

The Diamond Centre

for Disabled Riders

Being a Volunteer



www.diamondcentre.co.uk



admin@diamondcentre.org.uk



0208 643 7764

Welcome Message from Claire Snowdon

Chair of Trustees



We've been providing equine facilitated activities to children and adults, with a wide range of disabilities of all ages, backgrounds, and experiences since 1969.

Whether you started volunteering with us recently or have been with Diamond for many years, we really value your contribution. We couldn't do it without you and look forward to what we can achieve together in the future.

We want to do all we can to help you settle into your role. You can get in touch with the Volunteer Working Group at any time, and we are all here to support you every step of the way.

Welcome to the volunteer team!

Meet your Volunteer Working Group



Ffion Curtis



Eve Curtis



Kate Gordon



Claire Agius



Rosemary Stuart

If you have any questions, please come and find one of us or contact Ffion at ffion.curtis@diamondcentre.org.uk



Looking after yourself and others



Volunteering at The Diamond Centre is all about working together to create a safe and enjoyable environment for everyone.

You can help by:

-  Looking after your own safety and the safety of those around you.
-  Following the guidance of our coaches and staff.
-  Letting us know if you spot anything that could be unsafe.
-  Asking questions if you're ever unsure – we're always happy to help.
-  Taking on tasks that you feel confident and comfortable carrying out.
-  Remember, there is never any pressure to do something you're unsure about. We'd much rather you ask than take a risk.



Our Safeguarding Officers

Safeguarding refers to the proactive approach to keeping children, young people and adults at risk, safe from harm.

RDA places the highest priority on safety and enjoyment, and recognises that it has a duty of care to those taking part as well as promoting their welfare by taking all reasonable steps to ensure risks of harm are minimised.



Kate Gordon



Maz Ray



Carol Bedwell

Safeguarding in Practice:

- ✓ No person is left unattended.
- ✓ All sessions are supervised by trained coaches or activity leaders.
- ✓ We do not allow lone working with Under 18 year olds.
- ✓ Challenging behaviour and incidents of escalation are managed safely and recognised as safeguarding as well as safety concerns.



Here at The Diamond Centre:

- ✓ Everyone is treated with dignity, respect and compassion
- ✓ Choice, independence and wellbeing are promoted wherever possible
- ✓ Consent is sought and personal wishes are respected
- ✓ Concerns about physical, emotional, financial, discriminatory or neglect-related abuse are reported immediately
- ✓ Self-neglect, coercion, bullying and unsafe situations are recognised as safeguarding concerns
- ✓ Support is provided in the least restrictive way while keeping people safe

For further information see our website for the RDA Code of Conduct



Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Everyone has the right to be safe, respected and supported.

Information about riders, families or other volunteers must not be shared outside the Centre or on Social Media. Please do not post photographs or information about riders or activities unless authorised by the Centre.

If you have any concerns about a participant or another volunteer, please talk to one of the Safeguarding Officers.



What to Wear:

Sturdy shoes

- ✓ Trainers must not be worn. Volunteers should wear sturdy shoes that protect feet from horse hooves.

Weather Appropriate Clothing

- ✓ It can get cold in winter, but you get warm leading. Layers are recommended.
- ✓ Shoulders must always be covered - no strappy/vest tops.

Hair tied up

- ✓ If hair is shoulder length or longer, it must be tied up.

Avoid strong perfumes

- ✓ These can be upsetting for some participants.

Be aware of hanging jewellery

- ✓ These can get caught or be grabbed.

Riding hats must be worn when bringing horses in from the field or turning out

- ✓ Hats must be standard specified with Kitemarks



Appropriate PPE is readily available to support the safe completion of relevant tasks.



Health and Safety

Report all **accidents, incidents, near misses and hazards** immediately to a member of staff. Even minor incidents should be reported so we can prevent future accidents.

First aid kits are available on site in the **Office**, as well as the **Defibrillator**.

Qualified first aiders are always present during sessions.

Weather and Environment

- Sessions may be adapted, postponed, or cancelled during extreme weather conditions.
- Hydration is encouraged, particularly in hot weather.
- Riding surfaces, pathways, and working areas are checked before use.
- Extra care is taken during wet, icy, muddy, or low-visibility conditions.

