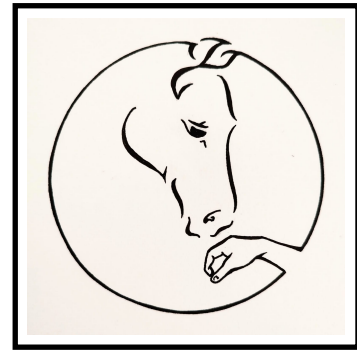


WILTSHIRE EQUINE ASSISTED LEARNING

Wick Yard, Bath rd, Farleigh Wick
Bradford on Avon, Wiltshire, BA15 2PU
07368 1555557



Name of setting PremisesWick Yard, BA15 2PU

Name(s) of those who conducted the Risk Assessment for the provision of equine assisted learning and qualifications are:

Hannah Lindsay – Equine Assisted Learning Facilitator and Director of Wiltshire Equine Assisted Learning

Most of our work will involve learners having contact with animals at Wick Yard but occasionally the animals may be walked along local lanes and public footpaths. A full risk assessment will take place of any new environment. Learners only handle horses from the ground, there is no riding involved.

Caring for the ponies forms part of the day to day work of the Centre staff.

How was the risk assessment done?

- We followed guidance from the HSE website.
- To identify the hazards, we looked at the HSE website, following guidance for small businesses. There is an accident book on the premises which is completed and reviewed annually by the Board of Directors, and any critical incidents would be taken to the Board as and when necessary.
- Hazards, and who they might affect, were identified.
- For each hazard, controls were put in place in accordance with practice guidance on the HSE website.
- We discussed our findings with the Board of Directors
- Wiltshire Equine Assisted Learning has Public liability insurance to cover up to £10,000,000 and Employers Liability insurance to cover up to £5,000,000. The certificates can be viewed on request and are kept on the premise

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are we already doing?	Further Actions
Horses and other animals • Sheep • Guinea Pigs • Dogs	• Staff and learners may be injured by horses or other animals by kicking, biting, scratching, stepping on toes, being crushed or knocked over etc • Risk of infection/hygiene risks	• Hannah is a qualified first aider. • First Aid Boxes are in the Stables and Office. • Any medication is in a locked box there. • Providing any new staff with an induction. • 'First aid at work' poster displayed. • Choosing horses and other animals carefully. New staff will receive horse handling training and supervision. Permission form signed by parent/guardian outlining risks. Providing learners with induction before they handle horses or animals. • Limited numbers working with horses at any one time and under the close supervision of all learners. Hats available for those who want to wear one. • Information provided for every learner prior to the start of the course regarding suitable clothing i.e. appropriate footwear with grip, gloves, wet weather clothing, sun hat, sunscreen etc. • Accident book to be completed by staff after any incident. Accident book reviewed by Hannah after any noted incident, or at least annually with report made to Board of Directors and any actions identified and completed. • Hand washing/gels after all interactions	
Equipment	• Staff and learners may be injured if they use tools, farm or animal equipment incorrectly, especially when working with the horses/animals. i.e. wrapping rope around hands could cause rope burns, blistering, or worse, if the horse were to take off. Stepping into a coil of rope could lead to being dragged along.	• Providing induction for learners before they meet the horses/animals. Allowing time to settle in a safe environment before meeting the horses. • Close Supervision by Staff at all times. • All farm equipment to be stored safely, • Provide all resources for practical activities, ensuring they are fit for use, checked and maintained. • A health and safety tool/equipment talk before learner commences activity, as part of the induction. • Keys for tractors/quad bikes to be kept securely locked away. • All sharp tools and potentially harmful tools kept secure i.e. ropes, scissors, tools, knives, pitchforks, grooming equipment, etc. • All use of animal care, tools and handling equipment to be supervised by Facilitator	

