

Date: 31 May 2019

For: Employees, volunteers, students, referrers, members



Entrance, Progression and Exit Policy **(Fixed term members)**

Introduction

Ride High aims to offer the service it provides to as many children and young people (hereinafter together referred to as “young people”) as possible. The scope of this aim is limited only by the following:

- the parameters of our charitable objects;
- the capacity of The Ride High Equestrian Centre (“RHEC”) to provide riding lessons, such lessons being a central part of our programme; and
- availability of funding.

This Policy sets out the criteria for acceptance of young people to the Ride High programme, the duration of each young person’s membership and the circumstances in which young people might be excluded from membership.

The scope of this Policy is limited to those young people who qualify as “fixed term members” as defined below. We provide a similar programme to other young people who qualify as “long-term members” as defined and provided for in our Entrance, Progression and Exit Policy (Long-term members) but this Policy does not relate to this latter category of young people.

Charitable objects

Our constitution states that our charitable objects are:

“To act as a resource for young people aged between 5 and 25 who are experiencing difficulties in their daily lives by organising programmes of physical, educational and other activities as a means of:

1. 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;
2. Advancing education;

3. Providing recreational and leisure-time activity in the interest 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 for such young persons.”

At least 50% of the young people attending Ride High must be living in the borough of Milton Keynes.

Up to 50% of the young people attending Ride High may be living in the counties of Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire and Bedfordshire provided that a financial contribution is made to Ride High either by the agency referring such young people to Ride High, or from some other source.

Entrance to Ride High as a “fixed term member”

A “fixed term member” is a young person who is accepted on to the Ride High programme after being referred by their school or other referring organisation to attend Ride High for a pre-agreed specific duration and purpose. (S)he must satisfy the following criteria (“the Entry Criteria”):

- (s)he is aged between 5 and 25 years;
- (s)he resides within the Borough of Milton Keynes, or in the counties of Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire and Bedfordshire;
- (s)he is disadvantaged (as defined below) and would benefit from the particular type of intervention offered by Ride High.

The term “disadvantaged” for these purposes refers to young people who are experiencing difficulties in one or more of the following areas:

- emotional welfare;
- behaviour;
- economic circumstances;

but the term excludes young people with special physical or other needs such that Ride High does not feel able to cater for them on the Ride High programme (at the discretion of the Children’s Committee, a sub-committee of the Board of Trustees), and young people otherwise disqualified from riding under RHEC’s rules.

The Entry Criteria must be satisfied at both the date of referral and the date on which the young person starts the Ride High programme.

For any young person satisfying the Entry Criteria who resides within the Borough of Milton Keynes, her/his place at Ride High will be funded fully or in part by the school or other referring organisation (as agreed in advance with Ride High), but for any young person satisfying the Entry Criteria but who lives in the counties of Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire or Bedfordshire, a financial contribution is required to be made to Ride High either by the referring organisation or from some other source.

No young person will be accepted on to the Ride High programme as a fixed term member until:

- satisfactory completion by the referrer of our Child/Young Person Referral Form (for young people referred to Ride High other than by a school as part of a group of young people from that school); or
- sufficient information has been provided by the school (for young people referred to Ride High as part of a group of young people from that school);

and in either case, until satisfactory completion of our Parent/Carer Consent Form.

In addition, the referrer must have completed our Service Level Agreement. Furthermore, by the end of the second week of the young person's membership, (s)he must have signed the Ride High Member's Agreement, which sets out the conditions of their membership.

It is also essential that a Ride High employee has met the young person before (s)he starts attending. Therefore a home or school visit, or a meeting at Ride High (in either case with a parent/carer and/or referrer present), will be arranged once a place is, or is due to become, available for that young person at Ride High so that an assessment of the young person's strengths and difficulties can be undertaken, and the young person's parent/carer and/or referrer can highlight any concerns. This will enable Ride High to complete, if appropriate, a risk assessment (see further below) before the young person starts at Ride High. Such a visit or meeting may lead Ride High to conclude that we are not able to help the young person and this decision will be communicated as soon as possible to the referrer.

A preliminary visit or meeting such as this is also helpful in that the young person will then recognise at least one Ride High employee on arrival, and because it enables any questions that the young person or their parent/carer may have about Ride High to be answered.

In offering places on the Ride High programme, we seek to extend the provision to as wide a range of individuals and groups as possible by nature of:

- the referrer (to cover as wide a range of referrers as possible);
- the location of the young person's residence within the Borough;
- the young person's gender;
- the young person's age; and
- the young person's ethnicity.

For the avoidance of doubt, where the parent/carer of a young person is also a referrer, or employed by a referrer, that young person must be referred to Ride High by an independent referrer.

Risk assessing young people

If deemed appropriate by the Children's Manager or Centre Manager following a home or school visit (or an initial meeting at Ride High), a risk assessment on a young person will be carried out by Ride High before that young person is accepted on to the Ride High programme.

