

Health and Safety Policy

It is the policy of Horserenity CIC to provide and maintain, as far as is reasonably practicable, a working environment that is safe and without risks to health in the context of equine assisted learning. The aims of this policy are:

- the elimination of hazards and reduction of risks to prevent harm to staff, learners and others affected by Horserenity operations;
- compliance with relevant legislation and with good practice in the equine assisted learning sector.

Equine Assisted Learning

Equine assisted learning (EAL) and the provision of EAL sessions is a specialist area requiring a range of skills and knowledge about health and safety. Horses are unpredictable, however well handled and it is the responsibility of each individual facilitator to ensure that they have adequately assessed the risks and benefits of working with horses and learners in any given session.

Many learners will not have the capacity to understand how to keep themselves safe.

Responsibilities

This policy applies to all facilitators, staff, learners, premises and activities under the control of Horserenity CIC.

Horserenity Director, Sarah Vivian, is responsible for the overall health and safety policies and procedures within the CIC.

Individual facilitators are responsible for the management of health and safety during their own equine assisted learning sessions.

All Horserenity, staff and learners are responsible for taking reasonable care that they:

- do not endanger themselves or others
- do not deliberately damage or misuse anything provided for their health and safety
- follow health and safety instructions, regulations and policies
- report faults or dangers
- report accidents and cooperate in any investigation to find causes and prevent a recurrence.

Monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of the policy

The policy will be reviewed by Horserenity Director, Sarah Vivian, or her representative, at least annually and more frequently if there are recommendations for action.

Risk assessments

Risk assessments should be conducted by each centre / assessment site for all equine assisted learning activities, projects, trips and events using the following areas:

- Environment, self (facilitator), horses, learners/clients, interactions

Facilitators must ensure that all involved are informed about the risks and precautions to be taken during the equine assisted learning session.

Annual Review

Health and Safety is one of the sections to be reviewed annually.

Training

Training on horse awareness, risk assessments and other aspects of health and safety are included during the initial facilitator training course.

At least one Facilitator, who is on site each day, must hold a recognised First Aid Certificate. Induction information for all new facilitators and staff includes the Health and Safety Policy. Facilitators must ensure that learners receive adequate training in safe work methods, especially before using hazardous machinery, chemicals or equipment.

Equipment

Equipment should be fit for purpose and maintained in good condition. Before purchasing equipment, chemicals or materials, staff should consider any risks to health or the environment and make arrangements for safe use, storage and disposal. When selecting equipment, the safety and cost of maintenance and repair should be considered and equipment must comply with relevant standards (check with supplier).

For example, using worm egg counts to limit the quantity of wormer required.

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 and learners. Fire drills will be arranged annually by the individual facilitator.

Reporting of accidents

Accidents must be recorded in the accident book.

Investigations of accidents to ascertain the cause should be undertaken and recorded.

First aid

All Facilitators should have a recognised First Aid Certificate. All team members should have successfully completed a course within the past three years and be able to take charge in case of injury/illness, until emergency services arrive.

'First Aider' means someone who has successfully completed a First Aid at Work course and holds a current first aid certificate. Re-qualification training is needed every three years to keep certificates up to date.

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.

Manual handling

When planning any activities involving manual handling, the risk of injury must be considered and precautions taken to eliminate or reduce the risk. All staff and volunteers must have been given a manual handling briefing before working on site.

Medicines

Any medicines brought on site by staff, learners or their families must be seen and noted by the Senior member of staff on site for that day. The medicines should be labelled with the name of the person who it is prescribed for and instructions given on how it should be administered. All staff are advised that self-administration for all learners (or administration from the parent/carer) is preferable under the guidance of the facilitators or a parent or carer.


Any medicines remaining on site for the duration of the session must also be signed out by the parent/carer/learner and taken home at the end of the session.

It is noted that one member of staff has an Epi Pen and has declared that they will self-administer unless incapacitated. The pen is stored in a secure place and that place is indicated to other staff daily for emergency purposes.

Review date – August 2024

Next review date – August 2025

Reviewed by –

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

Dan Vivian - Director