

The Diamond Centre for Disabled Riders



Policy for Individuals

Introduction

In addition to our school groups, over 170 individuals participate in therapeutic riding, vaulting and other equine activities at **The Diamond Centre for Disabled Riders** each week. This policy is to ensure that all users of the centre understand their responsibilities so everyone can gain maximum benefit from their experience at Diamond.

Payment

- Invoices are sent out termly and invoiced in accordance with the number of weeks in each term as per our current riding fees.
- Term time riding is paid for regardless of attendance.
- We also offer riding in the school holidays. These sessions are itemised in the invoice separately and are dependent on pre booking. This will be offered before each holiday and booking to ride in this session must be made.
- Invoices are sent via email a minimum of 40 days before the start of the term, and payment must be made before riding starts. If payment is not made by the start of term, we will not be able to let the participant ride.
- If a participant cannot ride for any length of time, i.e., due to injury, an operation or other absence, then their riding place may be held with full payment for one year maximum. If this is not possible, then an option to go back on the waiting list will be given.
- A minimum of 6 weeks-notice is required if a participant no longer wants to attend. A refund will be given for the remainder of the term (beyond the 6 weeks' notice period).
- If a participant must stop riding because they have gone over the weight limit or riding is no longer appropriate, a full refund of lessons left in the term will be given.

Opportunities to Ride

- All riders are given an initial assessment prior to riding with either our in-house physiotherapist or RDA Head Coach.
- The aim is to provide enjoyable, inclusive and equitable opportunities for all.
- The weight limit for riders at The Diamond Centre is 11st 7lbs (73kg). On occasions a lower weight limit may be applied depending on the level of support the individual rider requires. In such instances, The Diamond Centre will advise.
- We do not put any pressure on participants to ride if they tell us they do not want to.
- Horse riding and equine activities are potentially hazardous and involve an element of risk. Whilst every reasonable precaution is taken to ensure safety, participants and parents/carers acknowledge that accidents and injuries can occur.
- The Diamond Centre reserves the sole right to decide who rides and may discontinue participants for several reasons.
- If a participant is too frightened or anxious and refuses to get onto the horse during the first few weeks, a reasonable attempt will be made to encourage them, but it may not be appropriate to continue.
- All participants must take guidance from The Diamond Centre staff and coaches and adhere to their professional advice regarding behaviour and safety while riding.
- Due to our long waiting list, we are not able to offer two riding places within one week, for example, attending with a school group and individually at the same time, or riding at another RDA centre.

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Communication

- All consent, contact and medical forms must be completed before activities can commence.
- All consent, contact and medical forms must be **kept updated** by communicating changes to the office.
- We ask that any cancellations for sessions are made as soon as possible. This is to ensure we have the correct number of volunteers and horses available.
- Cancellation with less than 24 hours' notice must be made via phone call on 0208 643 7764.
- If a participant fails to turn up without cancellation a mark of absence will be made to their record. If multiple absences without cancellation occur within a term, Diamond will send an email of warning. If this happens again the riding place may be offered to someone else.
- Please try to make sure that participants arrive on time for their session. If you are running late, please let a member of staff know ASAP. Participants will not be allowed to take part if they are more than 10 minutes late for the session.
- Although we endeavour to accommodate the time and day a participant may ride, the opportunities offered are based on riding ability, horse availability and support required. If the participant is unable to accept the session offered, they may stay on the waiting list, however we may not be able to accommodate them.
- As participants progress, they will be asked to move to a different session in order in to continue their development. We must be mindful that we have a very long waiting list and need to try and give as many participants as possible, the opportunity to ride by making spaces available at the early stages of the riding programme.
- Please respect the session coach, they are trained to work with horses and with riders of all abilities.
- Talk to us if you have any concerns.

Riding

Acceptable Attire

- Riding hats must always be worn when mounted and while undertaking stable management activities.
- Riding helmets are provided free of charge. They are an expensive resource and must be treated with the utmost respect and care.
- Riders must not have a bun or hair bobble(s) underneath their riding hat, as the hat will not fit correctly and can create uneven pressure on the head. Should the rider fall and strike their head, this may increase the likelihood of injury.
- Braids that lie flat are acceptable provided they are not secured with large bobbles or beads. Hair buns and bobbles should ideally be fastened below the hat line.
- Participants may wear leggings, tracksuit bottoms or full-length comfortable trousers. Jeans should be avoided.
- Socks must be worn when borrowing riding boots.

Unacceptable Attire

- Vest tops (shoulders must be covered).
- Shorts.
- Three-quarter length trousers (legs must be covered).

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- Jewellery.
- Dresses or skirts.
- Sandals, flip-flops or sliders.

