



## Equestrian Interschools Ireland announcement

The year 2020 has been unprecedented. Coronavirus Covid-19 has impacted on the entire country, changing our daily lives and habits. **Equestrian Interschools Ireland** is just one of many organisations which suspended all of its activities to support the national effort to suppress this virus. We are aware that all of our members, parents, officials, schools and venues have been avidly waiting for the next announcement from the Department of Health.

**Equestrian Interschools Ireland** would like to take this opportunity to note that your efforts have not gone unnoticed and that the committee is diligently working to provide updates and guidelines for the future, based upon the Roadmap for Reopening Ireland and Department of Health and Health Service Executive announcements.

**Equestrian Interschools Ireland** is developing guidelines and protocols based on the best research and advice available, to allow a return to activity, when restrictions allow activities to commence. The road to returning to activity will be long and each step will be carefully considered. The safety and well-being of our members and supporters will be paramount. The plan for the return to activity will be based on best advice available. Progress will be dependent on government guidance and members and supporters' adherence to the protocols required by each step. Protocols for events, updates for risk assessment, the requirement for a Covid-19 Compliance Officer at events and traceability will be key cornerstones of this plan. The details of these procedures will be published in due course once all aspects have been considered and finalised. As we progress, we must think safety at all times. It is important that we all play our part to safeguard against the possible spread of Covid-19 and a renewed outbreak. While we are very keen to get started each of us must take every precaution, maintain the recommended social distance for horse and rider and supporters, practice good hygiene, hand washing, and sanitation. It is now above all, important to maintain social distance and be mindful of others.

We wish to pay tribute to all the front-line workforce who have kept our country moving during these challenging times. We urge you to keep a thought for all those who have lost their lives due to this virus and also those who have been successful in overcoming the virus.

Thank you all, for following the government guidance. There is still a way to go before we can meet in person again. In essence it is likely that there will be no events until after the return to school in September. With that in mind **Equestrian Interschools Ireland** is considering plans to complete the 2019 2020 league at the commencement of to the 2020 2021 season. We will keep you informed of developments as we monitor best guidance and practice from HSI.

It is important at this time not to let complacency set in as we make preparations to move forward. It is now with the prospect of a return to activity ahead of us that we must stay the course and become more diligent in maintaining good hygiene and social distance.

Stay safe and be positive.

**18<sup>th</sup> May 2020**