

Pathway Ponies Health and Safety Policy

Policy Statement

Pathway Ponies is committed to ensuring the health, safety, and well-being of everyone involved in our activities, including participants, staff, volunteers, and visitors. We strive to create a safe environment by identifying and mitigating potential hazards associated with working with ponies and running equine-based programs.

1. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to outline the health and safety practices and responsibilities at Pathway Ponies to minimise risks, prevent accidents, and promote a safe, welcoming environment.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, participants, visitors, and contractors involved in any activities organised by Pathway Ponies.

3. Responsibilities

- **Management:** Ensure this policy is implemented and reviewed regularly, and that all staff and volunteers are trained and supported in following health and safety practices.
- **Staff and Volunteers:** Follow all health and safety guidelines, attend training sessions, and immediately report any potential hazards or incidents.
- **Participants and Visitors:** Follow safety instructions provided by staff, respect the rules of the facility, and inform staff of any health or safety concerns.

4. Risk Assessments

Pathway Ponies will conduct regular risk assessments to identify and mitigate hazards associated with:

- **Equine Care and Handling:** Ensuring safety during all interactions with ponies, including grooming, feeding, leading and observing. Staff will oversee non-ridden pony activities to ensure all participants are handling ponies safely.
- **Facilities and Grounds:** Maintaining the yard, stables, and surrounding areas in a safe and tidy condition, including regular checks of fencing, gates, pathways, and other facilities.
- **Equipment:** Inspecting all equipment (such as grooming tools, head collars, lead ropes and obstacle equipment) regularly to ensure it is in good condition and safe for use.
- **Environmental Hazards:** Monitoring weather conditions and adjusting activities as needed to prevent heat stress, slips, or other weather-related risks.

Risk assessments will be documented and reviewed annually or as necessary to adapt to new activities or potential hazards.

5. Safety Procedures

- **Supervision:** All activities will be supervised by highly trained staff to ensure safe interactions with ponies. The appropriate ratio of staff to participants will be maintained at all times.

- **Emergency Procedures:** Clear procedures will be in place for emergencies, including accidents, injuries, and fire incidents. Emergency contact information and first-aid kits will be readily accessible on-site.
- **First Aid:** Pathway Ponies will ensure that at least one staff member with first-aid certification is present during all activities. First-aid kits will be checked regularly to ensure they are fully stocked.
- **PPE (Personal Protective Equipment):** Where necessary, PPE such as gloves and helmets will be provided to participants and staff to ensure safety during activities. All participants and staff will be instructed to wear suitable footwear.
- **Incident Reporting:** All accidents and near-misses will be documented in an incident log. Incidents will be reviewed to implement any necessary improvements to safety protocols.

6. Health and Hygiene

- **Zoonotic Disease Prevention:** To reduce the risk of zoonotic (animal-to-human) diseases, all staff, volunteers, and participants will be encouraged to wash their hands thoroughly after handling ponies. Hand washing stations will be available, and hand sanitiser will be provided in areas where soap and water are not accessible.
- **Cleanliness:** Stables, feeding areas, and activity spaces will be kept clean and free of waste, including regular removal of manure to maintain a hygienic environment.
- **Participant Health Checks:** All participants will be asked to disclose any relevant health conditions prior to engaging in activities to ensure necessary precautions are taken.

7. Training and Information

- All staff and volunteers will receive training on health and safety protocols, including safe handling of ponies, emergency procedures, and incident reporting.
- Staff will be briefed on the importance of health and safety, and will be provided with ongoing opportunities for training and development.
- Pathway Ponies will keep updated on health and safety legislation relevant to equine care and implement necessary adjustments to comply with legal requirements.

8. Fire Safety

- Fire exits will be clearly marked, and all participants and staff will be informed of emergency exits and meeting points.
- Regular fire drills will be conducted to ensure staff and volunteers are prepared in case of an emergency.
- Fire extinguishers and other firefighting equipment will be maintained and inspected in accordance with fire safety regulations.

9. COVID-19 and Infectious Disease Protocols

In the event of infectious disease concerns, Pathway Ponies will implement appropriate health protocols, which may include:

- Limiting group sizes to allow for social distancing, if necessary.
- Enhancing cleaning and sanitising practices for commonly used surfaces and equipment.
- Adapting activities to reduce close contact and maintaining good ventilation in indoor areas.

10. Policy Review

This Health and Safety Policy will be reviewed annually or as required to ensure it remains effective, relevant, and compliant with current regulations.

Last Review Date: 8th November 2024

Next Review Date: 8th November 2024

11. Contact Information

For health and safety inquiries or to report a concern, please contact:

Pathway Ponies Health and Safety Officer: Carly Flower

07984 417772,

pathwayponies@gmail.com

In case of an emergency, dial **999**.

Approval and Implementation

This policy is approved by Carly Flower, Owner and is effective as of 8th November 2022