safety requirements. All officials should be familiar with its content and the procedures to follow.
4. Any questions or queries should be referred to the Branch District Commissioner, Area Representative, Head Office respectively.
5. It is important that all safety protocol, hazard control measures, safe systems of work and emergency plans are communicated effectively with all parties. This should be done by using verbal and/or email communication and pre-event briefings which include safety. All safety documentation should be easily accessible, whether in paper or electronic format.

### **8.2.2 Subcontractors**

The following (third) parties must have their own current Public Liability (minimum GBP 5,000,000) and Employers' Liability Insurances (if applicable) in force\*, including an indemnity to Principal clause:

- ▶ Fairground operators and inflatable providers
- ▶ Stallholders, concessionaires and caterers

- ▶ Any other exhibitors, performers or display teams, for example if you have a coach coming in to give a horseback archery or carriage driving demonstration at an event organised by You.
- ▶ Any self-employed person(s) engaged by You (unless afforded indemnity under the policy, such as any coach) at a Pony Club event.
- ▶ Any bona fide sub-contractor(s) engaged by You

\* Confirmation must be documented/retained by You prior to said parties conducting any activity.

### **8.2.3 All-Terrain Vehicles Condition**

Users of All Terrain Vehicles and/or Motorcycles must adhere to the following guidance on "Use of All Terrain Vehicles and Motorcycles":

1. Only officials of the event with experience of driving a car, motorbike or tractor and who have received instruction and training in the use of ATVs or motorcycles should ride or drive them.
2. They should not be operated by any person who does not hold a full UK driving licence or is disqualified from holding or obtaining a full UK driving licence.
3. Passengers should not be carried unless the ATV or motorcycle is specifically designed to accommodate them.
4. The vehicle should be maintained in good condition and be in a fully serviceable state.
5. A helmet (compliant to current standards) must be worn by the rider or driver and loose clothing and shorts should be avoided.
6. Drivers must avoid any sudden increase in speed and should stay at low speeds appropriate for the terrain and proximity to spectators and horses.

The use of any unauthorised vehicles is not permitted at the event.

## 9. SAFEGUARDING

The Pony Club is committed to keeping everyone safe. Key Safeguarding policies can be found on:

The Pony Club website <https://pcuk.org/safeguarding/> Documents include:

- ▶ Useful Contacts
- ▶ Dealing with Concerns
- ▶ Safe Recruitment Practices
- ▶ Disclosure Checks
- ▶ Safeguarding Training
- ▶ Safeguarding at Events and Camps
- ▶ Safeguarding Guidance and Useful Information
- ▶ Related Policies and Procedures
- ▶ Forms and templates to be used to record important incidents and information.

If you believe a child is in immediate danger of harm, the Police should be called on 999.

Each Branch, Centre and Area has a nominated Safeguarding Officer that can support you with any concerns.

Nationally, The Pony Club has a highly experienced independent lead Safeguarding Officer, Christine Gould, who can further advise. Her contact email is [safeguarding@pcuk.org](mailto:safeguarding@pcuk.org) and her telephone number is 07833 523626.

For enquiries regarding safeguarding training, please contact the Pony Club office - [enquiries@pcuk.org](mailto:enquiries@pcuk.org) / 02476 698300.

### **Safeguarding Incidents:**

When investigating Safeguarding Incidents, it's important to record the following information:

- ▶ Name
- ▶ Date of birth,
- ▶ Address of alleged victim
- ▶ Name and contact details of reporter
- ▶ Alleged abuser
- ▶ Their relationships with the victim
- ▶ What happened
- ▶ In what circumstances
- ▶ Where it happened

- ▶ Any other relevant details

For forms and templates needed to record this information, visit The Pony Club Resource Hub.

**Rule: Before engaging in work within The Pony Club, all Staff, Committee Members, (including Sport, Organisational and Advisory Committees), Coaches, Assessors and Volunteers etc. who are in regulated activity\*, must obtain a Disclosure Check (PVG / DBS, Access NI) enhanced clearance with a check on the child barred list as appropriate), and within 6 months of enrolment, have successfully completed an approved Safeguarding course.**

**\*Regulated Activity:** Any person in a position of authority or influence over a child, or adult at risk, and who holds personal information about them or contributes to decision making which affects them, is deemed to be in regulated activity.

## COMMITTEE ROLES AND REQUIRED MINIMUM QUALIFICATION MATRIX

From 1st January 2026, All Committee Roles must comply with this matrix.

ESSENTIAL COMMITTEE ROLES	Disclosure Check	Safeguarding Certificate	First Aid Training	Branch officials Training	Treasurer Training
District Commissioner/ Joint District Commissioner	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Strongly Advised
Branch Secretary	Mandatory	Mandatory	Strongly Advised	Strongly Advised	
Branch Treasurer	Mandatory	Mandatory	Strongly Advised	Strongly Advised	Mandatory (from Jan 2026)
Health & Safety Officer	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Strongly Advised	
Safeguarding Officer	Mandatory	Mandatory*	Strongly Advised	Strongly Advised	

ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE ROLES	Disclosure Check	Safeguarding Certificate	First Aid Training	Branch officials Training	Treasurer Training
Assistant District Commissioner	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	
Membership Secretary	Mandatory	Mandatory	Strongly Advised	Strongly Advised	
Committee Member	Mandatory	Mandatory	Strongly Advised	Strongly Advised	
YELA Co-ordinator	Mandatory	Mandatory	Strongly Advised	Strongly Advised	
Branch First Aider	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory		
Ad hoc Volunteers (non-committee)	Strongly Advised	Strongly Advised	Advised		
Overnight Volunteers	Mandatory	Mandatory	Strongly Advised		
Rally Co-ordinator	Mandatory	Strongly Advised	Strongly Advised		

ADDITIONAL	Disclosure Check	Safeguarding Certificate	First Aid Training	Branch officials Training
Area Reps and BODs	Mandatory	Mandatory*	Strongly Advised	Strongly Advised
Area Safeguarding Officer	Mandatory	Mandatory*		
Board of Trustees	Mandatory	Mandatory		
Centre Membership Committee	Mandatory	Mandatory		
Company Members	Mandatory	Mandatory		
Finance Committee	Mandatory	Mandatory		
Horsemanship Committee	Mandatory	Mandatory		
Management Committee	Mandatory	Mandatory		
Rules and Compliance Committee	Mandatory	Mandatory		
Safety and Welfare Committee	Mandatory	Mandatory		
Sports Committees x 9	Mandatory	Mandatory		
Training Committee	Mandatory	Mandatory		
Volunteers and Officials Committee	Mandatory	Mandatory		
Youth Advisory Council	Mandatory	Mandatory		

**Mandatory** – This is a rule, and this training must be completed.

**Strongly Advised** – This training is crucial and should be considered best practice.

**Advised** – This role ought to have this training, but it's not essential to carry out the role.

**Mandatory\*** - The standard Safeguarding Officer training must have been completed, but it is strongly advised that the new Equestrian Safeguarding Officer Training is completed.

## ORGANISING ACTIVITIES:

When organising activities for Members, you should consider where additional challenges and risks are present and extra measures needed. For example, events where large numbers of Members are expected, use

of or travelling between multiple venues/locations, overnight stays and collaborating with other groups. Further information can be found on the safeguarding pages on the website.

Keeping Members safe when organising activities should be considered carefully. Further information on the following topics can be found on the website.

- ▶ **Safer recruitment procedures** - ensure everyone is suitable to work/volunteer with Members and able to carry out their allocated role.
- ▶ **Training** – ensure individuals have received adequate training, as a minimum this should be safeguarding, first aid and have an enhanced disclosure check (DBS, PVG or Access NI) with a check of the barred list, if they are in contact with children other than their own.
- ▶ **Safeguarding plan** – make sure volunteers and staff understand the safeguarding processes, including the safeguarding policy, reporting procedure, and where to go for advice about welfare concerns.
- ▶ **Safeguarding Officer** – Each Branch/Centre has a Safeguarding Officer who is responsible for safeguarding and child protection and is available for people to talk to if they have concerns.
- ▶ **Lost or missing children** – have a plan to deal with a situation where a child gets lost or goes missing. This should be part of your risk assessment.
- ▶ **Photography and filming** – have a clear policy for taking photos and videos and ensure official photographers are identifiable. An Official Professional Photographer should be used at open events or anywhere else where an outside photographer is employed, and they must be registered with the Information Commissioners Office. It is important that the parent/carers have given permission for their child to be photographed.
- ▶ **Consent** – All parents, who have parental responsibility, must give consent for their children to take part in activities. The right information must be recorded (e.g. emergency contact details and medical conditions). This responsibility cannot be passed on to anybody else, other than a social worker.
- ▶ **Additional needs of Members** - The Reasonable Adjustment Policy will help you to support any Members who have additional needs - <https://pcuk.org/reasonable-adjustment/>

- ▶ **Supervision** – consider the ratio of supervising adults to participating children.
- ▶ **Transport** – consider travel between venues and who is responsible for arranging transport. If travel is arranged by the Pony Club, certain conditions must be met and further details are on the website. If travel is arranged between parents, this is their responsibility.
- ▶ **Overnight stays** – ensure parents understand the arrangements for the activity/trip and have a clear plan for sleeping, washing, toilet facilities etc. All parents who are present for overnight stays must have a current enhanced disclosure check (DBS, PVG or Access NI) with a check of the barred list and check of the barred list.
- ▶ **Overseas travel** – compliance with overseas as well as UK legislation is essential when travelling overseas.
- ▶ **Alcohol and Drugs Policy** - The possession and/or use of substances, including illegal recreational drugs, non-prescription drugs or prescription drugs not prescribed to them will not be tolerated. The Pony Club disciplinary procedures will be used where necessary, including involvement of the police where illegal drugs are concerned

## **Alcohol**

Any person under the age of 18 must not consume alcohol at any Pony Club activity. All Members are expected to comply with the Code of Conduct. Adults need to be physically and mentally fit to undertake their responsibilities.

