



# Health and Safety Policy

## 1. Purpose

This Health and Safety Policy outlines the responsibilities, procedures, and guidelines to promote a safe environment for all participants, staff, volunteers, and animals at the centre. It ensures that health and safety practices comply with relevant legislation, including the **Health and Safety at Work Act 1974**, and meet the unique needs of working with horses.

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## 2. Policy Statement

We are committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of everyone at the centre by:

- Identifying and minimising risks associated with equine activities.
  - Promoting a safety-first culture among all participants, staff, and visitors.
  - Regularly reviewing and updating policies, procedures, and risk assessments.
  - Providing appropriate training for staff and volunteers.
  - Complying with all relevant health and safety regulations and industry best practices.
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## 3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Participants (including children and adults)
  - Staff and volunteers
  - Visitors and parents/caregivers
  - Horses and animals at the centre
  - Contractors or external service providers
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## 4. Responsibilities

## A. Centre Management

- Ensure that all health and safety policies are implemented and monitored.
- Conduct regular **risk assessments** of facilities, equipment, and activities.
- Ensure compliance with relevant legal and insurance requirements.
- Maintain incident and accident reporting procedures.
- Ensure appropriate first-aid provisions are available.
- Provide appropriate **personal protective equipment (PPE)**.
- Ensure that the site is safe and secure.

## B. Staff and Volunteers

- Participate in health and safety training and follow all safety procedures.
- Report any hazards, accidents, or incidents immediately.
- Ensure horses are handled safely and in accordance with best practices.
- Monitor the condition and behaviour of horses to prevent risks.
- Assist participants with safety equipment, such as helmets.
- To lock and secure the site as required.

## C. Participants and Visitors

- Follow all safety instructions provided by staff.
- Wear appropriate clothing and PPE (e.g., helmets, boots).
- Notify staff of any medical conditions that could impact participation.
- Ensure children are supervised at all times.

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# 5. Risk Assessments

Risk assessments will be conducted regularly and reviewed every six months or after any incident. **Areas covered by the risk assessments** include:

- **Horse-related activities** (e.g., riding, grooming, feeding).
- **Handling and behaviour** risks for individual horses.
- **Facilities and equipment** (e.g., stables, arenas, tack).
- **Environmental risks**, including weather conditions and uneven terrain.
- **Participants with special needs**, including physical and emotional challenges.

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# 6. Safe Practices for Equine Activities

## A. Handling Horses Safely

- Horses must be matched appropriately to the participant's ability and needs.
- All handling (grooming, leading, etc.) must be supervised by trained staff.

- Monitor horses for signs of stress, pain, or illness and respond promptly. Adhere to the principles of the Charter for the Horse.
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## 7. Facilities and Equipment Safety

- The **arena** and **stable areas** must be kept free from hazards (e.g., uneven ground, broken equipment).
  - Tack and other equipment must be inspected regularly and repaired or replaced as necessary.
  - **First-aid kits** must be available in key areas (stables, arena, office).
  - Fire safety procedures must be clearly communicated, with **extinguishers** readily available.
  - **Emergency exits** must be clearly marked and unobstructed.
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## 8. Incident Reporting and Emergency Procedures

### A. Incident Reporting

- All accidents and near-miss incidents must be recorded in the **Accident Log**.
- Reports must include:
  - Date, time, and location of the incident.
  - Names of individuals involved.
  - Description of the incident.
  - Actions taken (e.g., first aid, follow-up).
- Management will investigate incidents and update risk assessments as necessary.

### B. Emergency Procedures

- **Emergency contact information** will be displayed prominently around the centre.
  - In the event of an emergency (fire, injury, or animal incident), staff must:
    1. Ensure the immediate safety of participants and visitors.
    2. Administer **first aid** where necessary.
    3. Contact emergency services if required.
    4. Complete an **incident report**.
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## 9. First Aid Provision

- At least one trained **First Aider** will be present at the centre during all activities.
- First-aid kits must be easily accessible and regularly restocked.