Slips, Trips and Falls

- Use designated walkways at all times.
- Keep yards, pathways, and arena access routes clear of hazards.
- Take extra care on uneven, wet, or muddy surfaces.
- Spectators, parents, and visitors should remain in designated areas.
- Appropriate footwear must be worn on site.
- Always walk (don't run).

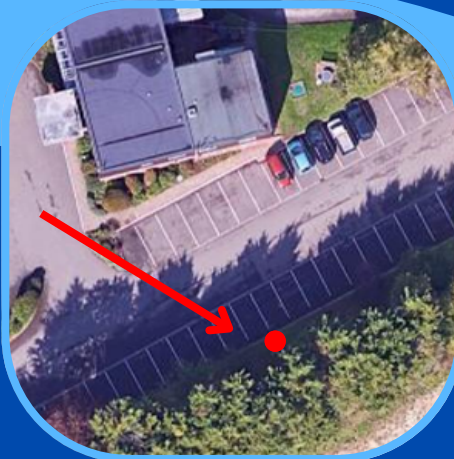


Fire Drill:

The fire meeting point is in the car park.

If there is an alarm, the best procedure is to listen.

Whether this be to the coach if in a lesson or a member of staff if on the yard, or head to your nearest fire exit (all of which are labelled).



WHAT3WORDS

In an emergency:

STOP the activity immediately
Notify the nearest member of staff
Follow the Coach's instructions if
in a lesson

Clear the area if required

Do not move the casualty

First aider to assess

If emergency services need to be
contacted, use What3Words

modest.cheese.basket

as well as our Postcode

SM5 4DT

All accidents and incidents MUST
be recorded



Manual Handling

- If you have an injury or medical condition that affects lifting, tell a member of staff before undertaking manual handling tasks.
- Do not lift unless necessary – use mounting blocks, ramps, or ask for assistance
- Always ask for help if unsure
- Use team lifts where required (multiple people lifting one object)
- Never lift beyond your capability

Plan the task

Check the load, the route and remove hazards.

Position

Stand close, feet shoulder-width apart.
One foot slightly forward.

Bend your knees

Keep your back straight and
bend at the knees and hips.

Lift with your legs

Hold the load close to your body.

Keep it close

Push through your legs, not your back.

Move and place safely

Turn with your feet, not your waist.
Put down carefully, don't drop.

If it feels unsafe, STOP immediately and ask for help

Using Equipment Safely

Many of the tools and equipment around the Centre require specific training or experience to use safely

If a task involves equipment such as the mower, strimmer, tractor or other machinery, a member of staff will let you know who is trained to use it.

There are always plenty of other ways to help, so if you're ever unsure whether you're able to use something, just ask a member of the team.



Working Safely at Height

Some jobs around the Centre involve reaching high places. To help keep everyone safe, our staff will take care of any tasks that require ladders or working above ground level.

If something is out of reach, simply let a member of staff know and they'll be happy to help.

There are lots of valuable jobs that can be done safely from ground level, and every contribution makes a difference.

Risk Assessments are carried out for activities, horses and work around the site. Volunteers must follow any control measures identified. See our website for Risk Assessments

Volunteers should not work alone on the yard, fields or any other areas. **Volunteers who are under 18 years old must always work under the supervision of a responsible adult or coach.**



Infection Control and Hygiene

Wash hands after handling horses and before eating or drinking



Cover cuts with waterproof dressings

Do not attend if you are suffering from sickness, diarrhoea or other contagious illnesses.



Your health and wellbeing are important to us. If you become unwell during your volunteering hours, please let a member of staff know as soon as possible so we can support you and ensure appropriate arrangements are made.



Mobile Phones

We ask that mobile phones be on silent and are kept away while leading horses

Phones should only be used in an emergency.

Please do not take photographs of participants



Smoking and Vaping

Smoking and vaping are only allowed in the designated area (The Den) in the car park.

Parking and Vehicle Safety

When arriving, please drive slowly (10mph maximum) up the drive and around the car park. Horses and pedestrians may be present and moving throughout the area.



Arriving for your Volunteering Session

Which door you use to enter on your volunteer day depends on your slot.

Early Risers will enter through the back door. This will be shown to you at the Induction.

