

Sheffield Riding for the Disabled Child Protection Policy

Sheffield RDA aims to create an enjoyable environment for all those who wish to ride at Smeltings Farm and Cowley Lane.

Sheffield RDA emphasizes that young people have the right to be safe, secure and free from threat.

We acknowledge that young people have the right to be treated with respect and for their concerns to be listened to and acted upon.

Those working with children and vulnerable people should:

1. be professional and maintain the highest standards of personal behavior at all times
2. be aware of situations which can be misconstrued or manipulated by others. For example, if the instructor or helper is alone with a child in a room away from others, they are open to the possibility of allegations about their behavior
3. be vigilant and aware of how actions can be misinterpreted. For example, adolescents can have strong emotional feelings and idealize some situations. Whilst these should not be dismissed and the youngster hurt as a result, neither should they be encouraged in any way
4. not appear to favor or show interest in one child or young person more than another
5. be very aware that physically handling a rider, perhaps to help develop posture or seating position, can be misconstrued by an observer or even by the rider
6. never swear or use or respond to sexual innuendo
7. design and use training methods and training programmes which are wholly appropriate to the individual rider
8. ensure that, as far as possible, they are not alone when working with young riders on an individual basis. If this is unavoidable then the parents should be made aware of the situation for the sake of the instructor. The presence of others is an insurance against false accusations
9. conduct all dealings with children in a public environment in full view of others, in order that all behavior can be observed
10. on tours / trips away from the stables, ensure that another adult is always present
11. report any concerns within the area of Child Protection (physical, emotional, sexual or neglect), in confidence and without delay, to a responsible person who can give advice and recommend any necessary action.
12. not, at any time, discuss an allegation or suspicion with another person, other than the police, before either the above person or a responsible person has been contacted
13. when reporting an allegation or suspicion, record information, including relevant details. (This includes the nature of the allegation, background information of the parties involved, the period of time to which the allegation relates and the degree to which the information is known to be fact rather than opinion or hearsay)
14. at no time make comment to the media. This may prejudice an investigation.

In the event of an allegation of improper behavior being made, the personal conduct and professional behavior of the adult will be very important evidence. For child abuse to take place, particularly sexual abuse, the child and the adult(s) will generally be alone and away from public view. Thus the best defense is to avoid all situations in which behavior cannot be observed.

For further information on Child Protection issues contact The Area Child Protection Committee, Floor 3 Palatine Chambers, 22, Pinstone St, Sheffield S1 2HD. Tel 01142734450

Sheffield RDA wishes to acknowledge the help of Wakefield RDA in the production of this Policy.