

Pony Partnerships CIC



Code of Conduct 2026-2027

Name of Organisation: Pony Partnerships CIC

Venue/Address: All venues

Date of Review: 1 September 2026

Date of Next Review: 31 August 2027

Author: Danielle Mills

1. Purpose and Scope

This Code sets out the standards expected of anyone working for or representing Pony Partnerships CIC.

It applies to:

- directors;
- employees;
- associates;
- sessional practitioners;
- volunteers;
- students and trainees;
- contractors;
- anyone else authorised to work on behalf of Pony Partnerships.

The Code applies during:

- sessions and activities;
- animal-care work;
- administrative and remote work;
- travel and off-site work;
- commissioned provision;
- online and digital communication;
- work-related events.

Conduct outside work, including online conduct, must not undermine safeguarding, confidentiality, professional boundaries, or a person's suitability to work with children, young people, or adults at risk.

2. Core Expectations

Everyone working on behalf of Pony Partnerships must:

- act honestly, respectfully, and professionally;
- treat people with dignity, kindness, and compassion;
- prioritise safeguarding and animal welfare;
- work within their role, training, and competence;
- follow approved procedures, risk assessments, and instructions;

- maintain professional boundaries;
- protect confidential information;
- communicate clearly and appropriately;
- seek support where unsure;
- report concerns promptly;
- take responsibility for their actions and decisions.

Conduct must reflect Pony Partnerships' commitment to inclusion, relational safety, community benefit, and ethical equine practice.

3. Safeguarding

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Staff, associates, and volunteers must:

- remain alert to signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation, distress, or unmet need;
- act in the best interests of children, young people, and adults at risk;
- listen calmly where someone raises a concern;
- never promise confidentiality;
- report safeguarding concerns immediately to the DSL or DDSL;
- complete required records promptly and factually;
- cooperate with safeguarding enquiries;
- not investigate safeguarding concerns themselves.

Concerns must never be ignored, minimised, or delayed.

3.1. Concerns About an Adult

Any concern about the conduct of an employee, associate, volunteer, trainee, director, or contractor must be reported immediately to the CEO/Manager or DSL.

This includes:

- allegations;
- inappropriate boundaries;
- low-level concerns;
- conduct that may be open to misinterpretation;
- concerning online or outside-work conduct;
- behaviour that may indicate transferable risk.

The person reporting the concern must not investigate, question the adult concerned or discuss the matter unnecessarily.

Individuals must self-refer where they have been involved in a situation that:

- could reasonably be misinterpreted;
- may have crossed a professional boundary;
- may have fallen below expected standards;
- could affect their suitability to carry out their role.

4. Professional Boundaries and Communication

Professional relationships must remain safe, respectful, and appropriate.

Pony Partnerships CIC (12448033) c/o 84 Cheal Close, Shardlow, Derby, DE72 2DY
07505951793/info@ponypartnerships.com/www.ponypartnerships.com



Social Farms & Gardens
**Green Care
Quality Mark**



Individuals must:

- avoid favouritism;
- avoid relationships that create a conflict of interest;
- keep professional and personal roles separate;
- avoid behaviour that is exploitative, coercive, or inappropriate;
- use approved communication arrangements;
- seek advice where boundaries are unclear.

Staff, associates, and volunteers must not:

- develop inappropriate personal, romantic, or sexual relationships with participants;
- communicate privately with participants through personal social-media accounts;
- make unauthorised personal arrangements with participants or families;
- transport participants unless this has been authorised and risk assessed;
- arrange unauthorised contact outside agreed provision;
- accept responsibilities outside their role without approval.

Communication must be:

- respectful;
- honest;
- clear;
- appropriate to the person and situation;
- accessible where reasonable adjustments are needed.

Abusive, threatening, humiliating, discriminatory or intimidating communication is not acceptable.

5. Equality, Inclusion and Respect

Everyone must contribute to an inclusive environment.

Individuals must:

- treat people fairly;
- respect identity, difference, and diversity;
- recognise different communication and participation styles;
- respect neurodivergence, disability and individual access needs;
- support reasonable adjustments;
- respect participant autonomy and choice;
- challenge discrimination or harassment appropriately;
- report serious or repeated concerns.

Discrimination, harassment, bullying, and victimisation will not be tolerated.