Pony Club coaches, officials and volunteers must not consume alcohol when they are directly responsible for Members who are not their own children at a Pony Club activity and must not permit young people (under 18 years of age) to consume alcohol at Pony Club activities.

All coaches, officials and volunteers are expected to comply with the respective Code of Conduct.

## **Prohibited Activities**

Under-age smoking, vaping, drinking alcohol or sexual activity is not lawful and therefore is strictly forbidden at Pony Club Events. Further information can be found on The Pony Club Resource Hub.

## **Performance-Enhancing Drugs**

All performance-enhancing drugs are strictly forbidden, and The Pony Club

supports 100% clean sport.

**i. Equine - Controlled Medication** – See Equine Welfare and Veterinary Section.

**ii. Human** - Performance-enhancing drugs are forbidden. The Pony Club supports the approach taken by the UK Anti-Doping Agency in providing clean sport. The Pony Club disciplinary procedures will be used where doping is suspected including reporting to the UK Anti-Doping Agency.

**Testing** - All competitors should be aware that random samples may be taken for testing from both themselves and/or their horse/pony. The protocol used will be that of the relevant adult discipline. Competitors and their horses/ponies at national or international level may be subject to blood tests in line with the Sports Council Policy on illegal and prescribed substances. All young people competing at these levels should be aware of this.

## **Reporting**

i. Anyone who has reasonable grounds for suspecting that a Member is using or selling an illegal substance must report their concerns to the District Commissioner/Centre Proprietor as soon as practicable. If there is an immediate risk to the health, safety or welfare of one or more Members then the Police must be informed as soon as possible. The person reporting their concerns must ensure that any material evidence is retained and should not influence any police investigation.

ii. Upon receiving a report of suspected use or selling of an illegal substance, the District Commissioner/Centre Proprietor should carry out an immediate investigation of the incident and the circumstances in which it occurred, and then decide upon the appropriate action to be taken. This will include:

- ▶ Informing the Member's parents/guardians
- ▶ Informing The Pony Club Area Representative who in turn will inform The Pony Club Office
- ▶ Informing the Police
- ▶ Suspending the Member concerned while investigations are completed
- ▶ Awaiting the completion of Police investigations and actions

## **Disciplinary Action**


The normal disciplinary procedure should be followed in cases relating to alcohol or drugs, which can be found in The Pony Club Handbook.

# 10. EQUINE WELFARE AND VETERINARY







## 10.1 EQUINE WELFARE POLICY

Equine welfare is and will remain at the heart of all decision making within The Pony Club.

The Pony Club has agreed to act in accordance with the BEF Charter for the Horse which outlines the ethical treatment of the horses in our care, sport and leisure.

  
**THE CHARTER FOR THE HORSE**

As responsible members of the equestrian community, we pledge to this charter for the ethical and fair treatment of all horses and other equids under our care.

 <p><b>Empathy</b></p> <p>Recognising horses are intelligent and emotional beings, we always prioritise their mental and physical health and overall wellbeing.</p>	 <p><b>Care</b></p> <p>Throughout their entire life, during exercise and rest, we offer horses a secure and suitable setting to create positive experiences that address their social, behavioural, nutritional and physical needs for a high quality of life.</p>	 <p><b>Respect</b></p> <p>Through compassionate, mindful, patient and empathetic interaction, we foster positive relationships with horses based on trust and respect.</p>
 <p><b>Consideration</b></p> <p>Each horse is an individual, and we strive to understand and meet their specific needs, including how they learn. We don't push horses beyond their health, fitness or ability levels, and we never let competitive or commercial influences compromise their welfare.</p>	 <p><b>Ethics</b></p> <p>In all our equine interactions, whether for leisure, training or sport, we adhere to the highest standards of equine welfare, safety, equipment, veterinary care and biosecurity, always guided by ethical principles.</p>	 <p><b>Learning</b></p> <p>Through continuously improving our equine knowledge, we evolve our behaviours based on education and informed advice from qualified professionals and the broader equestrian community.</p>

The Pony Club has an Equine Welfare Policy and associated Welfare Guidelines which must be followed at all events and activities.

The Pony Club's aim is to support and educate Members to give all horses and ponies a fulfilled and well-lived life. This means ensuring they are in good health, properly nourished, adequately sheltered, are free from pain, fear and distress, and have the opportunity to express natural behaviour, all of which benefit both their mental and physical well-being.

The objective of the Equine Welfare Policy is to safeguard the health and well-being of all horses and ponies involved in Pony Club activities. This is achieved through the implementation of clear policies, guidance, rules, and accountability, along with the promotion of good horsemanship, through effective training at all levels which are aligned with the core values of The

Pony Club.

District Commissioners, Centre Proprietors, Branch Committees, Event Organisers, Coaches and other Officials are all responsible for ensuring the Equine Welfare policy is observed and complied with.

If a welfare concern is raised, as a training organisation, the initial intervention should focus on providing support and re-training. If this fails, other sanctions should be considered, and as a last resort, arbitration and exclusion from The Pony Club may be deemed appropriate.

Formal complaints regarding horse welfare are dealt with using the Resolving Complaints Policy which can be found on The Pony Club Website.

Members and their parents/guardians, at rallies or competition who breach welfare rules can be reported using the Rider Report Card system, a copy of which can be found in The Pony Club Resource Hub.

Any behaviour or practice which could cause physical or mental suffering will not be tolerated. Those involved, if found to be deliberately breaching Pony Club Welfare Rules, will be subject to disciplinary procedures.

## **10.2 HOW TO RAISE A WELFARE CONCERN**

The Pony Club takes concerns about welfare very seriously. Members, supporters and the public should feel confident that any concerns raised regarding welfare are taken seriously, dealt with fairly, and appropriately, and recorded accurately.

In the first instance, if the concern is not urgent, contact the District Commissioner or Centre Proprietor to discuss the matter. If this initial approach fails to resolve the concern, then the help of the Area Representative should be enlisted. Please refer to the Resolving Complaints Policy for further details. If your concern is urgent, please refer to the website for emergency contact details.

Please email [equinewelfare@pcuk.org](mailto:equinewelfare@pcuk.org) with any questions or concerns relating to equine welfare.

## **10.3 VETERINARY COVER AT ACTIVITIES**

The level of veterinary provision at activities will depend upon the type and size of activity being organised and the number of horses/ponies expected. As part of the activity or event risk assessment, all organisers should consider whether a Veterinary Surgeon is required, and whether they should be present or 'on call' for the duration of the activity.

At larger events, screens and/or a tarpaulin should be arranged in case of an equine fatality or serious injury to a horse. The contact details for the local horse disposal should be readily available and be included in the SIM plan.

The decision as to whether an equine ambulance, horsebox or trailer earmarked for use in case of emergency should form part of the risk assessment for the event.

Appendix A2 – Veterinary Provision Matrix provides guidance on the level of veterinary cover to be provided at Pony Club activities.

## 10.4 VACCINATION AND PASSPORTS

A valid passport and vaccination record:

- ▶ Must accompany the horse/pony to all events
- ▶ Must be available for inspection by the event officials
- ▶ Must be produced on request at any other time during the event

Members are reminded that it is a legal requirement for all horses and ponies to be registered on the Central Equine Database. The owner details of an equine must be registered with the UK based Passport Issuing Organisation for that horse or pony and must be up to date. If the horse or pony has an overseas passport (e.g. Irish or continental) then the passport must be over stamped by an English/Scottish or Welsh Passport Issuing Organisation.

**All ponies/horses must be compliant with the Pony Club minimum vaccination requirements** - please see The Pony Club website for the current rule. Link: [The-Pony-Club-Equine-Influenza-VACCINATION-RULE](#)

**Please Note:** There are NO exceptions to this rule, even with a veterinary Certificate.

Events that are held at other venues may be subject to additional vaccination rules. For example, any horse/pony entering a Licensed Racecourse property must comply with the vaccination requirements set by the British Horseracing Authority. Similar restrictions apply in the cases of certain polo venues. If you are intending to compete under FEI Rules you will need to ensure you are compliant with their vaccination requirements.

