
SHETLAND PONY GRAND NATIONAL

CODE OF CONDUCT – 2026 SEASON

SPGN Code of Conduct

The Shetland Pony Grand National (SPGN) is committed to providing a safe, fair, respectful, and enjoyable environment for all riders, ponies, parents, guardians, handlers, owners, volunteers, and officials.

This Code of Conduct applies to **all participants and associates** throughout the entire SPGN season, including Trials Day, qualifying shows, invitation events, and the London International Horse Show (LIHS).

Compliance with this Code is **mandatory** and forms part of the SPGN Rule Book.

1. General Behaviour Expectations

1.1

All participants must behave in a manner that upholds the values, reputation, and integrity of SPGN.

1.2

Respect must be shown at all times towards:

- Riders
- Ponies
- Parents and guardians
- Handlers
- Officials and volunteers
- Other teams and spectators
- Show organisers and staff

1.3

Any behaviour that brings SPGN into disrepute is strictly prohibited.

2. Respect & Sportsmanship

2.1

All participants must demonstrate good sportsmanship, fairness, and courtesy.

2.2

Celebrations must be respectful; disappointment must be managed appropriately.

2.3

No individual may criticise or undermine another rider, pony, or team.

2.4

All decisions made by SPGN officials, stewards, and management must be respected.

3. Safety & Welfare

3.1

The safety and welfare of children and ponies is the highest priority.

3.2

Unsafe behaviour, reckless riding, or ignoring steward instructions is prohibited.

3.3

Ponies must be handled calmly and responsibly at all times.

3.4

Parents and handlers must ensure ponies are fit, sound, and appropriately prepared.

3.5

Any concerns regarding welfare must be reported immediately to SPGN officials.

4. Behaviour of Parents & Guardians

4.1

Parents must model positive behaviour at all times.

4.2

Parents must not:

- Shout at riders, ponies, or officials
- Engage in confrontational behaviour
- Interfere with stewarding or race management
- Attempt to influence decisions or outcomes

4.3

Parents must support their child's emotional wellbeing and encourage resilience.

4.4

Parents are responsible for ensuring all family members and supporters comply with this Code.

5. Behaviour of Riders

5.1

Riders must treat ponies with kindness, respect, and patience.

5.2

Riders must follow all instructions from SPGN officials and stewards.

5.3

Riders must not engage in:

- Aggressive behaviour
- Bullying
- Swearing
- Unsafe conduct

5.4

Riders must maintain a positive attitude and support fellow competitors.

6. Behaviour of Handlers

6.1

Handlers must be calm, competent, and in control at all times.

6.2

Handlers must not:

- Use excessive force
- Behave aggressively
- Interfere with other ponies or handlers

6.3

Handlers must follow all SPGN safety requirements, including dress code.

7. Zero-Tolerance Policy

7.1

SPGN operates a zero-tolerance policy for:

- Aggression
- Bullying
- Harassment
- Intimidation
- Swearing or abusive language
- Dangerous behaviour
- Disrespect towards officials
- Behaviour that compromises safety or welfare

7.2

Any such behaviour may result in immediate removal from the event.

8. Social Media Conduct

8.1

All participants must comply with the **Enhanced Social Media Rules**.

8.2

Negative, harmful, or inappropriate online behaviour will be treated as a breach of this Code.

8.3

Parents are responsible for monitoring their child's online activity relating to SPGN.

9. Integrity & Fairness

9.1

Cheating, dishonesty, or attempting to gain unfair advantage is prohibited.

9.2

All participants must respect the rules, processes, and selection criteria.

9.3

Attempts to influence officials or manipulate outcomes will result in disciplinary action.

10. Communication & Disputes

10.1

Concerns must be raised privately and respectfully with SPGN Management.

10.2

Public complaints, confrontations, or disputes at ringside are prohibited.

10.3

SPGN decisions are final.

11. Disciplinary Action

Breaches of this Code may result in:

- Verbal warning
- Written warning
- Removal from a race

- Removal from a show
- Suspension from the season
- Loss of LIHS or invitation eligibility
- Permanent exclusion

SPGN reserves the right to take immediate action where necessary.

12. Agreement

Participation in SPGN confirms that all riders, parents, guardians, handlers, owners, and associates:

- Have read this Code of Conduct
- Understand the expectations
- Agree to comply fully

Failure to comply may result in removal from SPGN activities.