- Staff will be trained in **basic first aid** and how to respond to horse-related injuries (e.g., falls, kicks).
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## 10. Safeguarding and Well-Being of Participants

- The centre is committed to safeguarding all participants, especially children and vulnerable adults as detailed in Horserenity's safeguarding and child protection policy.
  - Staff will be trained to identify and respond to safeguarding concerns.
  - Behavioural expectations will be clearly communicated to participants and visitors that is central to the centre's culture.
  - Sessions will be tailored to meet the **emotional and physical needs** of each participant.
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## 11. Fire Safety

- Fire risk assessments should be carried out for all buildings. Individual facilitators are responsible for ensuring that escape routes and exits are kept free of obstructions during sessions and that precautions are taken to eliminate or reduce risk of fire or explosion from activities carried out by facilitators or learners.
  - All staff and learners are responsible for ensuring that they:
    - do not create an uncontrolled fire risk
    - do not obstruct fire exit routes or doors
    - do not damage or deliberately misuse anything provided for fire safety • report faults and fire hazards.
  - Training and information on fire safety arrangements will be provided for learners by individual facilitators. Fire safety awareness is also included in induction information for new facilitators
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## 12. Hazardous Substances

- Hazardous substances include:  
chemicals (such as horse wormers / fly repellent) labelled toxic, harmful, corrosive or irritant:
  - substantial quantities of airborne dust (eg from hay stacks)
  - biological agents
  - substances such as crumbed rubber surfacing which emit toxic vapour bottled gas.
- Plans for work involving these substances must consider risks to health and the environment. These risks can be eliminated or reduced by substituting a

safer substance, using smaller amounts, making sure the area is ventilated, wearing protective clothing, and following suppliers' instructions for use.

- Always check the labels and manufacturers' datasheets before use.
  - Significant risks and precautions must be recorded on risk assessment forms.
  - Storage arrangements for flammable or explosive substances, including gases, must be secure and protect from flames, sparks and heat.
  - COSHH policy must be reviewed annually and updated accordingly.
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## 13. Infection Control

- Regular cleaning of tack, equipment, and communal areas to prevent the spread of infection.
  - Hand-washing facilities and **hand sanitisers** will be available throughout the centre.
  - Staff and participants will follow guidelines for interacting with horses to minimize health risks.
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## 14. PPE and Appropriate Clothing

- Staff and volunteers must wear appropriate clothing when handling horses or cleaning stables.
  - PPE will be provided for specific tasks e.g. high visibility vests when undertaking activities off-site.
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## 15. Mental Health and Emotional Well-being

- The centre promotes mental well-being among participants and staff.
  - Staff will be trained to recognize signs of **anxiety** or **emotional distress** in participants.
  - Regular debriefs will be held with staff to ensure emotional well-being and identify any additional support needs.
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## 16. Site Security

- The site is secured when not occupied by the agreed methods and locks.
- Staff are to check if are last person and secure as necessary.
- This is reviewed regularly and may be upgraded if deemed necessary.
- The boundary has hedges or fencing to indicate it.
- Valuable items, such as the quad bike are to always be parked out of view with the key removed.

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## 17. Monitoring and Review

- This policy will be reviewed annually or following any significant incident.
- Feedback from staff, volunteers, participants, and parents will be incorporated into the review process.
- Updated policies will be communicated to all staff, volunteers, and participants.

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## 18. Contact Information for Emergencies

- **Founder Director:** Sarah Vivian, 07734 058783
- **Designated Safeguarding Lead:** Sarah Vivian, 07734 058783
- **Nearest Emergency Service:** Blandford Police Station, Salisbury Rd, Blandford Forum DT11 7HR, 01202 222222
- **Veterinary Services:** Damory Veterinary Clinic, Damory Lodge, Edward St, Blandford Forum DT11 7QT, 01258 452626

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## 18. Policy Sign-Off

This Health and Safety Policy has been approved by Horserenity's management and will be communicated to all staff, volunteers, and participants.

**Signed:**

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'S. Vivian', is written within a rectangular box.

(Director)

**Date:** 1<sup>st</sup> December 2025

**Review:** December 2026