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are we already doing?	Further Actions
Allergic reaction to bites, animals, seasonal allergies, hay.	• Ill health from contact with animals. • Risk of infection from contact with animals - in particular lambs.	• Detailing on learner information web page the appropriate clothes to bring to a session (eg, gloves). • Identify any allergies prior to commencement of sessions, requested as medical information on referral form. • Advising facilitators to watch for sneezing/ runny eyes. • Provide handwash/sanitiser for all staff and learners after animal handling. Discuss antihistamine medication needs prior to sessions for learners who have a known allergy.	No further action identified.
Hazardous substances	• Medication for ponies. • Animal wormers. • Chemical substances used around the farm. • Muck heap and animal droppings. • Working in stream or woodland.	• All hazardous substances to be stored in a locked room. Learners will not be able to access the room unless directly supervised by a Facilitator. • Stock levels to be checked regularly by Facilitator. • All animals to be regularly counted and wormed, in line with the yard annual worming programme. • Learners taking part in animal care/outside learning (stream/woodlands) may come into contact with droppings and therefore facilitator to ensure they wash their hands thoroughly following contact with animals. • Sanitiser provided in all areas. • All animal droppings picked up regularly by staff and hands washed • Nettles/hazardous plants identified and controlled - education of learners regarding these	No further action identified.
Slips and Trips - outdoors on stairs/indoors	• Staff and visitors risk serious injury if they slip or trip, even on the level.	• Regular, visual checks for potholes and trip hazards. Facilitators to point out trip possibilities eg into the round pen, paddock, toilet, steps into rooms, stairs etc. • Ensure learners wear sensible and appropriate footwear to minimise risks. • Paths to field maintained in winter with field mats to ensure safer surface to field. • Dry mop floors on wet days to reduce risk.	No further action identified.
Transport		• Permission must be sought from learner or parents/guardians prior to any learner travelling in vehicles and those vehicles to be insured for business use.	No further action identified.

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are we already doing?	Further Actions
Fields and gate entrances	• Trapped fingers • Escaping animals • Trampling, dangers of accident with loose animals • Climbing • Fall, sprain, twists, head injury, broken bone • Damage to property and risk to security of animals.	• Staff to assist learners when appropriate. • If animal near, facilitator to take charge of safe passage through gate. • Risk of being barged by horses at a gate. • Ensure it is closed efficiently. • Enforce rules of no gate climbing.	• Dynamically assess and read body language of nearby animals. • Learning the country code. • Listening, understanding and following instructions.
Interactions with the public and dog walkers. • Unknown dogs off lead. • Risk of unsafe interactions. • Risk of breach of confidentiality. • Risk of dog bite/attack	• Supervising 1:1 at all times. • Ensure learner is always in site of facilitator. • Dynamic risk assessment. Request for dog on lead etc. • Remove and go to quiet space if people are in close proximity if necessary.	• Assess body language. • Maintain personal space. • Encourage safe interactions with animals and people. • Educate how not to over excite dogs. • Educate how to approach unknown dogs.	• Teach respect of the unknown. • Dynamic risk assessments • Learning about stranger danger.
Manual handling	• Staff and Learners may be at risk of injury whilst handling equipment used around the farm and in sessions.	• Managing Director to assess risks and ensure staff are aware of safer handling guidelines. All training needs to be identified. • Health and Safety Policy to be reviewed and updated annually. • Equipment to be used, where possible, to move any heavy load – i.e. hay bales • Learners to be supervised by Facilitator if moving or handling any equipment and advised on safe handling • Any injury to be dealt with immediately by Facilitator and recorded in accident book.	No further action identified.
Electricity	• Staff risk injury from electrical appliances or electric fencing.	• Electrical installations on premises inspected by a qualified electrician. Staff visually check leads and plugs items before use. • Signs displayed regarding any mains electric fencing and staff and learners are instructed regarding safe use	

