



SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER

Welcome to our September newsletter!

The year is passing so quickly we wanted to check in to bring you some of the latest news from Ride High!

We enjoyed a busy, action-packed summer of activities (read all about it below) and last month we welcomed over 120 new children to the Ride High Programme. We're delighted to report that the children are settling in well and bonding with our team of humans and horses. We can't wait to see their progress and watch them grow in confidence over the coming weeks and months.

Every child follows their own unique path at Ride High and their experience provides a stepping stone towards a brighter future. This month we're very proud to share Imi's inspiring story with you. Imi attended the charity in 2019 and she and her mum very kindly spoke at our recent Charity Golf Day - please take a minute to read Imi's story featured in this newsletter.

Whilst we're busy supporting our current members on their Ride High journey, we're already working through our ever-expanding waiting list of children in need and planning for our next intake in the new year. This means we're also planning our fundraising events for 2025, and we have some exciting new additions to the calendar alongside our famous annual Charity Ball! Our events provide a vital source of income for the charity and they're always great fun, so please do take-a- look at what's on below and join in.

Before I sign-off, I'd like to extend a huge thank you to all our supporters and volunteers for your continued support. It's only through your kindness and generosity that we're able to have such a positive impact on the lives of children in need in our community.

With best wishes,

Olivia Sugdon
CEO, Ride High

My happy place



Imi joined Ride High in 2019 when she was just 12 years old. At the time, school had become an increasingly difficult place for her. She struggled with autism and dyslexia, and bullying from her peers made school an unhappy place. The thought of attending school triggered her anxiety, even leading to panic attacks. It was Imi's teacher, Miss Cass, who suggested that joining a programme at Ride High may help her cope with these challenges. Initially, Imi was hesitant. The idea of going to a new place and meeting unfamiliar people was overwhelming, but with encouragement from her Mum, she agreed to give it a try.

Ride High was Imi's first experience with horses, so it wasn't surprising that she needed some extra encouragement from her club leader to get involved. She vividly remembers her first ride on a horse named Gunner. "I remember how hard it was for me to get up onto Gunner, but once I was on, all my worries disappeared. I forgot how nervous I was about being in a new place. I felt relaxed and at home." From that moment on, Gunner became Imi's first friend at Ride High. "I always felt so calm when I was with him. One of my favourite memories is feeding him an apple, and afterward, he rested his nose in my hand. Knowing I would see him each week became the highlight of my week, and Ride High became an escape from the stress of school." During her time at Ride High, Imi also participated in the Stubbs Gallery project, even appearing on television for an interview! "I was so proud of myself. Before Ride High, I would have never imagined doing something like that. I left Ride High feeling happier and more confident than I ever had before."

After a year at Ride High, Imi went on to complete her GCSEs. However, her love for horses stayed with her, and at the start of this year she returned to Ride High to begin an apprenticeship in Equine Care. "I love my job! Being around horses and seeing Gunner every day is a dream come true. I've also bonded with the team and, thanks to everything I learned at Ride High, I've made lots of new friends." Now, Imi not only works with horses but also helps the children currently on the Ride High programme. "I know exactly how they feel because I was once in their shoes. It's important to me to make sure they're okay and help them along their journey. In the future, I'd love to teach children to ride, especially those with additional needs. I love seeing them bond with the horses, just like I did with Gunner all those years ago."

Recently, Imi and her mum, Claire, spoke at our Charity Golf Day and shared how much Ride High has positively impacted both of their lives. We are so proud of how far Imi has come and we love that Ride High remains to be her safe place to this day.

Another tee-firic Charity Golf Day at Woburn

On Wednesday 25th September we returned to Woburn Golf Club for our 3rd Charity Golf Day where we welcomed back many returning teams but also had the delight of welcoming some new faces. Despite a rainy start, and Woburn being the victim of flooding, we were lucky enough to get a glimpse of sunshine! We started the day off with an impressive trickshot show from Dean Davis and throughout the day the golfers enjoyed a range of on-course competitions on the championship course 'The Marquess'.



Congratulations to our winners Bailey MK (1st place Team, pictured), Claire Whitecross (Best Lady), Spencer Eccleston (Nearest Pin), Nathan Bailey (Trickshot), Simon Free (Longest Drive). After a long day out on the course guests enjoyed a three-course meal with live auction, guest speakers and prize giving. A special thank you to Matthew Ayres our auctioneer, our speakers ex-member Imi and her mum Claire, Dean Davis for his display and on course entertainment and of course Woburn Golf Club for helping us host another a great day. We would also like to say 'Thank You' to our our main sponsors Sysmex and hole sponsors Geoffrey leaver, Avail Financial Planning, Bedford Battery, Leda Orthopaedics and Brian Currie for their support.

Take a look at some of the event highlights below. We already can't wait to welcome you all back next year!

