

<b>Date of issue</b>	2015	<b>Reviewed</b>	Oct 2023	<b>Next review</b>	Sept 2026	<b>Approved by</b>	Board of Trustees
<b>For</b>	Employees, volunteers, students, visitors, members						



## Volunteer Policy

### Introduction

Ride High's constitution states that our purpose is:

“to act as a resource for young people aged between 5 and 25 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 during sessions to complete tasks and sign off their work;
- in exceptional circumstances, 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.

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## **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 an enhanced DBS check (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 18 or above.

### ***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.

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### ***Induction and training***

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

- *Corporate volunteers*
- *Where corporate volunteers spend time at Ride High a check list is included in the risk assessment for the activity to ensure that any potential safeguarding risk is identified.*

### ***Support***

The main point of contact within Ride High for all volunteers is the Centre Manager. Volunteers will be provided with regular opportunities to discuss progress, future developments and concerns with a member of Ride High staff.

### ***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:

- Anti-bullying
- Behaviour
- Children's Privacy
- Code of conduct
- Confidentiality
- Complaints
- Covid 19
- Equal Opportunities and Diversity
- Grievance
- Health and Safety
- Privacy
- Safeguarding (child and adult) including: FGM, Non-recent abuse, Safer Recruitment and Safeguarding from Radicalisation and Extremism
- Social Networking
- Stress
- Whistleblowing
- Volunteering

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**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. It will be reviewed bi-annually, or more frequently if appropriate.