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are we already doing?	Further Actions
Risk to Horses and other animals from Learners	Horses and other animals worked with during sessions risk injury from Learners	- Learners to be supervised at all times during contact with animals. - Facilitator to be aware of the animal's body language and to change direction of the session if the animal appears anxious or distressed in any way - Twice daily visual checks of all animals to ensure they are healthy, relaxed and not appearing ill or injured. - Promotion of kindness and empathy during sessions. Where a risk from a learner is identified, a further risk assessment will be completed to minimise the risk to the animals. - A zero tolerance approach to any roughness with the animals will be taken and learners not adhering will be removed from contact.	No further action identified.
Office and Toilet - Heater, hot water, step up to toilet, slip risk on floor if wet, electrical equipment - Cleanliness, risk of infection	learners and staff	- daily cleaning and encouraging clean use of facilities. - Learners to be supervised from outside toilet door at all times. - Learners warned about steps up and gaps. - Switches out of reach to learners. - Mat at door and mop available to dry wet floor if using whilst wet. - Electrical equipment checked by facilitators and PAT tested. - Kettle/coffee machine and microwave to be used only by staff. - Hot water temperature to be set at comfortable level.	Weekly toilet check
Public space	- Risk of breach of confidentiality if parents/families/teachers waiting for learners and another session is running concurrently with another learner. - Deliveries and farm traffic - Risk of learners escaping to busy road or onto footpaths.	- Parents careers asked to wait within car or to leave. - Induction brochure made available to highlight risks of site - Barrier erected to prevent vehicles passing beyond the car park area. - At times of deliveries and farm traffic, learners to remain close to facilitator and advised where to stand. - Slow down sign at car park. - The entrance to Wick Yard is a public space and the public have access through the site. Learners are therefore accompanied and overseen at all times and collected and returned to the pick up point. - There is a main road at the entrance protected by a swing footpath gate and a cattle grid. - Specific risk assessments will be made as to the suitability of the child to 'open' the site.	- Permission for exposure to the 'public' space signed for in referral forms. - To be talked through with learner on initial site tour. - Commissioners invited to visit site to assess the suitability of specific learners prior to commencing sessions.
Parking area	Safety risk from incoming and site traffic to children and any animals loose in the yard.	- Sign on drive to remind visitors to slow down for children and loose animals in the yard at entrance to the farm - Closed gates between fields and parking areas at all times.	Arrival parking procedure information available on website.

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are we already doing?	Further Actions
Muck heap	• Slips trips & falls. • Risk of flies, risk of contamination.	• Learners to remain with facilitator at all times. • Wash/sanitise hands after contact. • Make gloves available. • Suitability of learners interaction with waste individually assessed.	• Understanding of essential care of animals. • H & S around manure droppings. • Fine & gross motor skills. • Team work.

Description of site for Forest School activities:

- 5 acre paddocks
 - Fields and woodland area with a shallow brook running through in the winter. The brook is not visible from the paddock and is hidden from learners so not immediately accessible. Learners only allowed into these fenced areas, supervised 1:1.
- Animals
 - Usual country animals of non-dangerous nature are present. Horses, sheep, dogs and guinea pigs are also on site but they have no access to woodland or stream and are contained within their own areas.
- Dogs
 - Facilitators often work with their own dogs in sessions. Owner's are required to clear up after their dogs and each individual dog has been risk assessed.
- Flora and Fauna
 - There is a wide variety of trees and ground flora. Good habitat for birds, insects and mammals. These are dynamically assessed within their season for poison, irritants and allergy potential.
- Access
 - Through a paddock and along a woodland path to a sunken lane. No vehicles are be able to access this area. The car park is active with public vehicles but no vehicle is able to reach the paddocks or woodland where we will be predominantly working when not indoors.
- Water:
 - There is a shallow brook in the sunken lane in the winter.

There are three elements to this assessment:

- Benefit - the positive outcomes of the experience / planned activities
- Hazard - the potential for something to cause harm
- Risk - Evaluating these elements allows decisions to be made about managing and taking risks.

The Health & Safety Executive have produced advice and guidance on risk assessment, identifying five logical steps to obtain effective risk assessments:

- Identify the hazards.
- Decide who could be harmed and how.
- Evaluate the risks arising from the hazards and decide what measures are required to reduce those risks.
- Record the findings.
- Review the assessment periodically, making revisions as and when necessary

Several types of risk benefit assessment are needed for outdoor play:

- A risk assessment of the natural and non-natural hazards, with an accompanying hand drawn map of the site.
- A general risk assessment of experiences the children may choose to undertake on the site e.g. climbing trees, log piles, digging in soil.
- Risk assessments of specific individuals taking part in an activity, i.e. if they have any special needs which are felt to need more support than a 1:1 facilitator:learner ratio.
- New risks identified on visual check
- Dynamic on-going risk assessments during a session
- Covid 19 risk assessment - all learners and staff are required to adhere to guidance outlined in the Covid 19 risk assessment and policy including temperature checks, hand-washing and social distancing guidance.

