



**TRAINING WORKSHOP**

# **SAFEGUARDING FOR EQUESTRIANS**

2025

# Introductions and Housekeeping

Today's session



British  
Equestrian

- Please remain on **mute** when not speaking to reduce background noise.
- If you are able to, having your **video** on during the session will be helpful.
- Please keep any sensitive information discussed confidential and treat each other with respect.
- Talking about safeguarding can be challenging. Please look after yourself and take a break if you need.

# Learning outcomes

- 1 Understanding safeguarding
- 2 Your safeguarding policy and responsibilities
- 3 How can I help prevent abuse?
- 4 Responding to a safeguarding concern
- 5 Case studies

You will be sent a copy of the learning materials and a certificate of completion after the course.

# 1) Understanding safeguarding

## Setting the scene



Trigger warning:  
Please be aware these videos contain  
content that viewers may find  
upsetting. Take a break if you need.



# 1) Understanding safeguarding

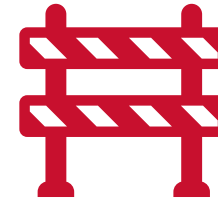
How does abuse happen?



1. A perpetrator has the desire to commit abuse.



2. Internally, they justify it to themselves. They decide it's okay to act on their desire.



3. They get access to their victim(s) and find the opportunity to abuse.



4. They overcome the victim's own resistance and/or convince them not to report.

It is safeguarding's job to build a wall of measures to prevent abuse. We need to make sure everyone knows what to look for. We need to make it easy for victims to get help if something doesn't seem right.

# 1) Understanding safeguarding

Abuse in sport happens.

**There are positions of trust that create an imbalance of power.**

**It's our responsibility to recognise this, and then behave in a way that keeps everyone safe.**

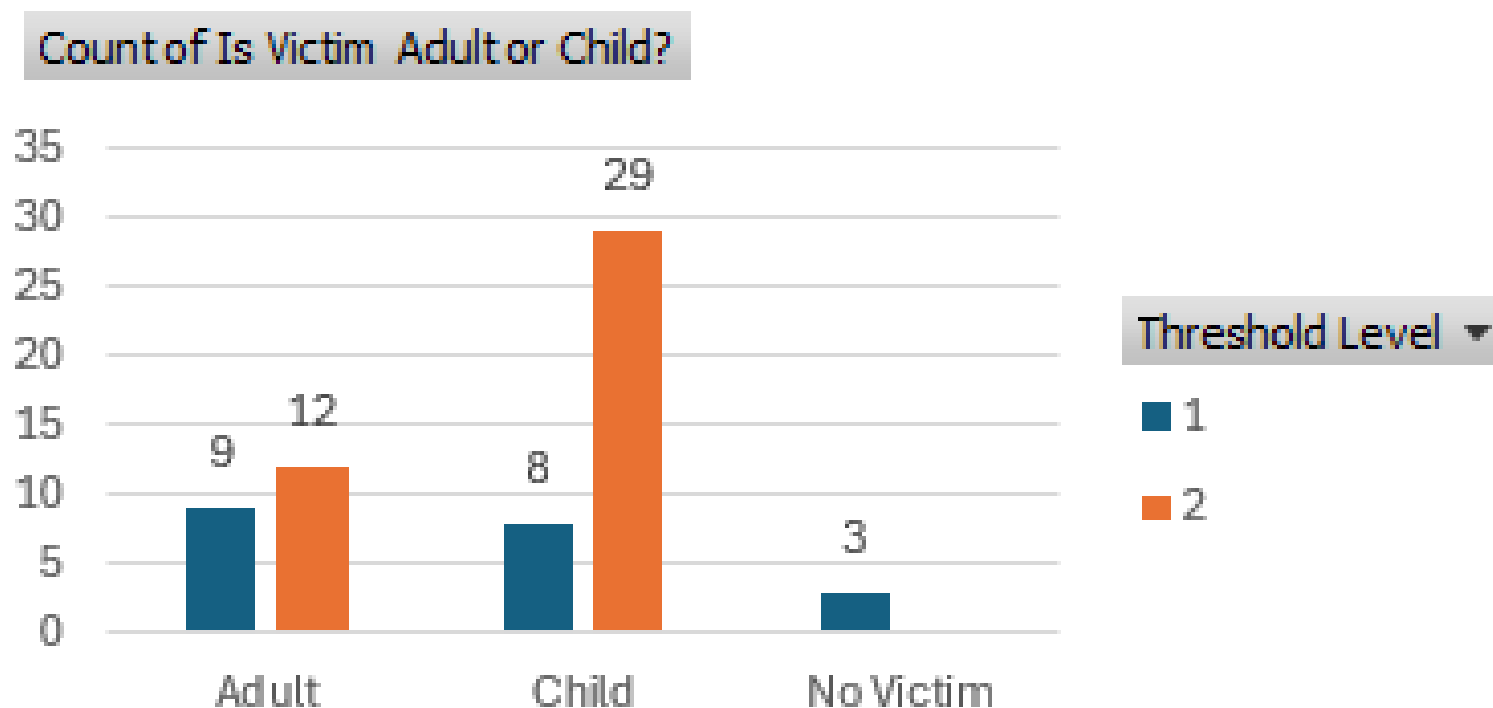
The Whyte Review received information from over 400 individuals as part of its call for evidence looking into gymnastics.