## 10.5 COMPETITION DISQUALIFICATION

The Official Steward or Chief Judge may disqualify a competitor at any stage of the competition:

- ▶ For dangerous riding, or,
- ▶ If, in their opinion, the horse is lame, sick or exhausted, or
- ▶ For misuse of whip, spur or bit, or ill-treatment of the horse, or
- ▶ For any breach of the rules, or
- ▶ For unseemly behaviour, including bad language.

## **10.6 NEURECTOMY POLICY**

The Pony Club adopts the FEI and, hence, British Equestrian Rules regarding Equine Welfare.

Having sought extensive veterinary and welfare organisation advice (including World Horse Welfare), the Pony Club have ruled the following:

### **Palmar Digital Neurectomy**

Horses/ponies that have had a procedure called a “Palmar Digital Neurectomy”, where the front feet are desensitized, cannot compete in any Pony Club competition.

If they are to be used at non-competitive events, before they are permitted to attend, a Veterinary Certificate of Suitability and Soundness must be issued from their own Veterinary Surgeon and be submitted directly to the District Commissioner/Centre Proprietor and Area Representative for approval. The Certificate must be renewed on an annual basis.

### **Neurectomy/Fasciotomy**

Horses/ponies that have had a procedure called a “Neurectomy/Fasciotomy” for the treatment of Proximal Suspensory Disease, can participate in all Pony Club activities after a suitable period of recovery, at least six months.

However, before they are permitted to attend, they must have a Veterinary Certificate of Suitability and Soundness issued from their own Veterinary Surgeon and be submitted directly to the District Commissioner/Centre Proprietor and Area Representative for approval. The Certificate must be renewed on an annual basis.

### **Interspinous Ligament Desmotomy**

Horses/ponies that have had a procedure called “Interspinous Ligament Desmotomy” for kissing spines can participate in all Pony Club activities after a suitable period of recovery, at least three months.

However, before they are permitted to attend, they must have a Veterinary Certificate of Suitability and Soundness issued from their own Veterinary Surgeon and be submitted directly to the District Commissioner and Area

Representative for approval. The Certificate must be renewed on an annual basis.

In general, if there is an on-going welfare or soundness concern about a horse/pony, the District Commissioner/Centre Proprietor or Area Representative are entitled to ask for a Veterinary Certificate of Suitability and Soundness. This must be submitted to them before the horse/pony in question is permitted to take part in any Pony Club activities. In the event of continued concern then The Pony Club Office can be asked to adjudicate, and they may seek a specialist opinion.

It is important to note that horses/ponies should not be excluded from a fulfilling and useful life after successful veterinary treatment for soundness issues. It is also important that the animal's own vet takes responsibility for their actions and that the Pony Club can seek assurance from them that the animal is pain-free and safe to take part in ridden work.

## 10.7 THE USE OF DRUGS FOR HORSES AND PONIES

It is essential for the welfare of a horse/pony that appropriate veterinary treatment and appropriate medication is given as and when required.

The use of medicines, such as NSAIDS (Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) like phenylbutazone (Bute) or Paracetamol, should be carefully considered and should only be used under veterinary supervision. Its purpose should never be to mask lameness or enable them to carry on ridden work if it causes pain or discomfort. However, if an older pony thrives on having a job and enjoys an occasional trip out to a low-level rally and needs some support to ease some mild soreness to old joints, the use of anti-inflammatory drugs can be beneficial. This should be done transparently with the involvement of veterinarians and Branch District Commissioners. This advice does not apply to competition or horses and ponies in medium or hard work.

## 10.8 HORSE/RIDER COMBINATION GUIDANCE

The combined weight of the rider and equipment, including tack, should **never exceed 20% of the horse or pony's body weight**. This ensures the pony can move freely, work comfortably, and remain healthy in the long term.

If any of the factors listed below are present, the percentage ratio should be reduced further:

If the Horse/Pony:

- ▶ is displaying signs of difficulty in carrying their rider.
- ▶ is under seven or over sixteen years of age.
- ▶ is over or underweight.
- ▶ has a history of musculoskeletal pain (e.g., requires joint injections, has had back pain, has PSSM, etc.).
- ▶ is not fit.

Or if:

- ▶ The rider is over-height, even if within an appropriate weight range.
- ▶ The rider is a novice and does not have a secure, independent seat.
- ▶ The saddle has not been checked in the past six months by a qualified saddle fitter.
- ▶ The workload is intense (e.g., lasting over an hour and requiring significant strength or stamina).
- ▶ Weather conditions are likely to place additional strain on the horse (e.g., extreme heat).

## **10.9 MINIMUM AGE FOR HORSES AND PONIES**

Horses and ponies must be 4 years of age or over to participate in Pony Club Events (Please note some sports require horses to be older to compete, please check the individual rulebooks).

In their first eligible year, they must NOT be less than 48 months old. (4 actual years old). Thereafter, a horse or pony shall be deemed to reach the age of 5 on the 1st of January and shall be deemed to become a year older on each successive 1st January.

e.g. A horse born on 1st August 2020 is 4 years of age on 1st August 2024. From this date, they may then attend pony club events. They will be deemed 5 years of age on 1st January 2025.

If the minimum age to compete is 5 years old. They must be at least 60 months old to compete. Their next birthday will be on 1st January thereafter.

## **10.10 AT PONY CLUB ACTIVITIES**

The following are unacceptable: -

- ▶ ponies that are aged under four years (48 months).
- ▶ ponies that are infirm through old age;
- ▶ ponies that are ill, thin, or lame;
- ▶ ponies that are a danger to their riders or to other Members or their ponies;

- ▶ mares that are heavy in-foal, mares in milk and mares with foal at foot;
- ▶ obese ponies.

Stallions can only be ridden at Pony Club events by Members if they obtain written permission from their District Commissioner and must wear identifying discs on their bridle in the interests of safety.

All ponies are expected to be properly groomed and well turned out, with correctly fitting tack.

# 11. DRESS AND TACK SAFETY

The dress code for each of the individual Sport is given in the respective Rulebooks. However, there are some items of dress that have safety implications. Members are expected to dress correctly and safely for all Pony Club activities.







## 11.1 HATS AND HAIR

**Hair: Must be tied up and back (preferably in a hairnet)** and secure, in a safe manner to reduce the risk of hair being caught and to prevent scalp injuries, Individual Sports may have additional rules.































**Hats: Members must always wear a protective hat when mounted,** to the standards specified below.

The Pony Club aligns its riding hat standards with those of other British Equestrian Federation (BEF) Member bodies. It is strongly recommended to check other governing body and individual Pony Club sports rulebooks regarding specific hat standards, as they may have differing standards.

Only hats to the following specifications are acceptable at any Pony Club activity as of 1st January 2026:

Hat Standard	Safety Mark
Snell E2016 & 2021 with the official Snell label and number	
PAS 015: 2011 with BSI Kitemark or Inspec IC Mark	
(BS) EN 1384:2023 with BSI Kitemark or Inspec IC Mark	
VG1 with BSI Kitemark or Inspec IC Mark	
ASTM-F1163 2015 & 2023 with the SEI mark	
AS/NZS 3838, 2006 with SAI Global Mark	

## EQUESTRIAN SAFETY STANDARDS

	Flat impact	Hazard edge impact	Spike	Crush resistance	Hemisphere anvil	Horseshoe anvil
Snell E2016 & E2021						
PAS015 2011						
EN1384 2023						
VG1						
ASTM F1163 2015 & 2023				 2023 ONLY		

Note: Some hats are dual-badged with different standards. If a hat contains at least one compliant hat standard it is deemed suitable to competition, even if it is additionally labelled with an older standard.

- ▶ For cross-country riding (at all levels) including Eventing, Arena Eventing, Tetrathlon and Horse Trials, together with Pony Racing (whether it be tests, rallies, competition or training) and Mounted Games competitions, a jockey skull cap must be worn with no fixed peak, peak type extensions or noticeable protuberances, not greater than 5mm, above the eyes or to the front, and should have an even round or elliptical shape with a smooth or slightly abrasive surface. A removable hat cover with a light flexible peak may be used if required.
- ▶ No recording device is permitted (e.g. hat cameras) as they may have a negative effect on the performance of the hat in the event of a fall.
- ▶ The fit of the hat and the adjustment of the harness are as crucial as the quality. Members are advised to try several makes to find the best fit. The hat should not move on the head when the head is tipped forward. The Pony Club recommends you visit a qualified BETA (British Equestrian Trade Association) fitter.

- ▶ Hats must be replaced after a severe impact as subsequent protection will be significantly reduced. Hats deteriorate with age and should be replaced after three to five years depending upon the amount of use.
- ▶ Hats must be worn at all times (including at prize-giving) when mounted with a chinstrap fastened and adjusted so as to prevent movement of the hat in the event of a fall.
- ▶ For Show Jumping: hat covers, if applicable, shall be plain dark blue, black or brown only. Branch/Centre team colours are permitted for team competitions. **There should be no additions to the hat cover e.g. pom poms.**
- ▶ For Dressage: hats and hat covers must be predominately black, navy blue or a conservative dark colour that matches the rider's jacket for Area competitions or above. The Pony Club Hat silk is also acceptable.
- ▶ For Mounted Games: hat covers, if applicable, shall be dark blue, black, or brown only.
- ▶ The Official Steward/Organiser may, at their discretion, eliminate a competitor riding in the area of the competition without a hat or with the chinstrap unfastened or with a hat that does not comply with these standards.