Participants must not have anything in their mouth whilst riding, including but not limited to:

- Chewing gum
- Food
- Sensory chews

Behaviour

Disruptive, abusive, or unsafe behaviour cannot be tolerated.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Spitting
- Hair pulling
- Swearing
- Aggression
- Intentionally frightening horses
- Aggressive behaviour towards staff, volunteers, or other participants

Participants displaying such behaviour may be asked to leave and may not be permitted to return.

On Site Expectations

- Participants must be supervised at all times and follow instructions from The Diamond Centre staff, coaches, and volunteers.
- Participants must behave in a safe, respectful, and responsible manner at all times to promote their own safety and the safety of others.
- Unsafe or disruptive behaviour, including throwing objects, climbing on structures, damaging property, or any behaviour that creates a safety risk, will not be tolerated.
- Persistent unsafe or disruptive behaviour, despite being asked to stop, may result in removal from activities, being asked to leave the site, and/or future exclusion from The Diamond Centre.
- Spectators are welcome to observe sessions; however, to ensure participants can hear coaching instructions clearly and remain focused, parents, carers, and spectators should avoid distracting or interacting with riders during lessons unless requested by staff.
- Deliberate damage to Centre property will not be tolerated, and individuals may be held responsible for any damage caused.
- The Diamond Centre cannot accept responsibility for the loss, theft, or damage of personal belongings brought onto the site.

Safeguarding

The Diamond Centre is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people, and adults at risk.

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- All safeguarding concerns will be managed in accordance with the Centre's Safeguarding Policy.
- Concerns may be shared with relevant agencies where required by law or guidance.
- Any safeguarding concern must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Details of the DSL are available upon request.

Accidents and Emergencies

- Qualified first aiders will provide appropriate first aid where necessary.
- Emergency services may be contacted if required.
- All accidents, incidents, and near misses will be recorded and managed in accordance with Centre procedures.

Adverse Weather and Force Majeure

The Diamond Centre may cancel sessions where conditions are considered unsafe, including but not exhaustive:

- High winds
- Extreme heat
- Ice
- Severe rain
- Other hazardous weather conditions

The Centre shall not be liable for cancellations resulting from circumstances beyond its reasonable control, including:

- Severe weather events
- Disease outbreaks
- Staff shortages
- Utility failures
- Government restrictions
- Other unforeseen circumstances

Refunds will not normally be issued for such cancellations.

The Centre reserves the right to review this policy if significant cancellations occur within a year.

Horse Welfare

- The welfare of our horses is paramount.
- Staff may modify, postpone or cancel any activity at any time if they believe participation may adversely affect the welfare, health or safety of a horse.
- All participants, parents/carers and visitors are expected to treat horses respectfully and follow staff instructions regarding horse handling and interaction.

Social Media and Photography

- Social media should be used responsibly.

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- Photography or video recording is not permitted without prior permission from the RDA Coordinator or Centre Manager.
- Where photography is approved, this will normally take place at the end of the lesson under staff supervision.
- To protect participants and respect social, cultural, and religious considerations, photography and video recording of group sessions is not permitted without prior consent and authorisation.

Data Protection and Confidentiality

- Personal information will be processed and stored in accordance with applicable data protection legislation.
- Information supplied by schools, colleges, participants, parents, and carers will only be used for legitimate operational, safeguarding, safety, and legal purposes.
- Information will only be shared where lawful and necessary.
- Further details are available in The Diamond Centre's Privacy Policy.

Complaints and Feedback

The Diamond Centre welcomes feedback and is committed to resolving concerns fairly and promptly.

- Concerns should initially be raised with the Centre Manager.
- Formal complaints will be managed in accordance with the Centre's Complaints Policy.
- Raising a concern or complaint will not affect future participation.

Participants, Parents and Carers Have the Right To

- Be assured that participants are safeguarded during their time with us.
- Access relevant policies and procedures upon request.
- Know who the Designated Safeguarding Lead is and how to contact them.
- Understand the training and qualifications held by staff and volunteers.
- Be informed of any concerns relating to participants.
- Be informed whenever an accident, incident, or injury occurs.
- Have consent sought for activities outside the scope of existing permissions.
- Receive information regarding significant changes to sessions, staffing, or operational arrangements.
- Expect activities to be delivered by appropriately trained staff and suitably inducted volunteers.
- Raise concerns, provide feedback, and make complaints without prejudice.
- Request access to relevant risk assessments relating to equestrian activities.

Acknowledgement

By accepting a riding place and making payment, participants and/or their parent/carer confirm that they have read, understood and agree to comply with this Participant Policy and any other relevant policies of The Diamond Centre.