**TOP TIPS FOR GETTING STARTED** (From Frances at Lambourn Group)

1. Don’t panic!
2. Follow the guidelines on the myrda website and keep up with and share the updates (often weekly) with your volunteers.
3. Contact your volunteers and participants to see who is available and tell them what you have put in place to keep everyone safe. Don’t forget to contact the schools; they may want a copy of your Covid 19 risk assessment. Invite them to come and see for themselves.
4. Send the Covid Consent forms to all volunteers and participants. They cannot come back without sending a signed copy to the Group.
5. Arrange training for your volunteers so that they are familiar with the new normal.
6. Arrange training for your participants carers if they are going to need help with mounting and side walking from a person from their household.
7. Be able to Track and Trace in case anyone becomes unwell after attending a session at your Group. ie be able to contact everyone who was at a session with the unwell person.
8. Buy plenty of sanitising products. You will get through a lot.
9. Have hand sanitiser at the first point of entry to the yard and the arena with a sign saying please sanitise before entry. Look at where else it would useful.
10. Be specific about the roles that your volunteers have at each session so that you limit the amount of people on site. If you have too many volunteers for the amount of participants run a rota system so that everyone gets to help but not necessarily at every session.
11. If you have sessions that cannot run for whatever reason ask those volunteers to come on other days if they are able and add them to your rota; the same with your coaches. Pink coaches can coach any session in your Group. You will then have happy volunteers who feel that they are contributing even though for now not as often as normal.
12. Leave time in between your participants to sanitise especially if using the same horses and equipment. 15-20 minutes should be plenty and it will give people time to get off site before the next participants arrive. Ask your participants not to arrive too early and to leave as soon as possible after their session.
13. Sanitise everything before it is put away at the end of a session so that the next lot of volunteers and coaches are confident that it has been done. Sanitise tack before it is put in the tack room. Maybe have a tick chart (like you get in service station loos with a time and date) to say it has been done. It will save a lot of time if there is any doubt.
14. If possible do not let participants share hats. You may need to buy more and allocate hats to participants. Keep each hat in a named bag after use and it is only used by the participant that it has been allocated to. It also saves adjusting each time. Don’t allow them to take them home.
15. For any queries or concerns contact your County and Regional teams or Group Support at NO.
16. Don’t leave it until the last minute to get everything ready to start. Have a few practice runs first before you welcome your participants back.
17. After your first couple of sessions, which will be nerve wracking, pat yourselves on the back as the following sessions will be so much easier!
18.  Don’t forget to breathe, smile and laugh with your team they will be just as nervous as you!!
19. If in doubt don’t! Safety above all else.

GOOD LUCK !