The Pony Club strongly discourages purchasing second-hand riding hats or buying them from online retailers without a professional fitting in person.

### **Hat Checks and Tagging**

The Pony Club and its Branches and Centres will appoint Officials, who are familiar with The Pony Club hat rule, to carry out hat checks and tag each hat that complies with the requirements set out in the hat rule with a Pony Club hat tag. Hats fitted with a Pony Club, British Eventing (BE) or British Riding Club (BRC) hat tag will not need to be checked on subsequent occasions. However, the Pony Club reserves the right to randomly spot check any hat regardless of whether it is already tagged.

Anyone attending a Pony Club organised event, who is not a member, should have their hat checked to ensure it meets the required standard, if an approved hat tag isn't present.

**Tagging is an external verification of the internal label and indicates that a hat meets the accepted standards. The tag does NOT imply any**

**check of the fit and condition of the hat has been undertaken.** It is considered to be the responsibility of the Member's parent(s)/guardian(s) to ensure that their hat complies with the required standards and is tagged before they go to any Pony Club event. Also, they are responsible for ensuring that the manufacturer's guidelines with regard to fit and replacement are followed.

For further information on hat standards, testing and fitting, please refer to the British Equestrian Trade Association (BETA) website: <https://beta-uk.org/>

## 11.2 BODY PROTECTORS

A body protector is compulsory for **all** Pony Club Cross Country riding (including Arena Eventing) and Pony Racing activities whether it be training or competition. A body protector for these activities must meet BETA 2018 Level 3 Standard (blue and black label).

For general use, the responsibility for choosing body protectors and the decision as to their use must rest with Members and their parents. It is recommended that a rider's body protector should not be more than 2% of their body weight. When worn, body protectors must fit correctly, be comfortable and must not restrict movement. BETA recommends body protectors are replaced at least every three to five years, after which the impact absorption properties of the foam may have started to decline.



## 11.3 AIR JACKETS

If a rider chooses to wear an air jacket in Cross country or Pony Racing, it must only be used in addition with a normal body protector which meets BETA 2018 Level 3 standard (blue and black label). Parents and Members must be aware that riders may be permitted to continue after a fall in both competitions and training rides for Cross Country and / or Pony Racing if the First Aid provider has no concerns about their welfare. In the event of a fall, an air jacket must be fully deflated or removed before continuing, the conventional body protector must continue to be worn. Air jackets must not be worn under a jacket. Number bibs should be fitted over the air jacket loosely or with elasticised fastenings.

## 11.4 MEDICAL ARMBANDS

Medical Armbands are advised if Members are not accompanied by a responsible adult, including hacking on roads and are compulsory for Pony Racing and for Endurance rides.

## 11.5 CLOTHING

When attending Pony Club activities, Members should be clean, neat and tidy, and dressed suitably for the activity.

For ridden rallies and training activities, Members should wear either a riding jacket with plain coloured shirt with a collar and Pony Club tie, or a sweatshirt and/or polo shirt in Branch/Centre colours and plain coloured jodhpurs.

Jeans should not be worn when mounted except when specifically allowed by certain sports. As a minimum, shoulders must be covered for all riding activities, except for Mounted Games where long sleeves are compulsory.

For Competition, refer to the individual sports rule books for specific clothing types and colours needed for each sport.

Hooded tops are permitted but must be removed during the main riding activity or competition as it allows better visibility of the riders' body position. This also applies to long riding coats; they must only be used while the rider is stationary or in walk, while waiting to ride or compete.

## 11.6 JEWELLERY

**Wearing jewellery while handling or riding a horse or pony is not recommended.** To reduce the chance of injury, the following must be removed:

- ▶ **Necklaces**
- ▶ **Bracelets** (except medical bracelets)
- ▶ **Large or dangling jewellery**, including items attached to piercings.

The following are allowed:

- ▶ Wristwatch
- ▶ Wedding ring
- ▶ Stock pin worn horizontally, and a tie clip. For cross-country, it is advised to remove stock pins.

**If a Member chooses to wear any other type of jewellery at a Pony Club event, such as stud earrings, it is at their own, or their parent/guardian's risk.**

## 11.7 FOOTWEAR

Only standard riding or jodhpur boots with a well-defined square cut

heel may be worn. Plain black or brown half chaps may be worn with jodhpur boots of the same colour. Tassels and fringes are not allowed. No other footwear will be permitted, including wellington boots, yard boots, country boots, "muckers" or trainers. Boots with interlocking treads are not permitted, nor are the boots or treads individually.

Stirrups should be of the correct size to suit the rider's boots (see the Stirrup rule). Laces on boots must be taped for Mounted Games only.

## 11.8 STIRRUPS

Stirrups should be of the correct size to suit the rider's boots. They must have 7mm ( $\frac{1}{4}$ " ) clearance on either side of the boot. To find this measurement, tack checkers should move the foot across to one side of the stirrup, with the widest part of the foot on the tread. From the side of the boot to the edge of the stirrup should not be less than 14mm.

There are now many types of stirrups marketed as 'safety stirrups'. All riders must ensure that their stirrups are suitable for the type of footwear they are wearing and the activities in which they are taking part and that the stirrup leathers are in good condition.

There are no prescribed weight limits on metal 'complete' stirrups, however with the advent of stirrups of other materials, weight limits are frequently given by manufacturers, including peacock stirrups. Any person buying these stirrups should comply with weight limits defined on the box or attached information leaflets. Neither the feet nor the stirrup leathers or irons may be attached to the girth, nor the feet attached to the stirrup irons.

It is strongly recommended that the design of the stirrup chosen allows the foot to be released easily in the event of a rider fall. Specific rules for individual sports can be found in the respective sports rulebooks.

Particular focus should be on ensuring that the boot and stirrup are the correct size for the rider taking part and used in line with the manufacturer's guidance.

**Magnetic Stirrups** – The Pony Club does not permit the use of magnetic stirrups, as our focus is on training and helping our Members develop independent leg control. We believe it's important for riders to learn how to recover a lost stirrup while riding, which magnetic stirrups may not allow. Please see the Stirrup Rule for full details.

For the avoidance of doubt, at Pony Club events:

- ▶ Stirrups which connect the boot and the stirrup magnetically are not

allowed

- ▶ Interlocking boot soles and stirrup treads are not allowed

Any queries concerning the use of magnetic or interlocking stirrups should be referred to [training@pcuk.org](mailto:training@pcuk.org).

## 11.9 HUMANE GIRTHS

Humane girths can pose an increased risk, as many designs could completely fail if a single strap breaks. Therefore, they are not allowed in most Pony Club organised events, including rallies, training, or competitions. The exception is for Polo activities, where their use is permitted in accordance with HPA rules, provided a suitable over girth is also worn.

## 11.10 TACK

All tack must be clean, in a good state of repair, properly fitted and suitable for purpose. Tack inspections should be routinely carried out at all events and the organisers may prohibit participation in the event if they consider the tack to be inadequate or unsuitable, or adversely affect the welfare of the horse/pony. Individual sports do have further specific tack rules which are detailed in their individual sports rulebooks.

Link to tack checking guidance for Officials and Parents/Guardians: [Tack, Equipment & Turnout- Rules and Guidance](#)

## 11.11 ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Electronic devices (i.e. headphones, mobile phones, etc. enabling another person to communicate with the rider) are not allowed whilst the rider is competing. No recording device is permitted (e.g. hat/bridle cameras, etc.).

## 11.12 USE OF THE WHIP

At all times, the whip must only be used

- ▶ For a good reason, as an aid to encourage the horse forward.
- ▶ At an appropriate time, namely when the horse is reluctant to go forward under normal aids of seat and legs.
- ▶ In the right place, namely down the shoulder or behind the leg but never overarm.
- ▶ With care and consideration.
- ▶ No more than twice for any one incident.

Excessive use of the whip anywhere at any event will result in

disqualification or being asked to leave. The following are always considered excessive:

- ▶ Use of the whip to vent a rider's anger.
- ▶ Use of a whip which causes injury e.g. Broken skin or a weal.
- ▶ Use after elimination or retirement at a competition.
- ▶ Use on a horse's head, neck etc. is always excessive.
- ▶ Using the whip from the ground after a rider fall or dismount is always excessive.
- ▶ If the rider's arm comes above the shoulder when using the whip, this is always excessive.

### **11.13 SPURS**

The policy regarding the use of spurs has been updated for 2025. Members wishing to use spurs to enhance the leg aid must be able to ride with a still and stable lower leg, coupled with a thorough understanding of spurs and how to use them correctly.

**RULE: Members wishing to wear spurs must have successfully completed The Pony Club C+ riding test or the Spurs Test 2024.**

Spurs must only be used to enhance the normal leg aids and allow for better communication from rider to horse.

