

Call Today  
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# EDUCATION THROUGH HORSES

NOW AVAILABLE IN HARBY



Equine assisted learning is a new and innovative way for children, young people and adults to engage in learning.

Sessions happen mostly out of doors with the horses and learners take part in ground-based activities with the horses, there is usually no riding.

Sessions run all year round and range from one two hour session per week through to a maximum of 15 hours per week depending on the needs of the person.

All aspects of the curriculum can be covered, from literacy and numeracy to history, science and PSHE (personal, social health and economic).

We cater for children and young people who are not taking part in any formal education as well as supporting those who are in school.

**Call Today!**

**07960 031312**

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[www.equineassistedqualifications.com](http://www.equineassistedqualifications.com)





# “Learning happens everywhere!”



Many learners prefer their sessions to be on a one-to-one basis but we do offer sessions for groups of up to four learners at a time.

Each learner has an individual learning plan with objectives that are appropriate and measurable.

Learners spend time with the horses or take part in horse-related activities and can work towards nationally-recognised qualifications. These qualifications have identified learning outcomes which are valued by funding providers such as the Local Education Authority.

We liaise with schools, SENCOs, teachers or other professionals as necessary, providing you with reports about the learner's progress should you need them.

**Outdoor learning with horses led to a nationally-recognised qualification for these learners!**



## Who Can Benefit?

Anyone can benefit but it is particularly beneficial for children who have:

- autism spectrum conditions
- low self esteem
- ADHD
- attachment issues
- special educational needs
- poor literacy and numeracy
- social, emotional or behavioural difficulties



## Learning Everywhere!

“Learning can happen anywhere and at anytime. For many of the children and young people we meet, they feel that they are already failing because they find it hard to cope with a traditional education or classroom environment.

Once they realise that learning can happen out of doors with the horses and that they can achieve, their confidence grows, their self esteem rises and we see enormous changes in their self belief. Each learner has an individual learning plan with objectives and we encourage learners to undertake qualifications to show how they can meet identifiable learning outcomes.”



# HORSES LEAD THE PROCESS

## “Horses choose when to sleep, they don’t do that on demand!”

One group went out to the paddock on a Saturday morning in early summer. The sun was already warm and the grass was plentiful. The horses were standing around in the sunshine, quietly dozing. The group had started off with lots of chattering, but they became more and more quiet as the horses began to lie down to sleep. A stillness descended on the paddock. Some of the learners took out phones and cameras to take photos, while others sat at the edge of the paddock and observed. It was a special moment for everyone.

Had the facilitator been focussed on a set ‘activity’ the magic of being with those sleeping horses would have been lost and it wasn’t the sort of situation that can be created by humans on demand. Tricia Day, EAQ Founder, said “The horses choose when they sleep – we don’t tell them when to do it and we’re not able to create that situation on demand. These are precious moments with the horses and it’s important that facilitators understand how to maximise the learning from these naturally-occurring, horse-led situations.”

### Horse-led

Horse-led interactions occur when learners go out to the paddock with loose horses and there is no set agenda. The horses are able to choose how and when they interact with the learner. Being horse-led gives the learners plenty of time to get to know the horses in a way that is meaningful, without rushing them through this most magical of times. It can mean that the learners experience a situation that would be impossible for humans to create on demand such as horses lying down to sleep or watching the herd in the snow!



### Learner-led

Horse-led interaction can quickly move to ‘learner-led’ interaction. One learner was out with the horses while they were grazing. The horses weren’t taking very much notice. “Why aren’t they coming over?” she asked before taking a few steps towards one, saying “I want to touch one.” The learner had identified for herself that she wanted to move towards one of the horses. No-one suggested to her that she approach the horses or set her a task. She identified for herself what she would like to do and was able to verbalise it too.

### Facilitator-directed

There may be times when the facilitator will set up activities for the learner. It may be something that is required because the learner is completing some assessment criteria or it could be fun games, jobs around the yard or simply getting the horse ready for a visit from the dentist.



# EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Experiential Learning means learning from your own first-hand experience and is how most of us learn most of the time! Learners take in information through their senses and process that information in a way that is relevant for them. EAQ uses Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle as a basis for the learning that happens with the horses.

Kolb identified four stages and the learners go through these at their own pace and in their own way depending on their age and level of ability.

**Concrete Experience**  
**Reflective Observation**  
**Abstract Conceptualisation**  
**Active Experimentation.**

Although learning can begin anywhere on Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle, it's usual to start by thinking about the 'concrete experience'. This could be going out to the paddock to approach and halter one of the horses. The learner has the real experience of being with the horse. They will have sights, sounds, smells and touch to refer to, and possibly taste as well.

