

RIDE HIGH Newsletter

Summer 2021



RIDE HIGH

Summer at last...



Summer has finally arrived but we are already planning for the arrival of our new children and young people in September!

With the new term will come our new programme and first steps towards diversifying our core service and expanding our reach to many more vulnerable children.

Of course, we couldn't run our programme without the support of our wonderful volunteers, and we were delighted to be able to acknowledge their efforts in a small way with a celebratory event in June.

To expand the charity, we also need to increase our fundraising, and there are various ways you can help us to achieve this. The Ride High Equestrian Centre and Ride High Development Centre are our Social Enterprise from which all profits are donated to the charity. If you'd like to learn to ride or would like to introduce your organisation and colleagues to memorable and impactful learning workshops, please take a look at our websites.

I am absolutely delighted to announce that we can now start to reintroduce physical fundraising events. I would like to wish all our riders taking part in our very first Ride High Cycle Challenge in August the very best of luck. I look forward to seeing you at the finish line! And finally – the Ride High Ball is back! Our biggest fundraiser of the year will return on Saturday 29th January. Please save the date!

Olivia Sugdon

Olivia Sugdon
CEO, Ride High

What Ride High means to me...



"Ride High gives me something to look forward to every week".
Evie



"The confidence I have gained since starting Ride High is crazy. I will forever be grateful".
Elize.



"I feel on top of the world when I'm riding Monnie".
Kamran.

Top marks for Boothville children

Earlier this year Boothville Primary School sent a group of their children who they felt needed additional support to Ride High. They were so impressed by the progress the children made they have since sent another two groups to attend six-week programmes.

Ride High provides an alternative way of engaging children who do not always respond well to the classroom environment. In a very short space of time, we have seen positive changes in the children's confidence, self-esteem and behaviour which have stunned the teaching team at Boothville.

"The children look forward to their trip to Ride High every week. It's two hours of pure joy where they can escape from the challenges of their normal routine and focus on the horses.

The confidence it gives them is incredible. We have a child who is very quiet at school, but here he is very engaged and animated.

As the children learn how to ride and care for the horses their confidence and self-belief soars – and they bring this positivity back into the classroom". Hita Rahrwan, SEN Teaching Assistant.



For more information about the programme please visit our website:
www.ridehigh.org/view/schools-programme
or contact Sam Ball businessmanager@ridehigh.org.

WIN a brand new Volkswagen iD3 electric vehicle for £1 and help to support Ride High.

Buy your tickets online at: www.miltonkeynes.thecharityraffle.co.uk.



Celebrating our volunteers



In June we celebrated Volunteers' Week – a wonderful opportunity to thank all our volunteers for their fantastic contribution and dedication to Ride High.

We held a special celebratory event for them, at which we were delighted to also welcome the Deputy Lieutenant of Buckinghamshire Debbie Brock and Deputy Mayor of Milton Keynes Councillor Amanda Marlow.

Our volunteers play an invaluable role at Ride High, from supporting our weekly sessions with the children to providing event and admin support, and cleaning hats and boots to gardening. They are simply amazing, and we couldn't support our children and young people the way we do without them.

New programme plans for September

In the Autumn term we will be re launching our Ride High Programme. A significant data project conducted during Covid allowed us to determine where Ride High has achieved the most impact in recent years, and we have taken the findings to make adaptations to our programme which will increase outcomes for our children and young people and allow us to support an increased number of beneficiaries.

The horses remain an essential part of our weekly programme and the vehicle through which we engage the children. The key differences are as follows:

- **Members will start and finish Ride High as a group**
Currently children start and finish at different times. Moving forward children will join as a group and complete a course that will last for anything from half a school term to three school terms. Fixed groups will allow children to develop together and to build stronger relationships with their peers.
- **Courses will be built of project blocks**
Project blocks will be chosen to suit the individual needs of the groups and be delivered in creative and engaging ways.
- **We will be introducing new courses**
New courses will allow us to support additional skills development and to appeal to a wider range of children. The first of these will be a science-based course for some of our younger members and a horse care and riding portfolio course for some teenage members. For young people who are not engaged at school, their portfolio will demonstrate achievement and commitment and will support entry to further education, an apprenticeship or employment.

In the Spotlight

Volunteering at Ride High is a great way to give back to the community, but it's also personally very rewarding. **Nefra** pictured below, has been volunteering with us for a few months now, read what she has to say about her experience.

"I had a tough time as a child, and ponies became a very important part of my life. I'd been following Ride High on Instagram for a while as the work they do really resonated with me because of my own experiences. When I saw they were looking for volunteers I just had to apply.