Spurs must never be used to vent a rider's anger or to reprimand the horse.

Use of the spurs which causes injury e.g. blood, broken skin or a weal, is always classed as misuse.

Misuse of the spurs anywhere at any Pony Club event will result in you being asked to leave or disqualification.

### **11.14 USE OF TACK AND EQUIPMENT AT RALLIES AND TRAINING**

Certain types of tack or equipment that are not permitted in competition may still be suitable for use during Pony Club training or rallies, provided they have prior approval from the Coach or District Commissioner (DC)/ Centre Proprietor (CP) and always uphold equine welfare. This may include items such as bitless bridles or hoof boots where safe and appropriate.

However, when ridden, any tack or equipment that restricts the horse's natural movement or forces the head into a fixed position, such as draw reins or bungees, will not be permitted at any Pony Club event.

Grass reins may be used only to prevent the pony from putting its head to the ground. They must never be fitted in a way that ties the head in or alters the pony's natural head position.

**Use of the Whip.** At the discretion of the Coach/DC/CP, Members may use a whip (restricted to 102cm in length, measured up to the tassel) or non-padded baton (maximum length 70cm but not less than 45cm) in rallies and training environments, including show jumping and cross-country, to train the pony to respond correctly and immediately to a light natural aid.

Riders must be educated on the least aversive (gentlest) use of the whip, adhering to the principles of learning theory, i.e. the correct application of negative reinforcement (pressure-release) and classical conditioning.

The whip must **never** be used to punish insufficient responses or unwanted behaviours. The whip must **never** be used to express anger or frustration.

**In competition settings the rules of the sport must be followed.**

# APPENDICES

## DEFINITIONS

**Appointed Person** - Someone appointed to take sole charge of communications in the event of an accident. It may be appropriate for the Trained or Qualified First Aider to be the Appointed Person provided they are part of the team organising the activity.

**First Aid Point** - A designated area, such as a tent, caravan or horsebox, where first aid can be administered in privacy.

**Trained First Aider** - A person who has an EFAW or BHS First Aid qualification (see First Aid Training & Qualifications).

**Qualified First Aider** - A person who has a FAW qualification (see First Aid Training & Qualifications).

**Ambulance Aid** - A person who is fully trained in patient handling, medical gases and ambulance equipment.

**Paramedic** - A healthcare professional with the primary role of providing advanced emergency medical care.

Professional registration: Health Care Professions Council (HCPC) – [www.hcpc-uk.org](http://www.hcpc-uk.org)

**Doctor / GP** - A person who is experienced and qualified in the practice of medicine and can help maintain and restore physical and mental health. It is recommended that the appointed doctor has been trained in pre-hospital emergency care.

Professional registration: General Medical Council (GMC) – [www.gmc-uk.org](http://www.gmc-uk.org)

**Ambulance** - A designated vehicle that is appropriately marked, identifiable and conforms to current regulations for the movement of injured or seriously ill patients. The medical provider must ensure it contains the necessary resuscitation, immobilisation and transportation equipment.

For transporting injured people on a public road, the Ambulance Provider must be registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC). The provider will be able to give details of their registration which may also be checked on the Care Quality Commission website, [cqc.org.uk](http://cqc.org.uk). This site can also be used to search for registered ambulance providers in the local Area.

CQC registration is not required for ambulances that move patients within the

confines of the event site. NHS Ambulances are all CQC registered, which does not need to be cross-checked.

**Emergency Response Vehicle (ERV)** - Usually a 4WD vehicle containing all the equipment for use by the appointed Doctor or Paramedic.

**Rescue Vehicle** - Usually a 4WD vehicle specifically designed for the moving of an injured rider to the nearest ambulance. It must be able to carry an injured person lying secured on a stretcher or long-board.

## APPENDIX A - MEDICAL AND VETERINARY COVER AT PONY CLUB EVENTS

**The information contained within this appendix is for guidance only;** the actual level of medical cover required **must always be determined by the event risk assessment.**

This appendix should be read in conjunction with the Medical and First Aid section, and the Equine Welfare and Veterinary section.

### ALL ACTIVITIES

It is the organiser's responsibility to ensure adequate medical cover is provided for the type of event, taking into account the expected number of participants, and spectators. This must be considered as part of the risk assessment.

**Appendix A1** provides guidance on the level of first aid cover to be provided at Pony Club activities. However, at the very minimum every event must have an Appointed Person, and a Trained First Aider present.

**Appendix A2** provides guidance on the level of veterinary cover at Pony Club activities.

**Please note:** It is recommended that the Coach should **not** be the sole First Aider and Appointed Person present, unless the **risk assessment specifically allows for this**. When making this decision, factors such as the following should be considered:

- ▶ Whether parents or guardians are present throughout
- ▶ The number of Members taking part in the activity
- ▶ The level and type of activity
- ▶ The experience and ability of the Members
- ▶ The experience and ability of the Coach

# APPENDIX A1 - FIRST AID PROVISION MATRIX

APPENDIX A1 - FIRST AID COVER AT PONY CLUB EVENTS			Appointed Person	First Aider/ EFAW	Paramedic	Doctor	Ambulance or equivalent	NPLQ Qualified Pool Lifeguard
<p>This matrix is designed to help event organisers decide what level of First Aid cover might be needed at Pony Club events. It is only a guide and should not be treated as a rule. The actual level of cover should be based on the event's Risk Assessment, which may require more or less than what is shown. However, every event must have at least one Appointed Person and one Trained First Aider present.</p> <p><b>R= Recommended for the event</b>  <b>C= Consider for the event</b>  <b>Y = Must be present</b></p>								
<b>All Rallies</b> (including cross country)			Y	Y	C		C	
<b>Hacking / Fun / Sponsored Rides</b> (including jumping)			Y	Y	C		C	
<b>Mounted Games</b>	Practices, Rallies & Training Days		Y	Y				
	Branch Events & Area Competitions		Y	Y	C			
	Zones & National Finals		Y	Y	R	C	C	
<b>Polo</b>	Practices, Rallies & Training Days		Y	Y				
	Competitions & Championships		Y	Y	R	C	C	
<b>Polocrosse</b>	Practices, Rallies & Training Days		Y	Y				
	Tournaments		Y	Y	R			
	Championships		Y	Y	R	C	C	
<b>Pony Racing</b>	Rallies		Y	Y				
	Pony Club Race Days		Y	Y	R	C	R	
<b>Dressage</b>	Practices & All Competitions (inc. Areas)		Y	Y				
	Regional & National Championships		Y	Y	R	C	C	
<b>Show Jumping</b>	Practices, Rallies & Training Days		Y	Y				
	Branch Competition		Y	Y	C			
	Open class equivalent to PC 100 (Intermediate) or greater		Y	Y	C			
	Area Competitions		Y	Y	R		C	
	National Championships		Y	Y	R	C	C	
<b>Cross Country</b>  (including hunter trials & arena eventing)  <small>Vehicle access to all parts of the course is essential during cross country phase.</small>	Practices, Rallies & Training Days		Y	Y				
	Event- PC 70 or PC 80	Training/ Rallies	Y	Y				
		Competition	Y	Y	R		C	
	**Event - PC 90 (Novice)	Training/ Rallies	Y	Y				
		**Competition	Y	Y	R	**C	C	
	**Event -PC 100 (Intermediate) or PC Open	Training/ Rallies	Y	Y				
		**Competition	Y	Y	R	**C	C	
**Area Competitions		Y	Y	R	**C	C		
**Regional & National Championships		Y	Y	R	**C	C		
<b>Tetrathlon</b>	Run		Y	Y				
	Swim		Y	Y				Y
	Shoot		Y	Y				
<b>Endurance</b>	Less than 10 km		Y	Y				
	More than 10 km – at each vet gate		Y	Y				
<b>CAMP</b> - Please see corresponding note below for more info.			Y	Y	C		C	

\*\* Evidence from accidents suggest that higher obstacles and longer, complex XC courses increase the likelihood of a serious or life changing accident for Members. Speed of attendance by competent medical professionals at such an accident is also important. In assessing risk, organisers need to consider the number and speed at which medical professionals can attend to injured riders. In addition, paramedics may be less likely to "clear" a rider to ride again or ride another horse than a doctor. Having a doctor in addition to paramedics can help provide cover over a complex XC course, gives the organiser additional trained personnel and can help in 'fit to ride' decisions.

## **ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES FOR INDIVIDUAL SPORTS/ACTIVITIES**

### **Swimming Activities:**

For Tetrathlon: A lifeguard must be present at all Pony Club events (Training and Competitions). The lifeguard must have an up-to-date recognised lifeguarding qualification with an up to date first aid at work qualification.

For other swimming activities: For activities such as camps and social events, it is recommended that a qualified lifeguard is present, unless the risk assessment specifically determines that this is not necessary. Where a lifeguard is not in attendance, a minimum of two competent and confident swimmers must be designated specifically for water rescue duties. These individuals must be willing and physically capable of entering the water to effect a rescue, if required, and must remain poolside and solely focused on this role for the duration of the activity. They must have an up to date first aid at work qualification.