The Sheldon Review in football found at least 240 suspects and 692 survivors.

# 1) Understanding safeguarding

Abuse in equestrian activity happens.

The BEF and Member Bodies are actively investigating safeguarding cases every day.





# 1) Understanding safeguarding

## Who are we protecting?

We protect everyone, but the law identifies two vulnerable groups in particular that we need to protect from harm:

### 1. Children and Young People

- Anyone under the age of 18 (16 in Scotland).

### 2. Adults at risk

- An adult who has additional needs for care and/or support.



[Read the  
Government  
Guidance here](#)



# 1) Understanding safeguarding

Understanding the types of abuse

## Child

- Neglect
- Physical
- Emotional
- Sexual

## Adult

- Self-neglect
- Modern slavery
- Domestic abuse
- Discriminatory
- Organisational
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Neglect
- Emotional

We also have  
Prohibited Conduct  
which covers other  
behaviours

## 2) Safeguarding for Equestrians

What is our goal?

Our **vision** is to ensure the highest standards of welfare are promoted and applied to everyone, whatever their involvement in equestrianism

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SCAN TO WATCH CHLOE'S STORY

SAFEGUARDING

# WORRIED ABOUT A CHILD?

WE SUPPORT

## SAFE TOPLAY

Say Something If you See Something

Our Safeguarding Lead is:-

Contact:

British Equestrian

THE NATIONAL LOTTERY

SPORT ENGLAND

nwg

## 2) Safeguarding for Equestrians

What does equestrian sport have in place?

- Any affiliated event or yard will have a **Designated Safeguarding Officer**, and you can report concerns to them.
- They will watch for any poor practice and promote ways to keep everyone safe.
- Include them in planning events and other activities.
- As a federation, we work closely with the relevant statutory authorities.



## 2) Safeguarding for Equestrians

What does a Safeguarding Officer do?

**You can expect the following things from your Safeguarding Officer:**



Promote a culture that puts people first



Implement safeguarding policy



Make sure everyone understands safeguarding



Manage concerns & reports at club level



Be designated safeguarding lead at events



Maintain confidentiality and share information appropriately

Support their work &  
help keep sport safe

## 2) Safeguarding for Equestrians

What should parents and carers expect from us?

We want those caring for children or adults at risk to expect high safeguarding standards from us.

As a minimum we need:



## 2) Safeguarding for Equestrians

### Safeguarding Facts Quiz

The most common category of safeguarding concerns reported to the BEF is Bullying.

True

False

All coaches teaching children, whether paid or unpaid, should have an up-to-date criminal record check.

True

False

You need at least two coaches for a class of eight 4-8yr old children riding off lead rein.