You get to this door from the car park, by going down the side of the building, and walking through the little brown gate and the door is on the right.



Volunteers who come in for lessons will enter through the front door.

Signing In:

When you come in for your volunteering session, it is essential to sign in.

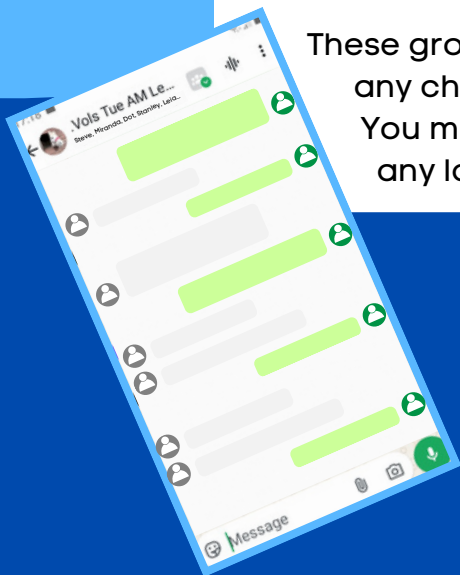
The register is located in the reception window. All you need to do is find your session/sessions on the day you volunteer, and tick yourself in.

If you have a holiday booked, or know you cannot attend a certain day, please mark yourself as away as early as possible.



When you are entered into the register, you will also be invited to join the WhatsApp group for the time you volunteer.

These groups are for us to contact you about any changes to your volunteering sessions. You may also use it to let us know about any last-minute cancellations.



Buddy System:

When you start, you will be working alongside a **Buddy**.

Your Buddy will show you the ropes, and be there to support you for as long as you need while volunteering.

If in doubt at any time, don't be afraid to ask your buddy, coach or a member of staff for help - no question is too trivial!



Working Safely Around Horses

Horses are gentle but large and unpredictable animals.

- Always stay alert and aware of your surroundings
- Only handle horses you are confident and authorised to manage
- Follow instructions from Coaches and Staff at all times
- Avoid sudden movements, shouting, or unnecessary noise
- If a horse becomes loose, stay calm and follow instructions immediately

Horse Risk Assessment

We have a risk assessment for every horse on the yard. This is in the form of a traffic light system.



GREEN: Friendly



AMBER: Be Aware



RED: Take Care

All of our horses are great at their jobs, but a few have certain requirements and needs. These are displayed on the side of their boxes. If in any doubt, ask a member of staff.

How to Hold a Lead Rope Safely

When leading, it is important to have a safe lead rope!

This means:



Arms are relaxed



No tension along the rope



Two hands on the lead rope

A safe lead rope looks like this:

Never wrap the lead rope around your hand or wrist.

If the horse was to pull, you could hurt your hand.



When in Lessons



For the horse to walk out, you must try to stay at their shoulder and not get in front of the horse's head.

Keep movements smooth - nervous riders will feel unbalanced at sudden halts or walk-ons. Be aware of your rider's balance, and be prepared to halt gently and safely, for your coach to come over.

Keep a horse's distance between you and the horse in front.

Always take wide turns- especially when coming out of the mounting area.



For helpful videos on leading, tacking up and untacking and preparing for lessons, scan the QR Code below to take you to the Volunteer Training Section of our Website.



How to Tie a Quick Release Knot

1. Make a small loop with your lead rope through the baling twine or safety ring



2. Twist your loop 540 degrees or 3 times



3. Grab the tail of the rope and pull another loop through the first



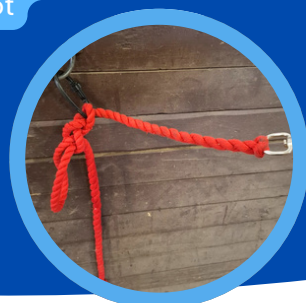
4. Keeping hold of the loop, tighten the knot till its snug



5. Quick release knot is done!



6. There should only be about a foot between the horse and the knot



**Miss them
when you are
not here?**
**Follow us
on...**



The Diamond Centre for Disabled Riders



diamoncentre_disabledriders



<https://www.diamondcentre.org.uk/#>

We look forward to seeing you soon!



www.diamondcentre.co.uk



admin@diamondcentre.org.uk



0208 643 7764