**Endurance:** A Trained First Aider should be present at the start and finish of the course. It is recommended that first aiders are available around the course too, e.g. at vet gates.

**Camp:** The First Aid Provision Matrix table indicates the minimum first aid cover required for camps. Additional first aid cover may be required depending on the activities organised during camp. 24-hour cover is required for residential camps/activities.

\*\*\*if you are going to consider having a paramedic and ambulance for all general rallies, it surely should be necessary to consider having a paramedic at branch competitions

# APPENDIX A2 - VETERINARY PROVISION MATRIX

APPENDIX A2 - VETERINARY COVER AT PONY CLUB COMPETITIONS		Vet On-Call	Vet On-Site	Horse Ambulance, Horsebox or Trailer Earmarked	Horse Ambulance, Horsebox or Trailer On-Site
<p>This matrix is included as a guide to event organisers when deciding what level of veterinary cover to provide at Pony Club Events. It should not be seen as the determining the level of cover that is appropriate to provide and the decision as to what level is to be provided (which may be greater or less than the level shown) should be determined in accordance with the Risk Assessment for the event. However at the very minimum a Veterinary practise is to be on call.</p> <p><b>Vets are to be on informed of the events taking place in the local area as assistance may be required.</b></p> <p><b>Tarpaulins are to be available at all events, these are to provide privacy and dignity for all horses and ponies.</b></p> <p><b>R= Recommend                      C= Consider</b></p>					
<b>ALL RALLIES (INCLUDING CROSS COUNTRY)</b>		R			
<b>FUN / SPONSORED RIDES (INCLUDING JUMPING)</b>		R			
<b>MOUNTED GAMES</b>	Practices & Rallies				
	Branch Events & Area Competitions	R			
	Zones	R	C		
	National Finals	R	R	R	
<b>POLO</b>	Practices & Rallies				
	Friendly Tournaments	R			
	Qualifier Tournaments		R		
	Championships		R	R	C
<b>POLOCROSSE</b>	Practices, Rallies & Training Days	R			
	Tournaments	R	C		
	Championships		R	R	C
<b>PONY RACING</b>	Rallies	R			
	Pony Club Race Days	R	R	C	
<b>DRESSAGE</b>	Practices & All Competitions				
	Area Competitions	R			
	Regional & National Championships		R	R	C
<b>SHOW JUMPING</b>	Practice				
	Branch Event				
	Branch Event with Open class equivalent to PC 100 (Intermediate) or greater				
	Area Competitions	R			
	Regional & National Championships		R	R	C
<b>CROSS COUNTRY (INCLUDING HUNTER TRIALS &amp; ARENA EVENTING)</b>	Practice				
	Branch Event PC 70 or PC 80	R			
	Branch Event - PC 90 (Novice)	R		R	
	Branch Event PC 100 (Intermediate) or PC Open	R		R	
	Area Competitions		R	R	
	Regional & National Championships		R	R	C
<b>TETRATHLON (Riding phase only)</b>	Rallies				
	Area Competitions		R	R	
	Championships		R	R	C
<b>ENDURANCE</b>	Less than 10 km	R			
	More than 10 km – at each vet gate	R		R	
<b>CAMP</b>	Additional cover will be needed for activities organised				

## **APPENDIX B – INFORMATION FOR FIRST AID PROVIDERS**

The following information should be supplied to the medical team ahead of the event:

1. Schedule for the day
2. Planned position for the ambulance and medical staff
3. Arrangements for communication (radios/mobile phones)
4. Arrangements for food/comfort breaks
5. Medical briefing plan with fence judges

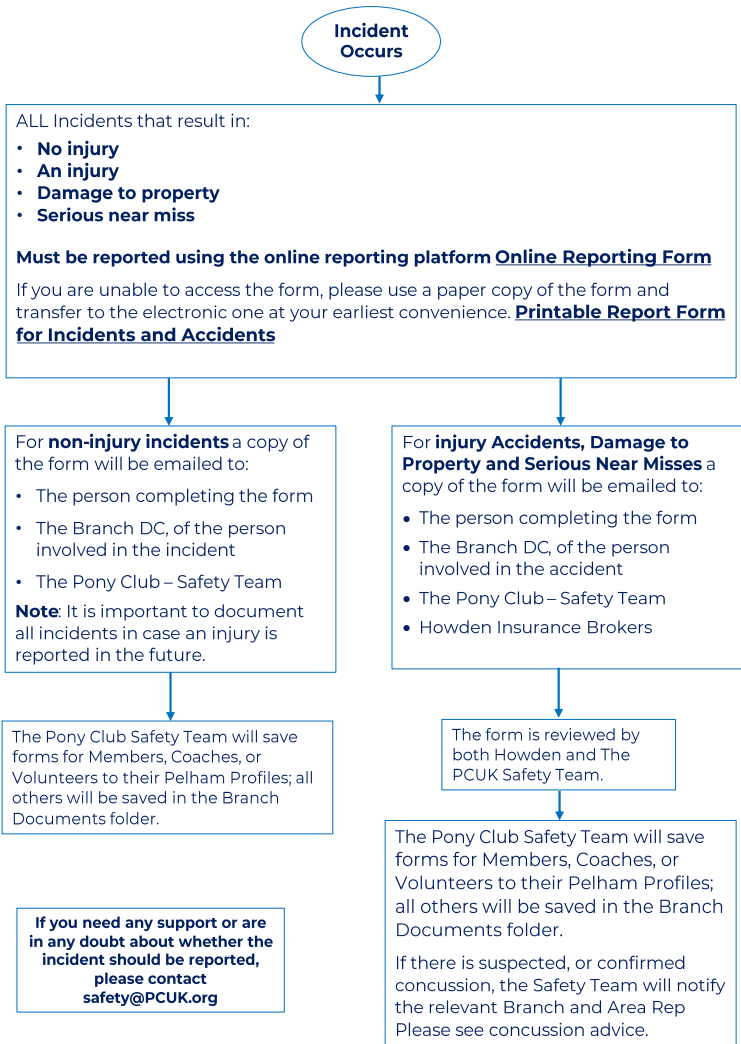
The First Aid Provider should be aware of the accident and emergency units available locally.

All First Aid providers should be given a “First Aid Information Pack”.

It should contain:

- ▶ Details of emergency contacts/SIM plan
- ▶ Notes for the First Aid Provider
- ▶ The Pony Club accident reporting forms/incident logs
- ▶ Concussion Advice Forms
- ▶ Head Injury and Concussion Flowchart
- ▶ Event programme with planned times / schedule
- ▶ Site layout plan, where applicable
- ▶ Map of the Cross-Country course, where applicable.

# APPENDIX C – ACCIDENT REPORTING PROCEDURE



If the accident resulted in:

- Unknown Injury, pending further examination
- An Ambulance being called
- A broken bone
- A visit to hospital
- Concussion
- Damage to property
- Serious Near Miss
- Anything more serious

Howden might make contact to find out more information about the accident or ask for an update if an injury outcome isn't clear.

Any injuries/damage of this nature will be referred to The Pony Club's insurers, and they may instruct a loss adjuster to investigate the accident.

The outcome of the investigation will be shared with Howden and PCUK Safety Team.

Follow-up investigations will be conducted by the PCUK Safety and Welfare Committee or its nominees, as necessary, to ensure any identified shortfalls are addressed, recorded, and that appropriate corrective actions are implemented.

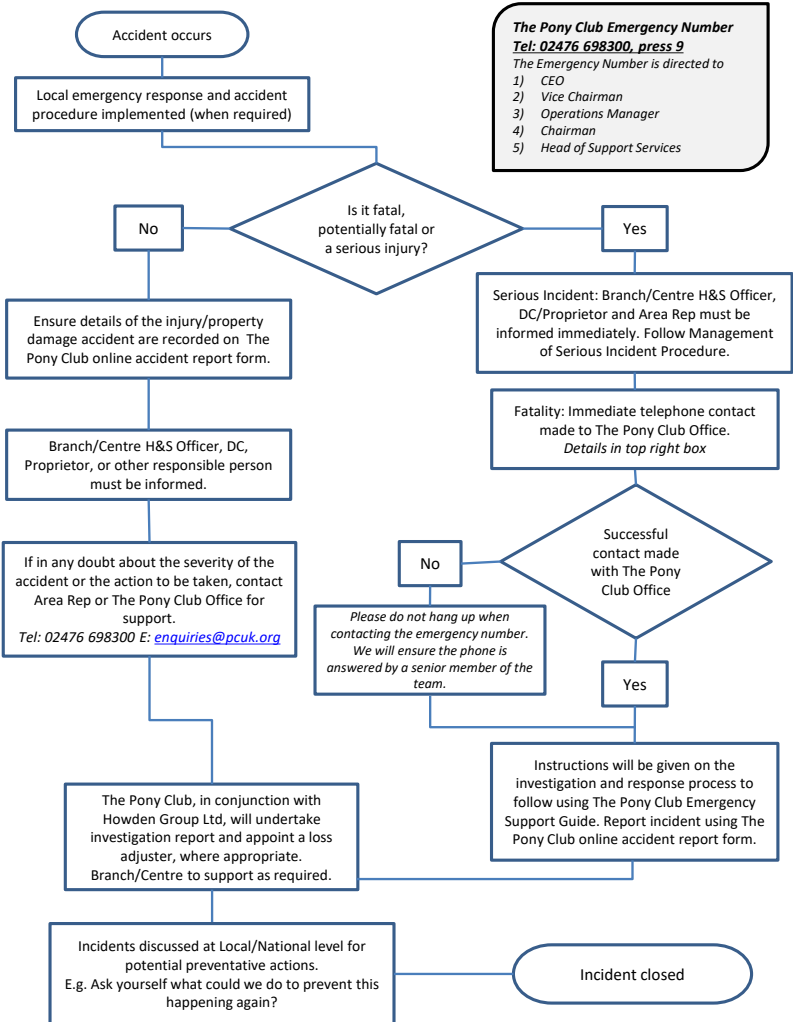
**Please note:** The Safety and Welfare Committee may conduct an investigation into any incident, at its discretion, where the circumstances indicate that further review is necessary, regardless of the initial findings.