6. Confidentiality, Information and Digital Conduct

Individuals must:

- access confidential information only where required for their role;
- use approved organisational systems;
- share information only where authorised or required for safeguarding, safety, legal or professional reasons;
- handle safeguarding, medical, allergy and personal information sensitively;

Pony Partnerships CIC (12448033) c/o 84 Cheal Close, Shardlow, Derby, DE72 2DY
07505951793/info@ponypartnerships.com/www.ponypartnerships.com



Social Farms & Gardens
**Green Care
Quality Mark**



- secure devices and accounts;
- use multi-factor authentication where required;
- complete a BYOD declaration before using a personal device for organisational systems;
- report actual or suspected data breaches immediately;
- report lost, stolen or compromised devices immediately.

Participant information must not normally be stored directly on personally owned devices and must never be stored in personal accounts. Any temporary authorised download must be kept secure and removed when no longer required.

Photography, video, or audio recording during sessions is not permitted unless:

- Pony Partnerships has authorised it;
- the purpose is clear;
- appropriate consent is in place;
- safeguarding and privacy have been considered.

Individuals must not use personal social-media or messaging accounts to communicate with participants unless an exceptional arrangement has been formally approved.

Digital conduct involving social media, online forums, messaging, image sharing or AI-generated content must not compromise:

- safeguarding;
- confidentiality;
- professional boundaries;
- the dignity of another person;
- the reputation of Pony Partnerships.

7. Animal Welfare

Animals must be recognised and treated as sentient beings with individual needs, preferences, and choices.

Individuals must:

- treat animals with kindness and respect;
- follow animal-welfare procedures;
- use calm and low-stress handling;
- work within their competence;
- observe signs of pain, illness, fear, distress, or fatigue;
- report concerns promptly;
- stop or adapt activity where welfare may be compromised.

Animals must never be:

- forced to participate;
- punished;
- intimidated;
- used where they appear unwilling, distressed, or unsuitable;
- placed at risk for programme delivery or operational convenience.

Animal welfare takes priority over planned activity or participant preference.

Pony Partnerships CIC (12448033) c/o 84 Cheal Close, Shardlow, Derby, DE72 2DY
07505951793/info@ponypartnerships.com/www.ponypartnerships.com



Social Farms & Gardens
**Green Care
Quality Mark**



8. Health, Safety, Medical Needs and Emergencies

Everyone must contribute to a safe environment.

Individuals must:

- follow relevant risk assessments;
- carry out dynamic risk assessment during activities;
- use equipment safely;
- wear required protective equipment;
- follow lone-working arrangements;
- report hazards, incidents and near misses;
- follow fire and emergency procedures;
- provide first aid only within their training and competence;
- follow agreed medical, allergy, and emergency-medication arrangements;
- adapt, pause, or stop activity where people or animals cannot be kept safe;
- follow the Search, Prohibited Items and Confiscation Procedure where an unsafe or prohibited item is suspected, and not search a participant, their possessions or an electronic device outside the authority and arrangements set out in that procedure.

Medication must only be administered or supported where:

- arrangements have been agreed;
- instructions and consent are available where required;
- the individual is authorised;
- the individual is acting within their competence.

Food must not be brought, offered, or shared with participants unless this has been agreed and relevant allergy information has been checked.

9. Treatment of Participants and Restrictive Intervention

Physical punishment, humiliation, intimidation, ridicule, and degrading treatment must never be used.

Restrictive intervention may only be used as a last resort where it is:

- lawful;
- necessary;
- proportionate;
- required to prevent serious and immediate harm.

The least restrictive option must be used for the shortest possible time.

Restrictive intervention must never be used:

- as punishment;
- to force participation;
- to enforce compliance;
- because a participant refuses an activity;
- for staff convenience;
- where reducing demands, changing the activity or moving away can maintain safety.
- Restrictive intervention must not be used simply to force cooperation with a search or to obtain an item. Any physical intervention must continue to meet Pony Partnerships' threshold of being necessary and proportionate to prevent serious and immediate harm.

Pony Partnerships CIC (12448033) c/o 84 Cheal Close, Shardlow, Derby, DE72 2DY
07505951793/info@ponypartnerships.com/www.ponypartnerships.com



Social Farms & Gardens
**Green Care
Quality Mark**



Planned physical intervention may only be carried out by people who:

- have received appropriate training;
- have been authorised to use it;
- are acting within an agreed risk assessment or support plan.