SESSION RISKS

Risk	-/+	Hazard	Benefit
Forest school walks, - To include in field, woodland and public footpath areas. - Slips, Trips, Falls. - Interaction with other animals.	Medium	- Learners to remain close to facilitator at all times. Facilitator to communicate potential hazards on route. - Only partake in activity if wearing appropriate footwear and clothing. - Offer assistance to Learners with a mobility issue, to assist balance etc. Undertake individual risk assessments for	- Encourage learners to make dynamic assessments of the environment. - Communication - Team work - Physical exercise, fine & gross motor skills. - Imaginative play. - Develop Respect for our environment and the impact of our actions within it.
Activities involving sticks, branches and lengths of wood, eg Den building: Scratches, Cuts,	Medium	Learners to follow Forest School rules of, wood handling. Support given where needed by trained staff. Any safety issues dealt with immediately. All accidents to be reported and dealt with immediately, in line with current legislation.	Challenges gross motor skills, balance, cardiovascular, physical strength. Fine motor skills with knot tying. Challenges social skills and negotiation when working as a team or problem solving individually. Use of communication skills and awareness of others.
Using String and rope: Friction burn, sprain, strain,	Low	Learner centred activity on different types of useful knots and application ie making dens and tying sticks together. Support and guidance from trained staff where required.	Challenges fine motor skills. Hand eye coordination. Memory recall of learned skills. Challenge to follow stepped instructions.
Small hand tools: Hand drill: Cut, puncture, sprain, strain, dust inhalation, dust in eye,	High	- Learners to follow rules and instructions when using tools. See guidance on iPad. Be able to demonstrate understanding of safe use prior to commencing activity. 1-1 Staff to learner ratio while tools are used and full supervision throughout activity. All staff are first aiders. Cut resistant glove to be worn as standard.	- Challenges fine motor skills. Hand eye coordination. Memory recall of learned skills. Challenge to follow stepped instructions. - Confidence building and developing new skills.
Large hand tools; Bow saw Digging tools: Cut, puncture, sprain, strain, dust inhalation, dust in eye.	High	- Learners to follow rules and instructions when using tools. Be able to demonstrate understanding of safe use prior to commencing activity. 1-1 Staff to learner ratio while tools are used and full supervision throughout activity. Cut resistant glove to be worn as standard.	- Challenges Gross and fine motor skills. Eye and hand coordination. Memory recall of learned skills. Challenge to follow stepped instructions. Confidence building and developing new skills. Understand risk taking and safety methods. - Communication skills to ensure safety of others

Risk	-/+	Hazard	Benefit
Cooking food: As above, and scolding	High	- In addition to the above campfire; All food being cooked, will be done so by a knowledgeable member of staff, in line with relevant food policies. Staff will check temperature of food before allowing learners to eat. - Learners are to be seated at all times while eating	- In addition to the above campfire: - Learners observe and are involved in the food prep and cooking. Learning life skills, importance of hygiene. Understanding of how a fresh meal is created. Challenges fine motor skills, eye hand coordination. Possible group
Allergies or learners existing conditions	Medium	Learners, parent, or guardian to have raised this on the consent/ learner information form. All staff to be informed of any known allergies or conditions. Staff to be briefed on action to be taken for	Encourage learners to be self aware, knowledgeable and independent in their ability to identify and avoid allergy inducing items, and confidence to inform others of this.
- Missing learner; - Learner may wander off into neighbouri	Medium	Learners to follow forest school rules. Learners to be shown boundaries of land and asked to stay within. Learner to stay 1:1 and in sight of facilitator at all times.	Learners to understand importance of following rules and boundaries. Understand the importance of keeping them and others safe. Building trusting relationships and working together
Animals: Horses, Sheep, Dogs, Guinea pigs; Bites, kicks, stood upon, knocking over, scratches	Medium	- Learners to follow rules and instructions when near the animals. Be able to demonstrate understanding, and feedback the safety rules and procedures prior to interacting or handling the animals. 1-1 Staff to learner ratio while learners are engaged in an animal activity and following instructions	Challenges the learners to think about communication and feelings. Improves confidence and self esteem by being with the animals and interacting under the animal's terms. Develops learners self control of body and emotions as the animals, in turn, react to these. Builds resilience as animals can be stubborn and won't always do as you

Written by: Hannah Lindsay: 07.09.2024

Reviewed on:

For Review: 07.09.2025