### Definitions

- For the purposes of The Pony Club Accident reporting procedure, the following definitions apply:
- **Incident:** An unplanned or uncontrolled event that **does not** cause injury or damage. For example, if a child falls from their pony but gets up uninjured, they are assessed by a first aider and once cleared, they can continue with the riding activity.
- **Accident:** An unplanned or uncontrolled event that results in an injury or damage.
- **Near Miss:** An unplanned or uncontrolled event that did not cause injury or damage, but had the potential to, or narrowly avoided a serious accident.
- **Damage to Property:** An accident that causes physical damage to someone's belongings or property.

**Rule:** All Accident and injury information, damage to property and serious near misses for everyone who attends Pony Club organised events must be recorded using the online accident report form.

# APPENDIX D – ACCIDENT REPORTING AND SERIOUS INCIDENT FLOWCHART

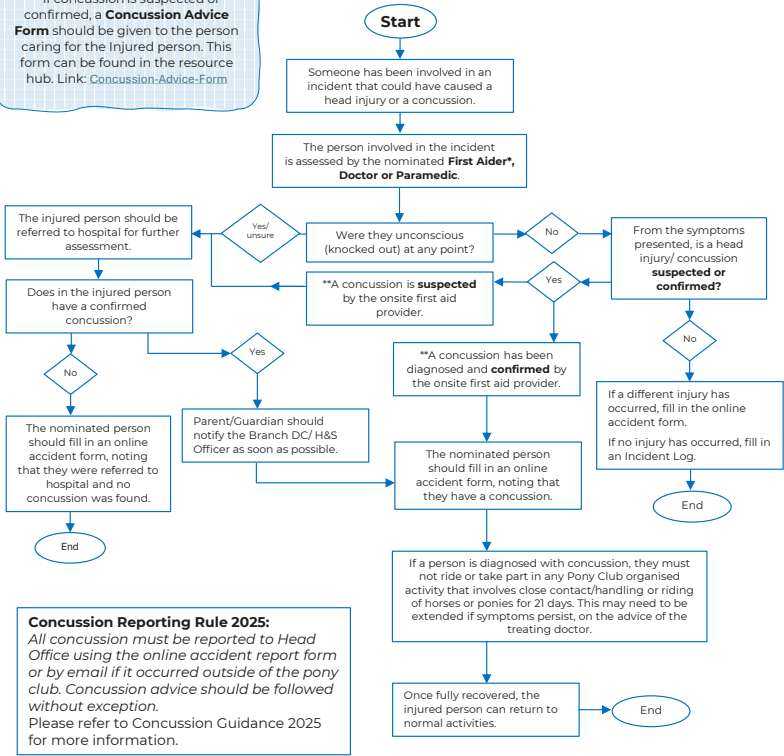


**The Pony Club Emergency Number**  
**Tel: 02476 698300, press 9**  
 The Emergency Number is directed to

- 1) CEO
- 2) Vice Chairman
- 3) Operations Manager
- 4) Chairman
- 5) Head of Support Services

# APPENDIX E – CONCUSSION FLOWCHART

**\*\*If concussion is suspected or confirmed, a Concussion Advice Form should be given to the person caring for the Injured person. This form can be found in the resource hub. Link: Concussion-Advice-Form**



\* If concussion is diagnosed by a first aider, this diagnosis can only be overruled by a doctor and letter evidence will be required.

If you need any advice or support, please contact the Safety Team [Safety@PCUK.org](mailto:Safety@PCUK.org)

## **APPENDIX F - CONCUSSION ADVICE FORM GUIDANCE**

Concussion is a condition that is not always immediately obvious. It can have very serious after-effects.

The Pony Club states in all its Rulebooks that following the fall of a rider, if concussion is suspected, the advice of the medical professional must be sought and followed. Medical advice must be obtained before the Member rides again. This advice must be relayed personally to the Parent/Guardian of the competitor and care must be taken to ensure that the Parent/Guardian fully understands:

- ▶ The potential seriousness of the injury
- ▶ That the rider should be taken that day to a doctor or the A&E Minor Injuries unit at a hospital
- ▶ That the rider must not ride again that day, and,
- ▶ The riding hat should be replaced.

The medical advice must include warnings about the danger signs which can occur later, namely:

- ▶ Deterioration of consciousness
- ▶ Restlessness and/or irritability
- ▶ Vomiting
- ▶ Persistent or worsening headache

The Parent or Guardian must be advised that if any of these symptoms occur, medical assistance must be sought immediately.

The Concussion Advice Form must be completed, signed and dated by the Parent/Guardian.

## APPENDIX G - CONCUSSION ADVICE FORM

I, [Parent/Guardian's Name], being the person with parental responsibility for [Member's Name] of the [Name of Branch/Centre] of The Pony Club have been informed that they have been involved in an accident which may have involved a head injury. As a result, they may have suffered a concussive injury.

I confirm that I have been advised that they should be seen by a Doctor or attend an Accident & Emergency Minor Injuries unit at a hospital today.

I have been advised that the following symptoms could indicate a worsening of their condition:

- ▶ Deterioration of consciousness
- ▶ Restlessness and / or irritability
- ▶ Vomiting
- ▶ Persistent or worsening headache

If any of the above symptoms occur, medical assistance must be sought immediately.

Print Name:

Signed:

Date:

## APPENDIX H - SERIOUS INCIDENT SUPPORT SUMMARY

Please note: More detailed guidance about the management of a Serious Incident can be found in the Pony Club Resource Hub

The Incident Lead is in charge and should delegate roles as they see fit.

<b>Event:</b>		<b>What3Words:</b>	
<b>Venue:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	

<b>Role</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
Appointed Incident Lead		
Event Organiser		
District Commissioner		
Event Secretary		
Control		
Lead First Aider		
Doctor		
Vet		
Farrier		
TA (Technical Advisor)		
Fence Repair		
XC Course Designer		
Landowner		
H&S Officer		
Pony Club CEO	Marcus Capel	02476 698300
Pony Club Area Representative		
The Pony Club Office	CEO Vice Chairman Operations Manager Chairman Support Services	Tel: 02476 698300, Press 9 for Emergency Number

Please do not hang up when contacting the emergency number. We will ensure the phone is answered by a senior member of the team.

## SERIOUS INCIDENT CHECK SHEET

<b>Human Casualty</b>	
1. First Aid Provider and Incident Lead called to scene immediately.	
2. Ensure First Aid Provider has space to treat the casualty. Use screens if available.	
3. Casualty condition assessed by First Aid Provider.	
4. Liaise with First Aid Provider when extent of injuries assessed.	
5. Ambulance called if needed - 999.	
6. First Aid Provider to inform Incident Lead of mode of evacuation.	
7. Incident Lead to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Assist First Aid Provider with evacuation of casualty by ensuring someone meets the ambulance/clears space for air ambulance.</li><li>· Ensure all other attendees, horses and ponies are safe.</li><li>· Support officials and witnesses, there may be some level of shock. If event continues there may need to be a change of official/judge.</li><li>· Ensure next of kin are aware of the situation and kept regularly updated.</li><li>· Ensure horse/pony is being cared for. Check arrangements for getting them home.</li><li>· Ensure other attendees are informed about delay, continuation plans, changes to the event.</li><li>· Depending on seriousness of the accident, notify District Commissioner/Area Representative/Pony Club Office. See below*</li></ul>	

