



Children First Act 2015 and Role of Branch Children's Officer



Children First Act 2015


- Irish Pony Club is currently in the process of writing a **Child Safeguarding Statement**. It must include:
 - We are responsible for keeping children safe from harm while they are using our service. i.e. Attending IPC Activities.
 - We are required to carry out a risk assessment to identify whether a child / young person could be harmed while using the service (attending IPC activities). Not just risk of physical injuries involved in our sport – risk of emotional, sexual harm and neglect.



Children First Act 2015

Child Safeguarding Statement (Cont.)


- We must manage risks identified e.g. need for supervision (one Instructor to eight children in a ride, one falls), prevent situation arising where no one adult can manipulate or groom children.
- Select and recruit Volunteers, Officials and Instructors who have satisfactorily completed Garda Vetting and Safeguarding 1. It is an offence to engage someone to do relevant work with children if not vetted.
- DC / Branch Committee must provide information to Volunteer / Officer / Instructor on Garda Vetting and Safeguarding Courses.



Branch Children's Officer (BCO)


Role:

1. Ensures that members can talk freely and have a voice in the running of their Branch.
2. To be available for children, parents or other sports leaders who have concerns.
3. To promote awareness of IPC Safeguarding Statement within the Branch, among members and their parents.
4. To influence policy and practice within the Branch in order to prioritise children's needs, reporting regularly to the Committee, giving children a voice in their Branch.
5. To pass any concerns relating to child protection in accordance with reporting procedures on to the Branch Designated Liaison Person (DC) or to the National Designated Liaison Person.



Branch Children's Officer (BCO)

Role:

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6. To be an advocate for children in a complaints disciplinary procedure to ensure the environment is safe and the process fair for children.
 7. To monitor changes in membership (renewals) and to follow up on any unusual dropout or Branch transfers by members, officials or sports leaders.
 8. To operate with and encourage a strict code of **confidentiality** within the Branch including any matters concerning a child occurring outside the Branch environment.
 9. BCO contact details must be easily available for all members e.g. Branch Website, Notice Board.
 10. BCO must have attended Safeguarding 1 and 2 (repeated every 3 years).
 11. BCO must have satisfactorily completed Garda Vetting (within 5 years).