

Body Protector Regulations

Body protectors are designed to reduce the severity of certain injuries resulting from falls, kicks or impacts, although no item of protective equipment can prevent every injury. The BHS strongly recommends Level 3 protection for ridden activities.

When Is a Body Protector Compulsory?

At Smugglers, an approved body protector is **compulsory for cross-country activities**.

We may also require body protectors for **specific lessons, clinics, activities, competitions or events** where management considers their use appropriate.

Riders will be informed where a body protector is mandatory for a particular activity.

Body protectors are also strongly recommended for jumping and other higher-risk ridden activities.

Current Body Protector Standard

Where a body protector is compulsory, it must meet the current accepted standard:

BETA Level 3 – Blue 2018 Label

Under current 2026 BHS activity guidance, older **BETA 2000 and BETA 2009** body protector standards are no longer accepted where a body protector is mandatory.

The appropriate label must be present and legible so that the standard can be identified.

Body Protector Fit

A body protector can only provide its intended protection when it is **correctly fitted and worn**.

We strongly recommend having a body protector professionally fitted by a suitably trained retailer.

Children in particular should have the fit of their body protector checked regularly as they grow.

Body protectors must be worn and adjusted according to the manufacturer's instructions.

If a member of the Smugglers team believes a body protector is **incorrectly fitted, damaged, unsuitable or does not meet the required standard**, the rider may not be permitted to participate in an activity where a body protector is compulsory.

Inclusion & Individual Requirements

Smugglers Equestrian Centre aims to make equestrian activities as **welcoming and inclusive as reasonably possible**.

We understand that a rider may have a disability, medical requirement, sensory need, religious requirement or other individual circumstance that affects the way standard protective equipment can be worn.

We encourage riders, parents or carers to **contact us before attending** where an individual requirement may affect the use or fitting of a riding hat, body protector or other safety equipment. Where appropriate, we will discuss whether a **reasonable and safe adjustment** can be made while taking into consideration:

- The individual rider's needs
- Horse welfare
- The activity being undertaken
- Manufacturer instructions
- Insurance requirements
- BHS or governing-body requirements
- Our risk assessment and duty of care

We will always aim to find a practical solution where it is safe and reasonable to do so.

However, inclusion does not mean that essential safety requirements can automatically be removed. There may be circumstances where a rider **cannot safely participate in a particular activity** without the required protective equipment.

Where this occurs, we will wherever reasonably possible discuss whether an **alternative activity or appropriate adaptation** can be offered.

Competitions, BHS Assessments & External Activities

Different governing bodies and individual disciplines may impose **additional or different equipment requirements**.

Anyone attending a BHS assessment, competition, Pony Club activity, British Riding Clubs activity or other organised event is responsible for checking the **specific rules applicable to that activity**.

BHS assessment guidance, for example, requires protective headwear for riding and certain other horse-related activities and requires compliant body protection for cross-country.

Where the rules of an organising or governing body are stricter than our normal riding-school requirements, **the rules of that activity will apply**.

Safety Standards Change

Equestrian safety standards are periodically reviewed and updated.

For this reason, **the fact that a hat or body protector was previously accepted at Smugglers does not guarantee that it will continue to be accepted indefinitely**.

Riders are responsible for ensuring their personally owned equipment continues to meet current requirements.

Smugglers Equestrian Centre reserves the right to **update this policy when recognised safety standards, BHS guidance, governing-body rules or our own risk assessments change**.

If in Doubt — Ask Us

If you're buying a new hat or body protector and aren't sure which standard you need, **please ask before purchasing**.

We would much rather help you check the requirements beforehand than have to tell you on the day that your equipment isn't suitable for the activity you've booked.

Correct standard • Correct fit • Correctly fastened • Every ride

 **Safety first, every time you get in the saddle.**