<p>8. Once the casualty has been evacuated, start the investigation into the cause of the accident. This will be done by the H&amp;S Officer if present:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Identify witnesses</li> <li>b. Take statements</li> <li>c. Take photos (of the scene/fence NOT of the casualty/injuries)</li> </ol> <p>The initial aim of the investigation will be to determine if the event should continue and, if applicable, the fence continue to be used. After a serious incident, the Incident Lead will make this decision in consultation with the DC, the organiser and the H&amp;S Officer.</p>	
<p>NOTE: In cases of serious injury, there may be a claim for damages and information will be gathered by The Pony Club Office as required by the insurers. This may include interviewing officials and taking statements.</p>	
<p><b>Rider Fatality</b></p>	
<p>1. Resuscitation should continue until paramedics or doctors arrive, or until exhaustion. Regularly switch persons doing CPR to try to avoid exhaustion. In most cases, a doctor or paramedic will confirm death after prolonged resuscitation attempts, particularly when a child is involved.</p>	
<p>2. Normally the ambulance service will call the police. The police will take control of the scene and co-ordinate what happens, including notifying the next of kin.</p>	
<p>3. The Incident Lead or someone appointed by them shall inform:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The District Commissioner</li> <li>b. The Area Representative</li> <li>c. The Pony Club Office</li> </ol>	
<p>4. In the event of a rider fatality, the event should be stopped, unless permission is given by Senior Management Team at The Pony Club Head Office. If it is decided to continue with the event, the official steward may want to hand over the responsibility for the continued running of the event to the organiser.</p>	

<p>5. The Incident Lead should ensure key witnesses, including First Aid Providers remain at the site and are available to make statements to the police. It is normal for the police to interview witnesses under caution. Only the police can tell witnesses when they can leave.</p>	
<p>6. It is important that all evidence is kept for inspection, this may include tack, riding hat and other safety equipment, and anything relevant to the accident. The Incident Lead should help the police make sure all evidence is collected and handed over to them.</p>	
<p>7. Photographs of the fence or scene should be taken, but UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES should photographs of the casualty be taken.</p>	
<p>8. Radios – transmitting and receiving radios can be easily overheard. Volume controls should be sensibly set. Mobile phones may be more appropriate for sensitive messages.</p>	
<p>9. Liaising with family, friends, and other riders/competitors is important role during initial stages. Appoint someone to liaise with them and keep them updated. The police should provide a family liaison officer, but it might be necessary to appoint someone until they arrive.</p>	
<p>10. Press Statement – this will be issued by The Pony Club Head Office in consultation with the police. People on site should be briefed to NOT make statements, post on social media or speak to friends. A designated spokesperson should be appointed for handling press and other enquiries and everyone should be briefed to refer to this one telephone number. The rider's name should not be released without express permission of the next of kin.</p>	

<p>11. Subsequent investigations will be managed by The Pony Club Office:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The coroner may call some of the officials on the day as witnesses at the inquest.</li> <li>b. The local authority environmental health department will carry out an investigation.</li> <li>c. The Health &amp; Safety Executive (HSE) might become involved as well. It is essential that everyone involved fully cooperates.</li> <li>d. The Multiagency Safeguarding Children Partnership may also conduct a review into the unexpected death of child to confirm whether procedures need to be changed to prevent future deaths. This can be distressing to all involved.</li> </ol>	
<p><b>Equine Casualty</b></p>	
<p>1. Veterinary Surgeon called to scene immediately.</p>	
<p>2. Assess condition of horse/pony.</p>	
<p>3. Incident Lead should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Agree course of action with owner/family and the vet.</li> <li>· Arrange suitable transport for injured horse OR arrange horse to be euthanised and taken away.</li> <li>· Notify the District Commissioner.</li> <li>· Make the decision in consultation with the District Commissioner, the organiser and the H&amp;S Officer about whether to continue with the event.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Equine Fatality</b></p>	
<p>1. The Incident Lead should notify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· The District Commissioner</li> <li>· The organiser</li> <li>· The owner of the horse/pony, if not present</li> <li>· The Area Representative</li> <li>· The Pony Club Office</li> </ul>	

2. The Incident Lead shall ensure key witnesses make immediate written statements. In conjunction with the Veterinarian, the official steward should conduct an immediate and thorough investigation, with the aim of establishing the cause of the accident and death.	
3. Photographs of the fence or scene should be taken, but UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES should photographs of the casualty be taken.	
4. It may be necessary to inspect the tack and any other equipment if it could have contributed to the accident.	
5. Radios – transmitting and receiving radios can be easily overheard. Volume controls should be sensibly set. Mobile phones may be more appropriate for sensitive messages.	
6. Liaising with family, friends, and other riders/competitors is important role during initial stages. Appoint someone to liaise with them and keep them updated.	
7. Press Statement – this will be issued by The Pony Club Head Office in consultation with the veterinarian.	

**Notification Requirements for all types of accident:**

	Human Accident				Horse/ Pony Accident				Property
	Minor Injury	Serious Injury*	Major Injury	Fatality	Minor Injury	Serious Injury	Major Injury	Fatality	Property & Vehicles
District Commissioner	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Area Representative		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Head Office Emergency Number			✓	✓			✓	✓	
Police				✓					

**\* Branch District Commissioner should notify Area Representative if the injured person is kept in hospital and not discharged the same day.**

**Minor Injury** – any injury, whether first aid is given or not, where the injured person does not receive professional medical treatment.

**Serious Injury** – a significant injury which requires professional medical treatment.

**Major/Very Serious Injury** – a very significant injury that may cause substantial, life-changing injuries.

### **Incident Debriefing**

Following a serious incident, it is important to conduct a debriefing as soon as possible afterwards. It provides an opportunity for volunteers and officials impacted by the event to come together, offer mutual support, and discuss key aspects of the incident. It allows for reflection on what went well, areas in need of improvement, and ensures that lessons are learned.

As the immediate effects of adrenaline subside, it is essential to prioritise the well-being of all individuals involved—both mentally and physically. Take time to check in with one another, openly discuss the event, and process its impact. By fostering an environment of communication and care, everyone can move forward more resiliently and be better prepared for the future.

### **Seeking Support After a Serious Incident**

Dealing with a serious incident can be extremely difficult and life-changing for many individuals. If you find yourself in need of additional support or someone to talk to, remember that you are not alone—help is always available. Consider reaching out to someone you trust, such as a Pony Club friend or fellow volunteer who experienced the incident alongside you. However, if you prefer to speak with someone independent of the situation, organisations like Riders' Minds or Samaritans offer confidential and compassionate support.

- ▶ Riders' Minds: Call 0800 088 2073 or text 07480 488 103
- ▶ Samaritans: Call 116 123

Taking the step to talk can make a significant difference in processing what happened, and moving forward.

## APPENDIX I - CROSS-COUNTRY ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

This information should be read in conjunction with the Eventing Organiser's Handbook and British Eventing Guidance.

Only British Eventing (BE) accredited course designers and builders should be used to build Regional and National Championships courses. It is also strongly recommended that a BE accredited course designer/builder is used for Branch events to assess any cross-country courses used, in particular those over 70cm.

**Frangible Pins** - If a BE fence with a frangible pin is being used, a BE accredited course builder must be present for the duration of the cross-country competition to deal with a broken pin. It should be remembered that the frangible pin system has been designed to activate under certain circumstances. The version currently in use has been designed in line with the weight of an average horse (470kg).

**MIMS Clips** - If a BE fence with MIMS clips is being used, a BE accredited course builder must be present to replace a clip.

Pony Club volunteers have not been trained to replace or repair fences following the activation of these collapsible devices. It is therefore incumbent on the event organisers to ensure that fence repair teams, from the organisation hiring the site, are available with sufficient replacement devices in the event they are activated. Pony Club volunteers must not, under any circumstances, try to repair such devices. This must only be done by the event repair team.

# USEFUL CONTACTS

## Emails:

- ▶ [safety@pcuk.org](mailto:safety@pcuk.org) – safety queries, risk assessment, accident reporting, horse welfare, insurance, first aid qualifications.
- ▶ [safeguarding@pcuk.org](mailto:safeguarding@pcuk.org) – any concern for the welfare of any person involved with The Pony Club.
- ▶ [enquiries@pcuk.org](mailto:enquiries@pcuk.org) – any general queries, including governance and codes of conduct queries.
- ▶ [volunteering@pcuk.org](mailto:volunteering@pcuk.org) – any questions or queries relating to volunteering, volunteering training inc. safeguarding training.
- ▶ [communications@pcuk.org](mailto:communications@pcuk.org) – questions or queries about communicating information to the wider public.
- ▶ [training@pcuk.org](mailto:training@pcuk.org) – questions or queries relating to test training, coaching, coaching training and qualifications, reasonable adjustment for training and tests.

## Phone Numbers:

General Line: 02476 698 300

Safeguarding queries: 07833 523 626

Emergency Line: 02476 698 300 option 9 or 02476 698 349 (direct number)

Answered by:

1. CEO
2. Vice-Chairman
3. Operations Manager
4. Chairman
5. Head of Support Services

Please note code of conduct breaches should be directed to the District Commissioner or Area Representative in the first instance, or to [enquiries@pcuk.org](mailto:enquiries@pcuk.org).



**The Pony Club**

Lowlands Equestrian Centre  
Old Warwick Road  
Warwick  
CV35 7AX

**02476 698300**

**[enquiries@pcuk.org](mailto:enquiries@pcuk.org)**