Any restrictive intervention must be:

- reported immediately;
- recorded on the same day;
- reviewed;
- followed by appropriate support for the participant and staff.

10. Gifts, Hospitality and Conflicts of Interest

Individuals must act with integrity and must declare any actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest.

Gifts or hospitality must not be accepted where they could:

- influence professional judgement;
- create an obligation;
- affect professional boundaries;
- create an actual or perceived conflict of interest.

Advice must be sought from the CEO/Manager where there is uncertainty.

11. Alcohol, Drugs and Fitness to Work

Individuals must not work while impaired by:

- alcohol;
- illegal drugs;
- misused medication;
- any substance that affects safe performance.

Prescription medication must be managed responsibly.

Where medication or a health condition may affect safe performance, the individual must inform the CEO/Manager confidentially so that appropriate support or risk management can be considered.

Anyone who believes they are not fit to carry out their role safely must report this before beginning or continuing work.

12. Raising Concerns

Individuals must raise concerns about unsafe, unethical, unlawful, or inappropriate conduct.

This includes concerns involving:

- safeguarding;
- professional boundaries;
- low-level concerns;
- discrimination;
- health and safety;

Pony Partnerships CIC (12448033) c/o 84 Cheal Close, Shardlow, Derby, DE72 2DY
07505951793/info@ponypartnerships.com/www.ponypartnerships.com



Social Farms & Gardens
**Green Care
Quality Mark**



- animal welfare;
- fraud or dishonesty;
- confidentiality or data protection;
- online or outside-work conduct;
- allergy, medication or first aid arrangements;
- unsafe food sharing;
- failure to follow procedures;
- failure to self-refer.

Concerns must be reported to the appropriate person, normally:

- the DSL or DDSL for safeguarding concerns;
- the CEO/Manager or DSL for concerns about an adult;
- the Animal Welfare Lead for animal-welfare concerns;
- the CEO/Manager for data, professional-conduct, or organisational concerns;
- the Session Lead for immediate operational safety concerns.

Where an immediate risk exists, emergency action must be taken before routine reporting.

13. Breaches of this Code

A suspected breach will be considered fairly and proportionately.

Action may include:

- advice, support, or supervision;
- additional training;
- changes to duties;
- removal from a session or activity;
- withdrawal of volunteer or associate status;
- disciplinary action;
- termination of employment, contract, or agreement;
- referral to a commissioner, professional body, safeguarding authority, DBS, or another external agency where required.

Safeguarding action and immediate risk management will take priority where necessary.

14. Responsibilities

- Board of Directors: responsible for promoting a culture of integrity, safeguarding, animal welfare, and accountability.
- CEO/Managers: responsible for implementing this Code, responding to conduct concerns, and ensuring appropriate organisational action is taken.
- Clinical Lead: oversees conduct and professional standards where these relate to therapeutic or clinical practice.
- DSL and DDSL: oversee safeguarding concerns and advise on concerns involving children, adults at risk or people working on behalf of Pony Partnerships.
- Session Lead: responsible for modelling expected conduct during sessions, maintaining safe practice and addressing immediate operational concerns.
- All Individuals Covered by the Code: everyone covered by this Code is responsible for:
 - reading and understanding it;
 - following it consistently;
 - seeking advice where unsure;
 - reporting concerns;

Pony Partnerships CIC (12448033) c/o 84 Cheal Close, Shardlow, Derby, DE72 2DY
07505951793/info@ponypartnerships.com/www.ponypartnerships.com



Social Farms & Gardens
**Green Care
Quality Mark**



- accepting appropriate accountability for their conduct.

15. Review

This Code will be reviewed annually, or sooner where:

- legislation or safeguarding guidance changes;
- organisational arrangements change;
- an incident or complaint identifies learning;
- professional or commissioner requirements change;
- the Board requests a review.

Pony Partnerships CIC (12448033) c/o 84 Cheal Close, Shardlow, Derby, DE72 2DY
07505951793/info@ponypartnerships.com/www.ponypartnerships.com



Social Farms & Gardens
**Green Care
Quality Mark**