- The risk assessment will be kept in the young person's file.
- The young person should be advised when, how and why information is to be shared with others.
- The risk assessment should be reviewed and updated as a matter of course if/when an incident occurs or information is received, which impacts upon the risk assessment.
- The risk assessment should otherwise be reviewed at regular intervals.
- Any special measures required when working with a young person must be agreed with Ride High and explained to the young person.
- Ride High will make all employees and volunteers, and RHEC, aware of any special measures required when working with a particular young person.
- The addition or deletion of special measures to or from an existing risk assessment in respect of a young person must be agreed with the Children's Manager or Centre Manager.

Waiting list

Ride High has limited places. Should we receive more referrals than we have available places at the time of referral, we operate a waiting list. We will inform the referrer as soon as we know that a place is not immediately available, and that the young person has been added to the waiting list. For young people on the waiting list, places are offered according to the following criteria:

- We will always prioritise referrals based on the level of disadvantage (and in particular the risk of harm) faced by a young person (as evidenced by the referral forms) and therefore the need for the service and benefits we provide.
- We take into consideration whether there is any other service or help available to the young person.
- We run both day time and evening sessions with eight young people per session; and we aim to ensure that all the young people attending a session are a similar age and have a similar level of horseriding experience, as this enables every young person in that group to feel most comfortable and secure, and to make the most progress. When a space becomes available, we have to consider whether the young person at the top of the waiting list can attend at the time available and in the particular group with the space taking into consideration their age and horseriding experience. We also look at the compatibility of the group as a whole. We may be able to make changes to other groups to accommodate a new young person but this will only be in extreme circumstances as we try not to break up an established and happy group.
- We must also consider the availability of funding for a young person. We aim not to let this determine whether or when a young person is accepted onto the Ride High programme but we do have to take our financial position into account when assessing how many unfunded places we can offer.

- Priority will not be given to a young person purely based on the date their referral was received. The date of referral will be relevant only where two young people appear to have the same level of priority based on the points above.
- The waiting list will be updated in accordance with these criteria each time a young person's name is added or removed. This means that a young person's position on the waiting list can go up or down.

Ride High reviews and monitors the waiting list on a regular basis and will keep referrers informed of progress

Ride High programme

It is recognised that the circumstances of each fixed term member (and the purpose for which (s)he has been referred to Ride High) will differ. However, Ride High offers all its fixed term members a learning programme featuring a combination of riding/horse care and clubroom activities, which aims to teach and improve not only horseriding skills but also various social skills (such as participation skills, speaking and listening skills, self-control skills and teamwork skills).

In some cases, where a school or organisation refers a full group (eight young people) to Ride High, we can (within the scope of our usual provision) offer a bespoke programme to suit specific needs of the referring organisation.

Throughout the programme, Ride High will monitor the progress of each fixed term member and will also monitor and record the wellbeing of each fixed term member (including in areas such as self-esteem, self-discipline, feelings of competence and positive relationships).

When each fixed term member leaves Ride High, his/her achievements and progress within the programme will be celebrated.

Circumstances justifying exclusion from Ride High.

Given that fixed term members attend Ride High for a specific (and relatively short) duration, it is hoped and intended that any problems that arise can be resolved promptly and satisfactorily through discussion with the fixed term member and/or his/her referrer. However, a fixed term member may be asked to leave Ride High if any of the following circumstances apply and the problem cannot be resolved through discussion:

- If (s)he cannot demonstrate a proper commitment to participating in all parts of the Ride High programme;
- If (s)he ceases to satisfy the Entry Criteria (as decided by the Children's Committee) or ceases to qualify for riding under RHEC's rules;
- If (s)he has not followed the terms and conditions of their Ride High Member's Agreement;
- If (s)he displays behaviour considered by others to be dangerous, aggressive, abusive or offensive where there is a lack of respect and consideration for Ride High employees/volunteers and other members (or to anyone else whilst in our care) and where their poor behaviour has a detrimental effect on the learning and enjoyment of others;

- If (s)he presents a risk with regard to health and safety (for example, is pregnant; refuses to acknowledge and follow Ride High’s codes of conduct; is believed (by at least two Ride High employees/volunteers) to have been using drugs or alcohol prior to, during or after their Ride High session or Ride High employees/volunteers are made aware of incidents related to drugs or alcohol that the young person has been involved with outside Ride High and such incidents are considered by Ride High employees/volunteers to have a negative impact on the young person or other young people and Ride High employees/volunteers when attending Ride High);
- If (s)he instigates or is involved in actively promoting acts of gross misconduct (eg. physical or verbal abuse or threatening behaviour towards Ride High employees/volunteers or other Ride High members, or behaving in a dangerous or inappropriate manner towards horses).

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 fixed term members and/or their parents/carers, and shown to all students undergoing training at Ride High.

Approval and review

This Entrance, Progression and Exit Policy (Fixed term members) was approved at a Board Meeting of the Trustees. It will be reviewed each year thereafter, or more frequently if appropriate.

Signed.....

Date.....