

County Galway Hunt Child Safeguarding Statement

Section 1 - National Governing Body and Club Information

The Hunting Association of Ireland is the Governing Body for fox hunting in Ireland.

The Hunting Association of Ireland through their clubs/branches/organisations provide various sporting activities and opportunities for young people through participation in clubs, regional/provincial events and through our representative teams at national level.

Affiliate details:

- Name: County Galway Hunt (CGH)
- Sport: Equestrian Sport
- Location: Local
- Activities: Fox Hunting, Hacks, Point to Points, Open days.

Section 2 - Principles to safeguard children from harm

The County Galway Hunt is committed to safeguarding children. By working under the guidance of our Safeguarding Policies our masters, members, subscribers, parents and legal guardians of juvenile members, visitors and hunt employees (participants) working with our young people, throughout the CGH, seek to create a safe environment for young people to grow and develop within sport.

A juvenile (child/children) is any person under the age of 18 years.

The following set of principles should be adhered to:

- Importance of childhood - The importance of childhood should be understood and valued by everyone involved in sport.
- Needs of the child - All children's sport experiences should be guided by what is best for children. This means that adults should have a basic understanding of the emotional, physical and personal needs of young people.
- Integrity in relationships - Adults interacting with children in sport are in a position of trust and influence. They should always ensure that children are treated with integrity and respect, and the self-esteem of young people is enhanced.
- Fair Play - All children's sport should be conducted in an atmosphere of fair play. The principles of fair play should always be emphasised, and organisers should give clear guidelines regarding acceptable standards of behaviour.
- Quality atmosphere & ethos - Children's sport should be conducted in a safe, positive and encouraging atmosphere.
- Equality - All children should be valued and treated in an equitable and fair manner regardless of ability, age, gender, religion, social and ethnic background or political persuasion.

Section 3 - Risk Assessment

This written Risk Assessment document indicates the areas of potential risk of harm, the likelihood of the risk occurring, and gives the required policy, guidance or process documents required to alleviate these risks. The list of risks identified and procedures to manage these risks are contained in the following categories:

Potential risk of harm to children	Likelihood of harm happening L-M-H	Required Policy, Guidance and Procedure document	Responsibility Club/Region/National	Mitigating Factors presently in place /adhered to	Further Actions
CLUB & PRACTICES					
REPORTING PROCEDURES					
Lack of knowledge of organisational and statutory reporting procedures		Codes of Conduct Safeguarding Training Communications policy	CGH	DLP in place	Ongoing Review
Designated officer in club		Safeguarding Training Policy	CGH	DLP in place	Ongoing Review
COMPLAINTS					
Lack of awareness of a Complaints policy		Complaints procedure/policy Communications policy	CGH	Complaints policy	Ongoing Review
COMMUNICATIONS AND SOCIAL MEDIA					
No communication of Child Safeguarding Statement or Code of Behaviour to members or visitors		Child Safeguarding Statement Communications policy	CGH	SS on website. SS distributed to all participants SS on display at hunt kennels	Ongoing Review
Unauthorised photography & recording of activities		Information Technology (Video/photo/social media/smart phone usage), Codes of conduct	CGH	Information technology policy	Ongoing Review
Inappropriate use of social media and communications by under 18's		Information Technology (Video/photo/social media/smart phone usage), Codes of conduct	CGH	Information technology policy	Ongoing Review
Inappropriate use of social media and communications with under 18's		Information Technology (Video/photo/social media/smart phone usage), Codes of conduct	CGH	Information technology policy	Ongoing Review

FACILITIES					
Risk of unintended harm while using facilities at the hunt kennels		Supervision policy	CGH	Supervision policy	Ongoing Review
GENERAL RISK OF HARM					
Vetting of staff/volunteers		Vetting policy	CGH	Supervision policy	Ongoing Review
Safety while participating in mounted activities		All children (under 18 years of age) must wear safety equipment of the appropriate safety specification while participating in CGH mounted activities	CGH	Waiver form signed by parent, legal guardian	Ongoing Review

Section 4 – Procedures

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015¹, Children First: National Guidance², and Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure & Practice and the Children, 2024³. In addition to our Risk Assessment document described above, there are further procedures that support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our activities.

The County Galway Hunt has the following procedures- outlined below- in place as part of our Safeguarding Policies:

- Code of Conduct Policy which includes:
 - *Reporting*
 - *Complaints*
 - *Communications*
 - *Information Technology (Video/photo/social media/smart phone usage),*
 - *Supervision*
 - *Vetting*
 - *Safe guarding Training*

Section 5 – Implementation

We recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. The CGH is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our activities.

Please note the following:

- That participants of the CGH have been furnished with a copy of this statement
- This statement is displayed at Ballymore House at the CGH kennels and available on the hunt website: [County Galway Hunt website, 'The Blazers'](#).