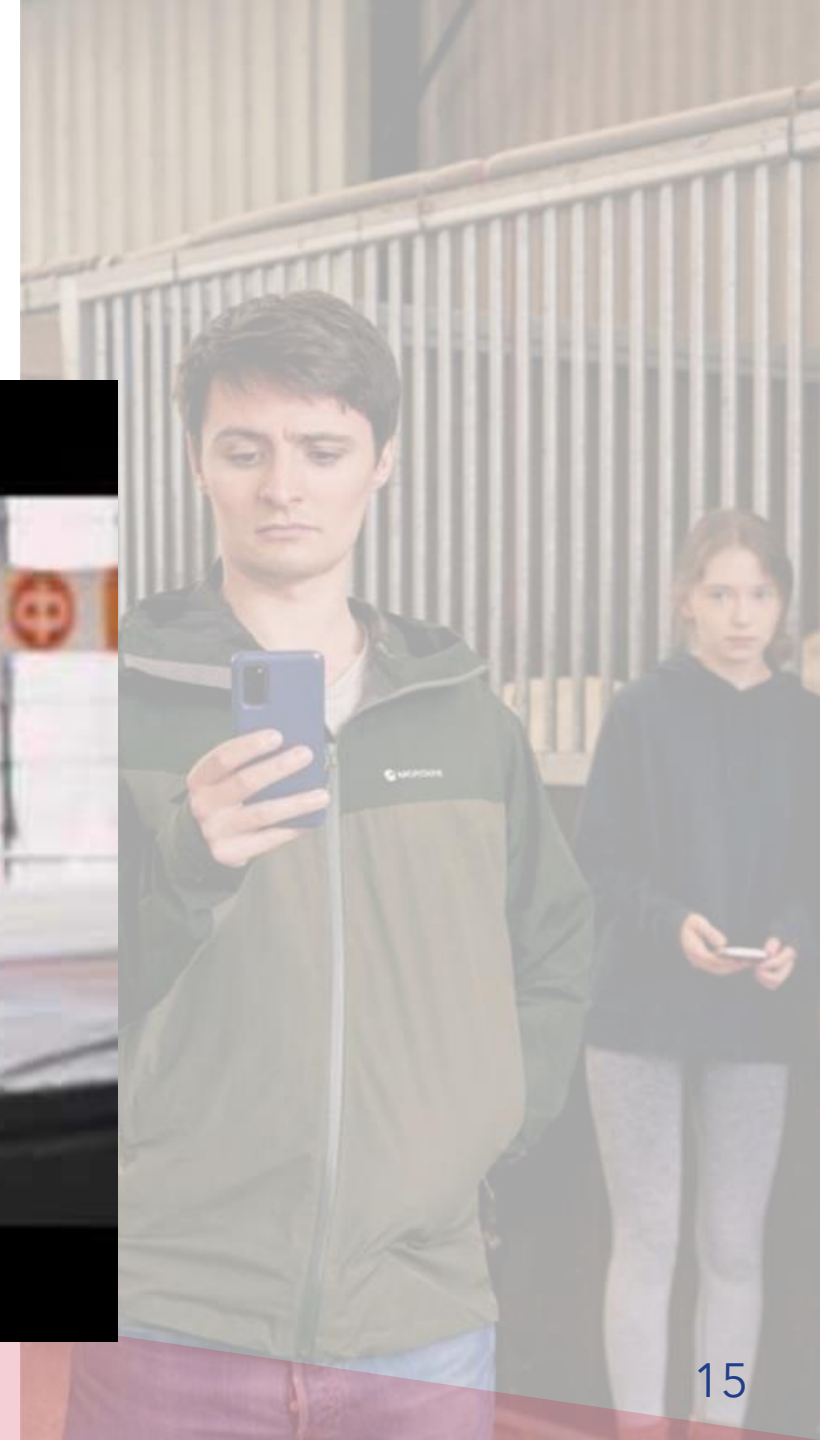
True

False



## 2) Safeguarding for Equestrians

How we react to safeguarding matters







Take a break

See you in 10 minutes

### 3) How can I help prevent abuse?

#### Spotting the signs

You may witness someone behaving inappropriately and know straight away what is wrong. Other times, we observe behaviours in victims that are more subtle but are still important to recognise and flag to a safeguarding officer, such as;

**Becoming withdrawn or  
anxious**

**Unexplained changes in  
behaviour**

**Uncharacteristically  
aggressive**

**Lacking social skills or  
friends**

**Running away/going  
missing**

**Poor or unusual  
relationship with adults**

**Always choosing  
clothing that covers  
their body/limbs**

**Inappropriate  
knowledge for their age**

### 3) How can I help prevent abuse?

Most importantly, listen to those who may be at risk.





