

Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) Programme

British Equestrian



Summerfield Stables
Birmingham

Centre Case Study



Summerfield Stables is a registered charity situated in the Yardley Wood area of Birmingham, affiliated with The Pony Club and British Horse Society.

Their purpose is to encourage children and young people to understand and interact with horses, while working to be inclusive of those from all backgrounds, including those with mental and physical disabilities and those who struggle in mainstream education.

The centre offers a variety of activities to help encourage participation for everyone whilst teaching the importance of understanding the horses and building strong relationships between horse and human.



HAF Programme at Summerfield



Summerfield has received funding to take part in the HAF programme throughout the school holidays, with their latest camp being held over Easter. They partnered with StreetGames to secure the funding.

Those attending the camps got involved a variety of activities to develop their pony care and riding skills, while earning Pony Club badges along the way, as well as art and craft sessions to show off their creativity.



Kirsty Froggatt from Summerfield Stables: "StreetGames has been very supportive during our HAF application. They helped us make connections which enabled us secure further funding to allow our HAF camp to run as we wanted it to. Having the opportunity to run HAF clubs has allowed us to open the doors to more children, in particular those with SEND (special educational needs and disabilities), and to share our horses and ponies with them. They've all benefited from learning new skills, being in new social situations and experiencing all the benefits of being active outdoors, supported with equine activities."

HAF Programme at Summerfield – Q&A

How have you found the experience of running the HAF camps?

Malika Keijzer: "It was heart warming to give children the opportunity to be around the horses. Loads of the children would never have had the chance to learn to ride and connect with horses and the other animals"

Georgina Urwin: "Running the HAF camps has been such lovely experience for all involved. Staff and volunteers have found there have been so many magical moments as they have helped young people explore so many 'firsts' with horses!"

What impacts on the centre and community have the HAF camps had?

Malika Keijzer: "Our centre became even more inclusive, we learned that there were many, many children who were refused by other stables. The children showed an immense difference in behaviour from day one to the last day. The community became more accepting of children with different needs."

Georgina Urwin: "We are already a centre that prides ourselves on trying to make horse riding accessible and inclusive wherever possible and so we were immediately drawn to running the HAF projects. We loved providing a welcoming atmosphere for young people who had struggled to find a centre to meet their needs."

Were there any notable changes in the children attending the HAF camps from their first day to their last day?

Malika Keijzer: "Some of the children had never seen a horse before, and never touched one, none of the children had ever ridden a horse. They started out shy or even fearful, at the end of the HAF project the children were confident and excited."

The horses had a calming effect on the children. Some of the children came in and just wanted a horse hug to calm themselves down. At the start the children were afraid to get dirty at the end, they loved the outdoors and enjoyed working with the horses."

Georgina Urwin: "Parents commented on how much calmer the children were during the program and how it had benefitted them with their confidence."

Would you run the HAF programme again?

Malika Keijzer: "Absolutely, there were sometimes difficult moments due to the amount of support some of the young people needed, but they were groups we will never forget."

What the parents said:

"For the first time in many years, my child slept through the night."

"It's amazing how quickly my son calmed down when he hugged the horse."



The HAF camps have encouraged many children to get involved with horses and the centre are working hard to ensure anyone who has taken part in the camps can have a space to continue to develop their new-found passion.

"Thank you so much for giving them the opportunity to have such a wonderful week!"

"It's lovely to see my child running to the gate, normally she is very reluctant to join in."