¹ Children's First Act 2015 [Children First Act 2015 \(irishstatutebook.ie\)](#)

² Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children [Children First National Guidance 2017.pdf \(tusla.ie\)](#)

³ Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice

[Tusla - Child Safeguarding - A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice.pdf](#)

- The CGH will keep and store securely all documentation in a confidential manner with respect to meetings, correspondence, and minutes of committee meetings.
- The CGH will set up, maintain, revise, and implement policies and procedures in the best interests of participants and taking into consideration the best interest of the club/committee and/or National Governing Body.
- The CGH will review this Safety Statement and associated documents on 01 09 2027.
- The Designated Liaison Person for The County Galway Hunt is Mary Rose O' Neill
You can also email: maryroseoneill24@gmail.com if you would like any information sent to you.

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed on 01 09 2027

Signed: 

Date: 15 04 2025

On behalf of **County Galway Hunt**
Mary Rose O' Neill

Section 6. Code of Conduct

County Galway Hunt Code of Conduct

This code of conduct applies to all participants to include members, subscribers, parents and legal guardians of juvenile members, visitors and hunt employees of the County Galway Hunt (CHG). This code extends to participation in activities including but not limited to hacks, hunting, point to points, charity rides, open days and other activities organised by the CGH.

Principles

- Adopt the code of conduct as the basic level of agreement between the club and the members, subscribers, parents and legal guardians of juvenile members, visitors and hunt employees (participants).
- Ensure that the activities of the hunt are conducted in accordance with the Irish Master of Foxhounds Association (IMFHA) Code of Conduct⁴.
- Acknowledge that it is all participant's responsibility to implement, support, and promote the code of conduct of the CGH and the IMFHA.
- Ensure safety of participants is paramount during all activities of the CGH.
- Ensure the highest standards of horse welfare during all activities of the CGH.
- Respect fellow participants, regardless of gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, age, disability, race, religion, and membership of the Traveller community.
- Demonstrate appropriate good behaviour by not using foul language, and by not engaging

⁴ [IMFHA - Irish Masters of Foxhounds Association](#)

in abusive language or deeds or by harassing other participants.

- Respect the decisions made by the Masters and Committee on behalf of the CGH.
- Respect the decisions made by the Field Master on behalf of the CGH while on the hunting field.
- Promote the reputation of the CGH and take all steps to prevent it from being brought into disrepute.
- Ensure that all activities are inclusive and allow all participants to participate in an enjoyable way.

County Galway Hunt Policies

Reporting

- Participants should be aware of the CGH Code of Conduct
- Report incidents/accidents involving children to the child's parents or legal guardians.
- Report incidents/accidents involving children to the designated liaison person.
- Report incidents/accidents involving children to the chair of the CGH committee who will refer the matter to the designated liaison person.
- Report breaches of the code of conduct by participants to the designated liaison person or chair of the CGH committee
- All reports will be followed up by the designate liaison person and chair of the CGH committee.

Complaints

- Participants should be aware of the CGH Code of Conduct.
- Complaints can be made to any chair of the CGH committee.
- A formal complaint must be made in writing to the chair of the CGH.
- All formal complaints will be reviewed by the chair of the CGH and the designated liaison person.
- Participants should cooperate with any review in respect of an alleged breach of the code of conduct.
- Ensure complaints including rumours are not ignored and are dealt with appropriately, following the relevant procedures.

Communication

- A participants of the County Galway Hunt have been furnished with a copy of this statement
- This statement is displayed on The County Galway Hunt website
- This statement is displayed at Ballymore House at the County Galway Hunt kennels
- The designated liaison person is the point of contact for all safeguarding relayed matter.

Information Technology (Video/photo/social media/smart phone usage)

- Hunting is carried out in public, therefore the CGH are not responsible for any social media posts made by members of the public.
- Participants of the CGH should not post any content of children participating in hunt activities without the express permission of the child's parent(s) or legal guardian.

Reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Statutory Authorities.

- The designated liaison person will be responsible for reporting any safe guarding issues that arise within the CGH to the Statutory Authorities.

Supervision

- A juvenile (child/children) is a person under the age of 18 years. It is the policy of the CGH that all children must be supervised by parent/ legal guardian or named adult when participating in hunt activities.
- Unsupervised children cannot participate in hunt activities where there is no named adult in place to provide supervision.

Vetting

- The National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016 provide a statutory basis for the vetting of persons carrying out relevant work with children or vulnerable persons.
- The committee will carry out a role identification exercise and determine when vetting is required. A person who undergoes vetting must also undertake the Safe Guarding 1- Basic Awareness Course.
- The vetting confirmation and safeguarding 1 certificate of completion must be provided to the committee of the CGH.

Safeguarding Training

- The CGH will abide by the recommended safeguarding training in line with Sport Ireland and Horse Sport Ireland guidance.
- The CGH has one named Designated Liaison Person who has undergone relevant Garda vetting and safeguarding training.

Appendix 1. Additional information

Horse Sport Ireland
[Home - Horse Sport Ireland](#)

Safeguarding Guidance for Children & Young People in Sport
[safeguarding-guidance.pdf \(sportireland.ie\)](#)

Sport Ireland
[About Sport Ireland | Sport Ireland](#)

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