# 3) How can I help prevent abuse?

You have a voice in our sport. Use it.



**Keep safeguarding central and visible**

Example: Poor safeguarding measures can signal to a perpetrator that they're unlikely to be challenged.

**Be professionally curious**

Example: if a child is behaving unusually during a lesson, ask yourself whether it could be a sign of concern.

**Help others to learn from their mistakes**

Example: if a coach is moaning that they needed take a child in their lorry on their own but weren't allowed to, explain that the guidance is to protect them too.

**Report and refer**

Example: mention to your safeguarding officer if an instructor has added a child on snapchat. It might be nothing, but it could be a pattern of behaviour and it's important to correct it early.

# 3) How can I help prevent abuse?

Advocate best practice



## 3) How can I help prevent abuse?

How can I remember all this?



We know that safeguarding can be tricky.

Our “Safe To Play” website is designed for parents, coaches, officials and volunteers and gives key safeguarding information in an easy-to-read format.

Many Member Bodies also have dedicated support and guidance available on their websites.

You can signpost people to these resources or use them yourself if you have questions.

## 4) Responding to a concern

How to handle a disclosure from a child





# 4) Responding to a concern

How to be good at listening

- 1) Be approachable and reassuring
- 2) Let the conversation happen at its own pace and in its own words
- 3) Reflect back to show you understand

**NSPCC**  
‘Learning’

## Let children know you’re listening

A **safeguarding resource** to help you show children and young people that, whatever they want to share, you’re ready to listen.  
**There are three simple directions to remember...**

- **Show you care, help them open up**  
Give them your full attention and keep your body language open and encouraging. Be compassionate, be understanding and reassure them their feelings are important. Phrases like “you’ve shown such courage today” help.
- **Take your time, slow down**  
Respect pauses and don’t interrupt them – let them go at their own pace. Recognise and respond to their body language. And remember that it may take several conversations for them to share what’s happened to them.
- **Show you understand, reflect back**  
Make it clear you’re interested in what they’re telling you. Reflect back what they’ve said to check your understanding – and use their language to show it’s their experience.

+ **Find out more**  
For more training and resources to help protect children visit [nspcc.org.uk/listen](https://nspcc.org.uk/listen)



## 4) Responding to a concern

### Responding to a disclosure

#### **Listen**

Let them speak at their own pace, and in their own words.

#### **Reassure**

Consider the barriers to abuse. Reassure them they have done the right thing by talking to you.

#### **Ask open questions**

Don't try to lead them to any particular answers. Use the TED method (tell me..., explain to me..., describe to me...) to keep your questions open.

#### **Refer**

Get the information to the people who need it, so they can take the right action. Don't promise to keep the information a secret.

#### **Record**

As soon as you're able to after speaking to the child/adult at risk, make notes of everything they told you. Include dates/times.

## 4) Responding to a concern

Explaining the barriers to reporting

Top tip

**Removing the  
barriers of making  
a disclosure**



# 4) Responding to a concern

Who do I turn to?



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Someone makes a disclosure to you, reports a concern about someone else to you, or you observe/hear something that concerns you



Check the victim's immediate wellbeing. If needed, call the police. **Speak to your Safeguarding Officer**, and get the concern reported to your Member Body's Safeguarding Lead.



Complete any reports/forms/records needed. Assist with any investigations as required.

