**HorseWorld Discovery Relationship Behaviour Policy**

HorseWorld Discovery develops holistic growth through a tailored equine assisted learning programme that brings young people who struggle with mainstream education together with gentle rescued horses.

**Discovery Ethos**

Discovery helps every soul  through a whole setting approach; supporting social and emotional development alongside strengthening links with our communities which enables collaborative, holistic approaches that help all young people and equines feel safe, respected, and included.

Discovery provides a safe, nurturing, and welcoming environment, in which every young person feels valued, loved, and respected as a unique individual. Discovery is a non-judgemental space where every child, young person, adult, and horse are accepted; a place where they can belong and achieve.

**Rationale/philosophy for this policy**

At Discovery we understand that behaviour is communication, both for our young people and for our horses. Effective behaviour management is underpinned by the building of respectful, kind, caring, reflective and positive relationships. This most often begins with the horses and ponies. Our students are encouraged to reflect on how their behaviour impacts upon the horses, themselves and ultimately, others around them. We understand that behaviour is a communication of needs, and our work is routed in Thrive, The **United Nations** Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Five Freedoms of Animal Welfare.

**Policy aims**

* Clear, consistent boundaries and expectations are set by Discovery staff, prioritising the welfare of the learners & horses to keep young people and adults nurtured and safe. These boundaries and expectations are regularly reflected to the learners, are embedded in every activity, and are modelled by staff and volunteers.
* All adults to endeavour to build trusting, respectful, kind, caring and positive relationships with learners, volunteers, and colleagues.
* All adults to notice when learners are doing well down to the smallest try and respond positively e.g. with a smile, a thumbs up or a positive comment, stating what they did well.
* All adults understand that learners at Discovery require a personalised approach to manage their behaviour.
* All adults to understand that emotional distress or trauma can manifest itself through challenging behaviour.
* All adults will work in a non-confrontational way whilst focusing on the underlying needs of each learner and what is behind the behaviour.
* All learners are encouraged to understand the body language and behaviours of horses and their own behaviours and to reflect on this.
* All learners are supported to manage their own behaviours and body language and to understand the impact of this on the horses and ultimately to extend this understanding to the impact of their behaviours on others around them.
* Through caring for the horses our learners develop an understanding that all behaviour is a communication and that by meeting the needs of the horses with kindness care and respect, they can build deep and trusting relationships with them.
* Learners are encouraged to use calm, quiet voices and body language. By working in this way, they are supported to regulate their emotions, process information, build resilience and develop the confidence to challenge themselves and to achieve.

**Strategies to engage students who are disengaged.**

* Allow the learner time and space to reflect and for their anxiety levels to dissipate.
* Listen to them if they are able/ready to talk.
* Give options for the student to re-engage and remove pressure (moving away if necessary).
* Ask a member of staff from their provision to stay with them if required.

**Action to take if a student exhibit challenging behaviour that is unsafe to themselves, others or the horses.**

* If possible, give space to the student away from the group either in a quite area on the yard or, if safe to do so, using the open countryside spaces on the farm.
* Use simple, clear, and concise language to explain why their behaviour is unsafe and to remind them of expectations.
* If the learner is unable to safely re-engage, explain that they will be unable to stay for that session and plan with the referrer for them to discuss this and be reassured they will be included in the next session.
* Explain that they will be able to return to the next session providing they are able to behave in a safe manner.
* If possible, outline what has gone well that day, ensure that the students leave knowing that it is possible for them to return and that we believe that they can do it.
* Contact the person who has made the referral for the student and explain that you are keen to have the student back and explain what our expectations will be. Ensure that all positive behaviours and achievements are passed on too.

Telephone or email

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