

Mounted Games Association Ireland Child Safeguarding Policy

The Mounted Games Association of Ireland (MGAI) has a statutory and moral duty to ensure that the Association functions with a view to safe guarding and promoting the welfare of children who are riding or non-riding members of the Association.

The MGAI as an affiliate association of Horse Sport Ireland (HSI) fully endorses the HSI Policy statement "*The Code of Ethics & Good Practice for Youths and Vulnerable Adults In Our Sport*" guidelines.

Throughout this policy reference will be made to "Children and young people". This term is used to mean those under the age of 18. The committee duly recognise that some adults are also vulnerable to abuse, accordingly, the procedures maybe applied (with appropriate adaptations) to allegations of abuse and the protection of vulnerable adults.

The welfare of our young people in MGAI is our first priority and we are committed to providing an environment that will allow participants to perform to the best of their ability, free from abuse, neglect, bullying and intimidation. Fair play is the guiding principle of the Code of Ethics & Good Practice for Children's Sport.

Every individual in MGAI who has a duty of care to children must sign up and adhere to this Code of Ethics & Good Practice, including but not exclusively the following; Administrators at all levels, Officials, Coaches, Volunteers and Parents/Guardians.

MGAI will ensure the careful recruiting and selecting of all Coaches and Volunteers and that they are aware of the responsibility to safeguard children in their care.

MGAI will ensure that Parents/Guardians and Children are given the appropriate opportunity to voice concerns they may have at any given time.

MGAI undertakes

To provide a safe environment for children and young people to compete in. To offer support and confidentiality to children and young people who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm,

To take appropriate action to see that such children and young adults are kept safe, whilst attending MGAI organised events or representing MGAI elsewhere.

In pursuit of these aims, the general committee will approve and annually review policies and procedures with the aim of :

Raising awareness of issues relating to the welfare of children and young people and the promotion of a safe environment for the children and young people to compete in.

Aiding the identification of children and young people at risk of significant harm, and providing procedures and reporting concerns.

Establishing procedures for reporting and dealing with allegations of abuse against officials of MGAI

The general committee of MGAI recognises the following definitions of abuse;

1 Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning or suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. It may be done deliberately or recklessly, or be the result of a deliberate failure to prevent injury occurring. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child they are looking after.

2 Neglect

Neglect is the persistent or severe failure to meet a child or young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs. It will result in serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failure to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

3 Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves a child or young person being forced or coerced into participating in or watching a sexual activity. It is not necessary for the child to be aware that the activity is sexual and apparent consent of the child is irrelevant. This may include non contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of pornographic material or in watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

4 Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse occurs where there is persistent emotional ill treatment or rejection. It causes severe and adverse effects on the child's or young person's behaviour and emotional development, resulting in self-worth. Some level of emotional abuse is present in all forms of abuse, though it may occur alone.

Members of MGAI

Members of MGAI are entitled to:

- Be listened to
- Be believed
- Be safe and to feel safe
- Be treated with dignity, sensitivity and respect
- Have a voice in the club / organisation
- Participate on an equal basis
- Be happy, have fun and enjoy sport
- Experience competition at a level at which they feel comfortable
- Make complaints and have them dealt with
- Get help against bullies
- Say no
- To protect their own bodies
- Confidentiality

Members of MGAI must:

Treat each other, officials and administrators with respect.

Play fairly at all times and do their best

Respect team members, even when things go wrong

Respect opponents, be gracious in defeat
 Abide by the rules set down by MGAI and their representatives when travelling to away events.
 Behave in a manner that avoids bringing Mounted Games into disrepute
 Use social media responsibly and not infringe on rights or respect of others
 Use photographic equipment responsibly and not infringe on rights or respect of others
 Ensure that the welfare of their pony/horse is paramount at all times

Members of MGAI must not:

Cheat
 Use violence or physical contact that is not allowed within the rules
 Shout or argue with officials, team mates or opponents
 Harm team members, opponents or their property
 Bully or use bullying tactics to isolate another player(s).
 Use unfair or bullying tactics to gain advantage
 Keep secrets, especially if they have been caused harm
 Tell lies about adults / young people
 Spread rumours
 Alcohol: Under no circumstances shall any underage member consume alcohol at an MGAI event or whilst representing or supporting an Irish player or team elsewhere at Mounted games
 Random breathalysing can be employed at MGAI events and competitions. Also if there is a particular concern of a member being under the influence of drink, they can be requested to undergo breathalysing
 Drugs : Members are strictly forbidden from using or being in possession of any form prohibited or mood altering substance

Misuse of Substances

The term `substance` covers alcohol, solvents and illegal, as well as prescription drugs not prescribed for the user.

Where a member arrives at an event under the influence of some substance:

1. The member must not be allowed to remain and ride.
- 2 If a member appears aggressive or at risk of endangering themselves, or others. The committee /ground jury must decide what action is to be taken .It is important to note that MGAI has a duty of care to all its members.
3. a) The member should be accompanied back to their responsible person ie parent carer.

In developing the above policies and procedures, the CPO of MGAI has consulted with Ciara Gorman HSI CPO Alison Davies MGAGB CPO and acknowledges their input with gratitude.