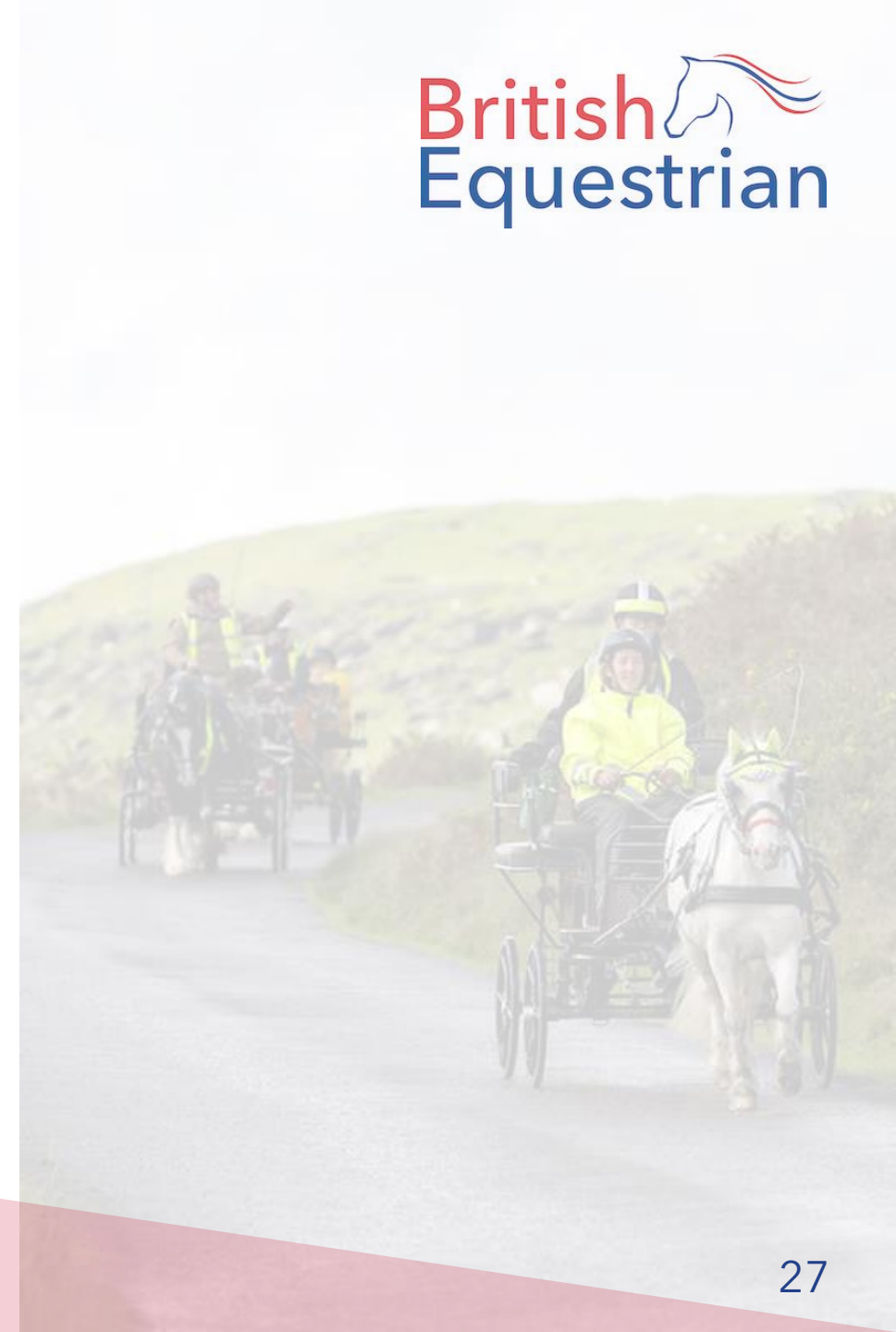
Your Safeguarding Officer is your first point of contact. All concerns should also be reported to your Member Body Safeguarding Lead.

You can also reach the central BEF Safeguarding Team on [safeguarding@bef.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@bef.co.uk) or you can use the BEF's [Online Reporting Form](#) anytime.

## 4) Responding to a concern

### Consent and Confidentiality

- As a general rule you can only share information about an adult with their consent (unless they lack capacity or they are in immediate danger).
- For children, protecting them from harm overrides their/their carers right to privacy. Never promise to keep information a secret.
- Seek advice on information sharing if you're ever unsure.
- Only share relevant and accurate information on a need-to-know basis for the purpose of keeping children and adults at risk safe. Always report concerns to your Member Body safeguarding lead.
- Record your information sharing decision, including why you chose to share or not to share.





