

Date: 15 August 2017
For: Employees/volunteers, referrers, members



Volunteer Policy

Introduction

Ride High's constitution states that our purpose is:

“to act as a resource for young people aged between 8 and 17 living in the Borough of Milton Keynes who are experiencing difficulties in their daily lives by organising programmes of physical, educational and other activities as a means of:

- (a) advancing in life and helping young people by developing their skills, capacities and capabilities to enable them to participate in society as independent, mature and responsible individuals;
- (b) advancing education;
- (c) providing recreational and leisure time activity in the interests of social welfare for people living in the area of benefit who have need by reason of poverty or social and economic circumstances with a view to improving the conditions of life of such persons.”

Ride High was therefore set up with the idea that we could change children's lives for the better using horses. We recognise that we could not achieve this aim without the invaluable help of volunteers.

Ride High seeks to involve volunteers:

- to assist the young people who attend Ride High to prepare for their riding lesson and help them during it;
- to help the Club Leaders prepare for each session;
- to work with the young people to complete tasks and sign off their work;
- on occasion, to drive the young people to or from Ride High sessions or organised Ride High outings;
- and in general to help the Ride High staff to fulfil the aims of Ride High in relation to every young person who attends.

Principles

This Volunteer Policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- Ride High will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisational structure and that mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to Ride High's work.
- Ride High does not aim to introduce volunteers to replace paid staff.
- Ride High expects that staff at all levels will work positively with volunteers and, where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work.
- Ride High recognises that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development and will seek to help volunteers meet these needs, as well as providing the training for them to do their work effectively.

Practice guidelines

The following guidelines deal with practical aspects of the involvement of volunteers. More detailed information about the role of volunteers within Ride High and their induction process and training is provided in Ride High's Volunteer Handbook, a copy of which will be given to each volunteer.

Recruitment

All prospective volunteers will be asked to complete an application form and may then be invited to an interview to assess their suitability for a role within Ride High. This is an opportunity to find out what they would like to do if accepted, their skills and how best their potential might be realised. Any prospective volunteers will then be asked to complete a DBS (applicable only where aged 16 or over) before they start work at Ride High and provide two references.

Minimum age

All volunteers must be aged 15 or above, unless they have previously been a member of Ride High. A risk assessment will be carried out by Ride High for any volunteer aged under 18, and all such volunteers will be supervised by an adult.

Documents

Each prospective volunteer will complete a Volunteer Application Form and each volunteer will be asked to complete a Volunteer Details form and Confidentiality Statement. Each volunteer will also receive a copy of the Volunteer Handbook. None of these documents is a contract; Ride High has no intention of creating a contract with any volunteer.

Expenses

Ride High will reimburse volunteers for use of their own vehicle and any out-of-pocket expenses properly incurred on Ride High activities. No other payments will be made by Ride High to volunteers.

Induction and training

All volunteers will receive an induction into Ride High. Training will be provided as appropriate.

Support

The main point of contact within Ride High for all volunteers is the Children's Manager. Volunteers will be provided with regular supervision to feed back on progress, discuss future development and air any problems.

The volunteer's voice

Volunteers are encouraged to express their views about matters concerning Ride High and its work and policies.

Insurance

All volunteers are covered by Ride High's insurance policy whilst they are on the premises or engaged in any work on Ride High's behalf.

Confidentiality

Volunteers will be bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as paid staff.

Written policies

Ride High has a number of written policies, many of which are relevant to volunteers. Volunteers are expected to have an understanding of the policies relevant to them, namely:

- Administering Medicines
- Behaviour
- Complaints
- Confidentiality
- Data Protection
- Entrance, Progression and Exit (of the young people)
- Equal Opportunities and Diversity
- Grievance
- Health and Safety
- Lone Working
- Safeguarding
- Social Networking
- Stress
- Whistleblowing

Training and awareness

A copy of this Policy will be shown to all employees and volunteers, and each must sign the list attached to the original to indicate they have read and understood it. It will also be made available to all referrers and members and/or their parents/carers.

Approval and review

This Volunteer Policy was approved at a Board Meeting of the Trustees on 15 August 2017. It will be reviewed each September thereafter, or more frequently if appropriate.

Signed.....

Date.....