

# Bisley and Sandown Branch Chase Pony Club

## The Policies and Rules of the club 2022

### AIMS

The Aims of Bisley and Sandown Chase Branch of the Pony Club are to ensure that-

- your child is safe
- all our members and their families have fun and enjoy being part of our branch of the pony club.
- we offer a range of activities for all age and skill levels
- we provide training that will help our members grow in ability and confidence
- entry to competitions and teams includes as many of our members as possible

In order to achieve these aims, and that we have a supportive and friendly club, there are some policies and rules that the Branch will be operating by. These policies/rules will apply to all our members, and many are based on recommendations by our Area and National Headquarters.

### Keeping your child safe.

These policies are set out by Pony Club HQ, many of them are from government guidance and law.

Without exception, our instructors hold minimum DBS and Safeguarding certificates, and we will also ask our regular parent helpers and First Aiders to undertake **DBS checks**. For camp helpers, safeguarding training will also be required.

We have a committee member who oversees this area of the Branch **to ensure compliance**.

All our events require a Health and Safety Inspection and we have a committee member focusing on this too.

Both these officers follow the guidance set out in an annual publication from the Pony Club and further information is available on the national Pony Club website.

### Behaviour

We want the Branch to be friendly and supportive and would expect that parents/guardians and children behave appropriately. The Branch will not tolerate any form of bullying, bad language or aggressive behaviour by children or parents towards **ponies**, other members/families, visitors or instructors.

Respect to other competitors and organisers of the events is expected and any reports of poor behaviour or sportsmanship, by either parents or children, will be taken very seriously.

We are expecting that parents will set an example to children, be punctual to events, support instructors and other parents.

In line with safeguarding practice, Parents are asked not to address any issues with children directly, outside of their own family, and bring any concerns to the attention of Instructors or DC.

*The Branch will operate a zero-tolerance policy to bullying by parents to their children, other children or adults or children to children.*

## **Alcohol**

The Pony Club has an alcohol and drugs policy and it is expected that the Branch comply with this.

## **Social Media**

We currently operate a member only Facebook account. This site has posting veto by our DC and membership secretary.

When posting Branch news on a more public Facebook or other type of social media account please check if other parents and children over 13 years are happy to have their information shared more widely.

Any group chats between B&SC members should not contain bad language, inappropriate comments or evidence of cyberbullying. Any evidence of this will be taken very seriously.

## **Booking events and rallies**

Bisley and Sandown Chase Pony Club now offer an electronic payment system via its website.

Payments for all activities should be made in advance via this system. **Cash payments are no longer accepted.**

Once booked a refund cannot be made (unless vet's or Doctors' Certificate or proof of positive Covid test) or unless someone is available to take your place. Obviously, if we cannot honour times, ability, we will reschedule or refund.

## ***Rallies***

It is important that before booking the times and ability of pony and rider is taken into account.

It is difficult for our instructors to teach sessions with a wide mixture of abilities, so wherever possible we will group members in ability levels.

Please book as early as possible to ensure we can book instructors and times as efficiently as possible.

Cancellations are as above.

## ***Competition and Entries***

Please tell the B&SC team manager, or whoever has issued the invitation, as soon as possible if you want to take part in **team** competitions.

Please follow their instructions for payment. When paying B&SC first please do this as soon as possible, to avoid team managers or other parents bearing the costs.

We would not expect members to withdraw from teams, but where this proves necessary, please inform the team manager asap so that a replacement can be found. No refund will be made unless a replacement can be found.

In the interests of the pony's welfare, we would recommend that the pony is only entered for two show jumping classes per show and one in eventing.

## Tests

Signing up for training for tests means you have committed to paying for the whole course. Attendance is vital to ensure your child gets the level of training they need to pass the test.

### **Concern re ability to sign up and pay for Branch activities**

We want all members to enjoy a wide range of activities that the Branch has to offer. If you have concerns about ability to pay for branch activities, or your child has special needs, please do approach the D.C. to discuss and explore possible solutions.

## Team selection

### ***Interbranch Competitions:***

We want as many members as possible to represent the Branch and we would encourage people to ride in a team rather than as individuals.

If we have too many, or not enough members to ride as a team, then we will suggest the member rides as an individual and run a reserve list.

Selection will be made as per the schedule for the competition, which may have particular members age, pony height, and experience criteria. Please read the schedule before entering your child.

### ***Area Competitions:***

It is important that parents read and keep up to date with emails from the Branch. Membership renewal must be made by February in order to represent the Branch that year

It is the rule of the Pony Club that any member riding in the Area Competitions must have attended three rallies on the horse/pony since July in the preceding year and at least one since 1<sup>st</sup> January.

Our Branch expects that members have attended one rally in the discipline in which they want to compete and that they have competed at that level prior to the selection date.

### ***Mounted Games:***

Attendance at the Saturday afternoon training sessions held September – July is expected regularly.

The trainer can advise on the frequency required, particularly in relation to team groups and competitions.

## Instructors

All of our instructors have appropriate training and have to demonstrate that their skills and qualifications are up to date. They **are Pony Club Accredited: they have had enhanced DBS check, hold a First Aid qualification as well as a Safeguarding certificate, and have attended ongoing CPD.**

We have an instructor on the committee who keeps track of this.

**As part of their commitment to safety, instructors will not allow children to train above the ability that they see on the day of training.**

**An instructor has the final say on heights jumped, courses attempted, and this will be based on their assessment of the child and environment during that lesson.**

*Parents are expected to support the instructors, not undermine them. Rudeness to instructors from adults and children will not be tolerated.*

## **How you can help**

Our Branch relies on volunteers. All committee roles are unpaid and in addition to day jobs!! Our biggest supply of volunteers is you!

We need your help with general maintenance of the field, helping at events and jobs behind the scenes. All members are expected to help at a minimum of two events a year. This is part of your membership agreement, and failure to help will lead to membership not being renewed for the following year.

We have an annual AGM, where our Treasurer presents her report, and future plans discussed.

We also have an annual awards ceremony to celebrate all our members achievements.

Please do contribute your ideas or any concerns about the Branch to our DC.

### **In summary the key rules for being a member of the Branch are as follows:**

- Members and parents must not demonstrate any form of bullying, bad language or aggressive behaviour towards other members/families, visitors or instructors either in person or via social media.
- Competitors and parents should show respect to all involved in Pony Club any reports of poor behaviour, sportsmanship, or bad language will be taken very seriously.
- Parents should set an example to children, be punctual to events, support instructors and other parents.
- Parents are asked not to address any issues with children direct, outside of their own family, and bring any concerns to the attention of Instructors or DC.
- Pony club coaches, officials and volunteers must not consume alcohol, or any illegal substance, when they are directly responsible for young people at any pony club event – riding or non- riding. This includes camp and away competitions. No alcohol at any Pony Club Event may be consumed by anyone under 18 years old.
- All members are expected to help at a minimum of two events a year. This is part of your membership agreement **and we take your commitment very seriously. Without help we cannot maintain our**, and failure to help **may** lead to membership not being renewed for the following year.