# 4) Responding to a concern

Where does the information go?

You report a concern to your Safeguarding Officer\*

They report to their Member Body Safeguarding Lead who adds it to a central reporting database (Globocol)

They are supported by the BEF Case Management Group

We use anonymised data to review trends and shape our work reducing risk of harm as a Federation

\*if you don't have a designated Safeguarding Officer you can report directly to your Member Body Safeguarding Lead



# 5) Case Studies

## What to expect

- You will now apply your learning by working through a series of case studies in small breakout groups.
- Each breakout group shall consider x1 case study, and then come back to discuss your findings with the main group.
- Make sure everyone has the opportunity to contribute to discussions, and nominate a spokesperson.

Please note: whilst none of these case studies are real, they can feel familiar and may be triggering. Please take care and have a break if you need.





# 5) Case Studies

## Case Study 1

You are coaching at a training event.

In the warm-up, you observe a parent (Adam) who is very frustrated with his child (Daniel, 8). Adam grabs Daniel's arm and marches him towards his pony exclaiming about how much money they've invested in the pony and Daniel's training. Daniel is crying.

Someone next to you comments that Daniel has been a nightmare today, refusing to take part in activities with the other children.

Question: How would you respond?



# 5) Case Studies

## Case Study 2



You are a parent attending a show with your child, Amara. You take Amara (14) for lunch after the competition and one of her friends, Betty (15), comes over to join you.

Betty excitedly tells Amara that she has been staying at the showground in her coach's fancy new lorry because her Mum is away with work.

As the two girls go to fetch their food from the trade stand you overhear Betty invite Amara to come over later because her coach, Mark, "has some wine in the lorry".

Question: How should you respond?

# 5) Case Studies

## Case Study 3

You are the proprietor of a competition yard.

You receive reports from a member of staff that Claire (16), a groom working on your yard, has recently started bullying other staff and livery owners and creating a toxic atmosphere.

Davina, the mother of one of your liveries, then reports that Claire has also been posting threatening messages on social media. Davina had found her daughter (17) crying and not wanting to go to the yard as a result. Davina shows you evidence of Instagram messages but says she cannot access the Snapchat ones.

Question: How would you respond?



## 5) Case Studies

### Case Study 4

You are the regular Show Organiser. The parents of one of your competitors (Layla, 15) have contacted you to say that their daughter has told them that one of your other competitors (Nathan, 19) has repeatedly raped her. Nathan also volunteers as a junior coach.

The parents explain that this happened for the first time two years ago. Nathan had abused Layla, even though she had told him she didn't want to.

Earlier this week, some of Layla's friends were chatting about boys and relationships. Layla was shocked when they said if a boy had sex with someone when they didn't want to, that was rape. Layla didn't know that.

The parents are concerned that other girls may be at risk or have had the same experience as Layla.

**Question: How would you respond?**



## 5) Case Studies

### Case Study 5

You are the Safeguarding Officer of a carriage driving club.

Club members report they are concerned about carriage driver Irene (92) who continues to compete, receiving significant support from her groom (Olivia, 31). The other members are concerned about Irene's state of mind, and report that she is physically very frail.

When you speak to Irene, she responds that the other members of the group "can't cope with her being a bit dotty". She is adamant she doesn't need any external help.

**Question: How would you respond?**



# 5) Case Studies

## Case Study 6



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You are a parent of a child who is competing this weekend. You will also be volunteering at the event as one of the stewards.

When attending a training event a few days prior to the competition, you notice one of the children (Emma, 10) has her arm bandaged under her coat. She is wincing whenever she moves her arm.

Emma's Mum, Gwen, notices you looking. Gwen says Emma had a small fall a few days ago but is fine to carry on as normal, and Emma "couldn't bear" to miss out on competing.

Emma doesn't seem comfortable, and you feel uneasy about this.

**Question: How would you respond?**



# 5) Case Studies

## Case Study 7

You are the yard manager at a riding school.

During a lesson, one of your coaches (Amara, 24) asks a volunteer (Imogen, 19) to escort a student (George, 11) to the office so that he can calm down. George has been very disruptive during the lesson, becoming frustrated and striking his pony in an unacceptable manner.