[Watch the highlights here](#)

Summer Fun



Over the summer we welcomed many of our members from previous programmes to join our summer activities. The school holidays can be hard for families; often parents work full-time and clubs and days out are expensive. It's really important to keep our young people engaged. Here are some of the things we have been up to...

Our first trip out was to Climb Quest in Milton Keynes. It was great to see our members supporting and cheering each other on while they scaled the walls and for some, faced their fear of heights!



We were also lucky enough to spend the day with Electra Boat MK travelling down the waterways of Milton Keynes. Our members loved meeting fellow boaters and learning about the wildlife.



In August we welcomed back 20 of our members to our first-ever pony camp! They spent 3 days riding and caring for their ponies and enjoyed a range of activities such as mucking out, bareback riding and handy pony games. It was great to welcome back so many familiar faces and to see them put into practise all the skills they had learnt while on their Ride High programme.



You can watch our pony camp highlights [here](#)

Our summer activities provided the opportunity for many of our members to be reunited with friends they made while on their programmes while also making new friends. We hope they all had as much fun as we did this summer!

Taster day for children in the community



We recently received a kind donation from GXO (Milton Keynes) which enabled us to host our first-ever taster day for children in Milton Keynes and the surrounding areas. The event was designed to give those who had not been previously referred to us a glimpse into the unique support that Ride High has to offer.

Young people from local children and family centres, the Resettlement Team at Milton Keynes Council, and Faith Dimensions (Wolverton) were nominated to attend the day. The majority of the children were unfamiliar with Ride High or otherwise would not have considered us as a support service that would interest them. For many, the taster day marked their first interaction with horses and seeing smiles as they immersed themselves in the activities highlighted the impact just one session at Ride High can have. We hope that the taster day will encourage referrals from organisations that have not previously worked with us and will mark the beginning of many more collaborations across Milton Keynes.

The Big Half

This September we had 3 runners take on 'The Big Half', in London, all in aid of raising funds for Ride High. We would like to thank Shanika, Jack and Flo (left to right) for running in the hot weather and collectively raising over £1000.

If this has sparked your motivation to challenge yourself next year we have spaces



available for the full- and half-marathon races for the MK Marathon in May 2025. Get in touch below if you would like to secure one of our free spaces ASAP.



I would like to run for Ride High



Fundraising Events

RIDE HIGH

Touch of Tartan

Charity Ball

BURNS NIGHT
SATURDAY 25TH JANUARY, 18:00-00:30
LEONARDO HOTEL
MILTON KEYNES, MK9 2HP

RAISING FUNDS FOR


RIDE HIGH



Touch of Tartan Charity Ball

Join us for an extraordinary evening when sophistication meets Burns Night at our upcoming fundraising charity ball! We are pulling out all the stops with a Drinks Reception, live entertainment, music from band 'XO', amazing auction items up for grabs complete with a three-course meal and wine.

Reserve your tickets here



Cheltenham Preview Night

Our first ever 'race night' featuring expert guests (including Sky Sports presenter Kate Tracey). We will gallop through key races, horses and big race tips ahead of Cheltenham Festival. Guests will also enjoy a Drinks Reception with the opportunity to mingle with the panelists in La Tour's Fourteen Sky Bar – providing unparalleled views over the city. Followed by a three course meal with wine, live music and live auction.

[Reserve your tickets here](#)

RUN FOR RIDE HIGH



MK Marathon Weekend

Are you looking to challenge yourself in 2025? Grab your running trainers and run for Ride High this spring. We have a limited number of spaces available for either the full-, half-marathons routes. We will support you throughout your training and be there on the day to cheer you on!

[Sign up here](#)



Charity Football Tournament

New for 2025! Lace up your boots, gather your friends and colleagues and kick off for a great cause. Bring a team of up to 10 to our first-ever charity

football tournament. With prize giving, goody bags, BBQ and licensed bar it's an afternoon not to be missed.

[Register your team here](#)

[For more information on all our events click here](#)

Visit Gulliver's Land of Lights and support Ride High

We are very excited to share our collaboration with Gulliver's Kingdom Milton Keynes with discounted tickets available for Friday 8th November through our exclusive link!

- Explore Wonders of the World, Frozen Lands, Undersea Kingdoms, and many more enchanting realms
- Suitable For All Ages
- Free Parking
- Food, Drinks & Tasty Treats available

For every ticket sold through our link £2 will be donated to Ride High helping us to support vulnerable and disadvantaged children in the community.



[Book your tickets here](#)



Thank you

As we welcome back our members, schools and volunteers, we'd like to thank everyone for their continued support including our team of amazing volunteers, generous donors and our loyal corporate supporters.

Without your support we would not be able to help change the lives of so many vulnerable and disadvantaged young people.

We are really looking forward to supporting our new members throughout the upcoming Autumn term. Keep an eye on our social media platforms for updates on their weekly session and all things Ride High.

Follow Us:



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