

RDA Guidance for Getting Started with School Groups



The guidelines and restrictions on schools vary regionally and sometimes even locally so it is a good idea to talk to your school to see what position they are in. Whether your group can offer sessions or not, have a talk with your school contact to let them know your current situation, what you can or can't offer and why.

Getting Started

- Before any activity starts the group must complete and send in their covid-19 risk assessment and trustee checklist to National Office for sign-off to recommence RDA activities.
- All activities carried out at the group must be in line with government guidance including any local restrictions.
- Social distancing guidelines vary depending on your location but remember for all group activity RDA is following the government guidance for organised sport. This may be different to the school guidelines in your country or area.
- Talk to your school, they will also have guidelines and restrictions in place that might limit what they are able to do.

New riders

New rider assessments can take place using a mechanical horse or using off-horse techniques groups were using pre-COVID-19 – visual presentation, balance and being able to sit without back support etc. This should be done adhering to social distancing. A risk assessment would have to take place for each rider and we would recommend for the majority of riders to have a number of sessions in a quiet corner/ stable management session to build the relationship between the coach and the rider and to better understand the level of communication between rider and coach. If relevant, this may also be required to build the relationship between coach and trained household/bubble member if required to support for mounting and dismounting or sidewalking.

Guidelines on using a mechanical horse and the 'Application for RDA activities' form, can be found at:
<https://www.myrda.org.uk/runningyourgroup/getting-started-after-lockdown/>

What could you offer if not able to ride?

- **School visits**

If you would like to take a pony to school to be able to do a quiet corner/meet and greet this may be possible with the schools consent.

As a one off visit or to trial a visit (up to 2 visits) you can use the 'RDA Holidays and day out' form.
<https://www.myrda.org.uk/assets/Holiday-Day-Out-Insurance-Form-17-1.pdf>

For a longer term solution, you can have the school assessed as a temporary non riding venue. The venue would need to be assessed by the Regional Coach which can be done virtually (in real time via a video call), going through the venue and risk assessments for both the group and the school.

The RDA public liability insurance would cover both scenarios however the ponies are not covered by the RDA insurance if they were to get injured and the transportation of the ponies is not covered by RDA insurance.

- **Onsite non-riding activities**

There are activity sheets available on the website to help with planning some of these:

- Quiet corner
- Virtual horse care
- RDA Proficiency tests
- Countryside/dressage challenge on foot

If you are able to offer any activity you must be clear with the school on protocols and procedures that you have in place. Share your risk assessments and ask to see theirs.

Checklist

Action	Y/N
COVID-19 risk assessment and trustee checklist signed off	
Only activities planned that meet current relevant (including local) social distancing requirements and gathering numbers – check any restrictions	
Contacted all schools who use group	
Suggested unmounted activities (where relevant) and risk assessment share with school	
Suggested mounted activities/ carriage driving (where relevant) and risk assessment shared with school	
If taking an equine into a school as pupils are unable to get to the group, completed RDA visits form or assessed as an alternative venue	
School happy with activities planned and risk assessments provided	