The following day you receive a report from one of the grooms (Ellie, 18) saying that they saw Imogen “clip George around the ear” on the way to the office, telling him never to let her see him treat a pony like that again.

Question: What should you do next?





## 5) Case Studies

### Case Study 8

You are the Chair of a riding club. A group of parents have contacted you about a coach (Ryan, 24) that the club is using.

The parents tell you that Ryan has a WhatsApp group with some children to run private training sessions for “his most talented students”.

You remember that last year Ryan was spoken to about bringing alcohol into a camp. He said it was just for him, even though the club rules had banned alcohol from the camp.

Earlier this season, you received complaints about the language that Ryan was using around children. He was spoken to again and he responded by saying that he was in a stable and didn't know that any children were around.

**Question: How would you respond?**



## 5) Case Studies

### Case Study 9

You are a volunteer at a local competition, helping in the collecting ring as a steward.

A parent approaches you and tells you that they've seen a suspicious individual taking photos of the competitors leaving the arena including taking photos of multiple children.

They point out the individual, who you recognise as Annie. Annie is a retired former steward who still attends competitions occasionally as a member of the public.

Question: How would you respond?

# 5) Case Studies

## Case Study 10

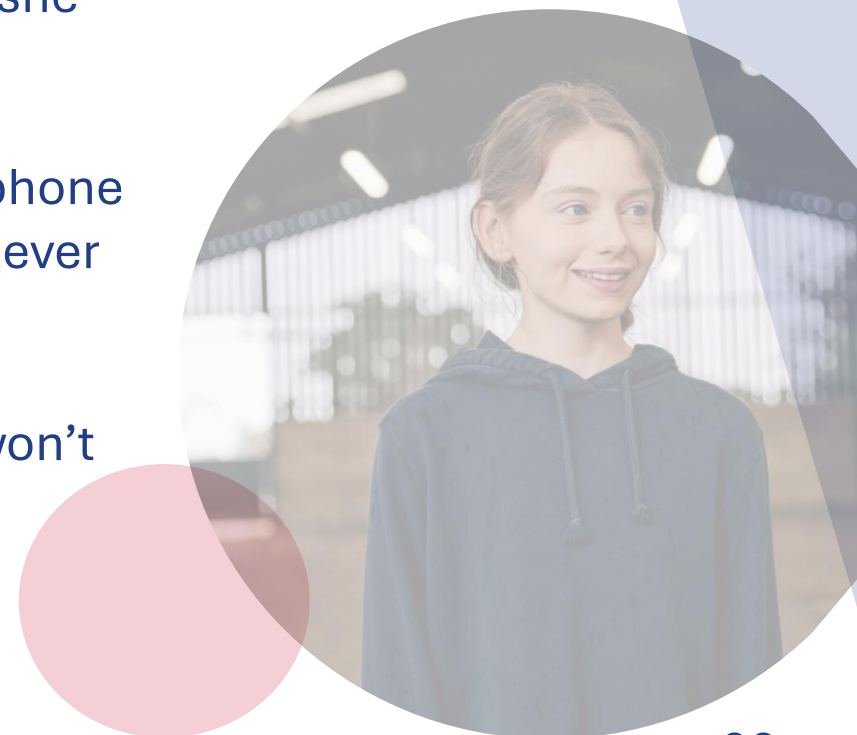
You are a freelance coach teaching lessons on a livery yard.

As you fetch yourself a cup of tea from the kitchen you bump into one of your students (Amelia, 15) who seems distressed. She tells you that she has been “seeing” one of the grooms (Freddie, 18).

Amelia shares that her friend said he heard Freddie laughing on the phone and promising to forward a nude photo Freddie had of Amelia to whoever he was speaking to.

Amelia is now scared that her parents are going to find out and she won’t be allowed to come to the yard anymore.

What should you do next?



# What we have covered

- 1 Understanding safeguarding
- 2 Your safeguarding policy and responsibilities
- 3 How can I help prevent abuse?
- 4 Responding to a safeguarding concern
- 5 Case studies

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