I really enjoy leading the ponies during the children's riding lessons and seeing how much the children progress each week. Helping them on the yard as they learn how to care for a pony is great too – mucking out sessions are always fun! They leave each session having learned and achieved something new, whether they realise it or not, and I feel privileged to be able to watch them progress over their time with the charity.



Seeing the children's confidence around the ponies and in themselves grow and knowing that you've helped them get there is really rewarding. Sometimes they arrive really nervous and don't want to get too close, but 10 minutes later, after a bit of encouragement and reassurance, they're asking which brush they need for a pony's tail or want to know when they'll learn to jump! Ride High is an experience that they will never forget – and nor will I!"

A rainbow after the rain

We recently had the pleasure of welcoming more young people from The Harry's Rainbow Charitable Trust to Ride High. They spent time learning about the horses and how to look after them and enjoyed a riding lesson too. They had a wonderful time and we were delighted to be able to work with the charity again to support their beneficiaries.

"During the past year it has been more difficult to reach out to bereaved children and their families. Working with you meant we could provide support to the children most recently registered and bereaved to relieve feelings of isolation and loneliness, as well as facilitate contact and build confidence. We would like to say a huge thank you for the youth group sessions you held for us. Your staff were amazing, and all the children really enjoyed themselves". Odette Mould, CEO, Harry's Rainbow.



Donation to help our science course start with a bang!

Persimmon Homes, one of the UK's leading housebuilders has awarded Ride High £1,000!

We were selected to receive the donation from the Persimmon Homes Building Futures scheme, which supports organisations working with under 18's. We are going to use the donation to purchase materials & equipment for our new courses that we are launching in September.

We were delighted to welcome representatives from Persimmon Homes Midlands to Ride High where they presented us with the donation and met some of our members.

Persimmon Homes are awarding 128 grants of £1,000 to vital community groups this year. Three initiatives will go onto win £100,000 each through a national online public vote. We'll keep you updated as to our progress – but fingers crossed!



Leave a Legacy to transform a child's future

We know that leaving a gift in your will is a big decision but by remembering Ride High in your will you can be confident that your legacy will transform the lives of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children and young people in Milton Keynes and surrounding areas.

Horses have the power to change young lives in a way other methods cannot. They inspire, engage and improve children's wellbeing and outlook on life.

We see children who won't speak whisper in a horse's ear, children who wouldn't engage in any positive activities prior to Ride High return to school, and children with no positive relationships building friendships that last beyond their time at Ride High.

A gift of any size will make a big difference to us, and a lasting impact on our children.

Write your will for free

We have partnered with online will writing provider Beyond.

As a supporter of Ride High you can write your will for free online in as little as 30 minutes. Beyond is ranked the best online will writing service in the UK by the Times' Money Mentor and Fairer Finance.

If you would prefer to write your will in a more traditional way face-to-face with a solicitor, you could use our trusted partner Tollers Solicitors. As a supporter of Ride High Tollers will offer you a £50 discount for their will-writing services.

If you would like to talk to us about leaving a gift to Ride High please contact us: E: fundraising@ridehigh.org T: 01908 669169 or visit: www.ridehigh.org/view/leave-a-legacy



Social Enterprise support

Did you know that the Ride High Equestrian Centre is not just our home but is also a social enterprise whose profits are gifted to Ride High? Every time members of the community have a riding lesson at the equestrian centre, go on a hack or take part in a holiday activity they are helping to support the work of the charity.

This summer the equestrian centre has a programme of fun-filled activities for children of all ages and abilities. Take a look on their website: www.ridehighquestriancentre.co.uk.

The Ride High Development Centre is a centre of learning, based at the equestrian centre. Building on our experience in Equine Assisted Learning, the centre delivers bespoke workshops for organisations and professionals that are truly memorable and impactful.

What sets them apart is how they use horses to help their clients learn and develop their team building, leadership and communication skills.

Half day open courses launching in September include:

- Mental health workshops
- Team building
- Management development

Take a look at the website

www.ridehighdevelopmentcentre.co.uk



SUNDAY 15TH AUGUST |
50 & 100 MILE ROUTES | MK

GOOD LUCK TO ALL OUR
WONDERFUL SUPPORTERS
RIDING TO RAISE FUNDS
FOR RIDE HIGH



THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS:



TO DONATE: www.vmgiving.co/ridehigh

Save the date...

Saturday 29th January 2022

the Ride High Ball is back!

It's a year later than we'd planned but we are delighted to finally announce the date for the biggest and best Charity Ball in town.

Enjoy a fabulous and fun evening with a four course meal, live band and disco and live and silent auctions. We guarantee you'll have a fantastic evening in aid of Ride High.

Pop the date in your diary and reserve your tickets now! Tickets range from £90-£130 (VIP). Contact Helen Dixon at E: helen.dixon@ridehigh.org T: 01908 696169



A BIG thank you to all our supporters:

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