They can use these physical experiences to help them with their 'reflective observation'. They will be able to reflect on what has happened in a way that is different from reading a book or looking at the internet. They can think about what is working or not working, how they feel, what they liked or didn't like about their experience.

Following this reflective observation they can think about ways that they would approach and halter the horse next time (abstract conceptualisation) and then go out to halter the horse again (active experimentation).

In order for experiential learning to be effective, the learner needs to be actively involved in the process with the ability to reflect on their experience. They need to be able to think about what has happened and make decisions about how they will change the experience the next time.



## FIRST SESSION

One Mum took her 5 year old son for his first session. He has an Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) and shows a lot of autistic traits. She told the facilitator before the first session that her son would cling to her but he walked onto the yard saying "Hello, my name's \*\*\* what's yours?"

The facilitator said "He could see the horses through the window when he arrived. There were two of them, out in the paddock. Rather than go straight to the horses, the boy asked about walking through the long grass."

It was June and the grass was almost taller than he was. The facilitator, helper and the boy went 'on a bear hunt' through the long grass around the paddock adjacent to the horses. The facilitator said "This helped to build his confidence and later he had the confidence to go into the paddock where the horses were. He was walking really fast and one of the horses took off away from him. He stopped and so did the horse. He decided to walk towards her instead. I didn't have to tell him to do this, he realised for himself. The horse stood still and waited until he was close, then put her head down towards him. He put his hand out quite quickly, wanting to touch her. She had her head at his level as he touched her face and he laughed and asked if he could do that again."

His Mum was watching and said later "I can't believe he did that."

## LABELS LEAD TO EXPECTATIONS

One 10 year old boy was known to be extremely violent. He would get into a rage in moments. His Mum was able to call her own team of helpers if he became unmanageable at home and his teacher kept the door of the classroom open so that she could call for help if necessary. He had to be accompanied on and off the school premises by two people at all times. All the information we had about this child before he arrived led us to believe that he was a violent boy, capable of the most dramatic rages. When he arrived he was quite small in stature and unassuming. He went with the facilitator to the paddock to visit the horses, as he got closer he grabbed her hand and said nervously "They're big aren't they?" Here was a young boy, unsure about taking part in this horsey experience, not the 'thug' we had been told about on paper!

## HORSES DO NOT SEE LABELS

"Horses do not understand the concept of labels or baggage but many of the learners who come to sessions have already been given labels and come with their own 'baggage'. Learners start afresh when they come to a session. They experience being with the horses without being judged or labelled. It's good to show learners that what has happened in the past doesn't need to follow you wherever you go." Tricia Day, EAQ Founder.

**"Experiential learning with horses can lead learners to acquire new knowledge, improve physical skills, alter their beliefs or change their attitudes."**

Learners do not need to be able to process information verbally to learn from their experience although they do need to have some processing ability. Some learners will process within their body. For example, if you are trying to learn a new physical skill you might want to remember the feeling in your muscle memory, rather than talking about it.

# ADHD

Attention-Deficit-Hyper-Activity Disorder (ADHD) is the name given a group of behaviours including:

- short attention span
- restlessness
- constant fidgeting
- over-activity
- impulsiveness
- being easily distracted.

Most cases are diagnosed between the ages of 6 and 12.

ADHD is thought to be the most common behavioural difficulty in the UK, affecting 2-5% of school-age children and young people.

## Self Identity

One Mum told us about her son who has high-functioning autism and ADHD. She said

"It's the first time in 9 years that we've ever been able to leave him anywhere. He relies very much on me for communication so he's never been comfortable to be left anywhere because he wasn't sure about what he was going to say. It's incredible. He has an amazing affinity with horses.

They did one activity about American Indians. The facilitator asked them to think of their own symbol and its meaning and he did that. He put a big smiley face with an arrow and that's the first time he has put an emotion to himself as he had a real problem with self identity. That was quite amazing!"

### [Watch the Video](#)

You can watch videos of parents talking about their children on the EAQ Network Channel on YouTube.

[Click here to view](#)



## GETTING CLOSE TO BLUE

One 15 year old with ADHD came to meet the horses.

He was very active and often wanted to run with the horses. We had one horse, Blue, who was really nervous and difficult to approach. the boy spent time in the round pen, waiting for the horse to come to him.

The two pictures below look quite similar, but the boy has moved his hand in the bottom one. That small movement caused a large reaction in the horse.

It is not often that someone with ADHD can see the impact of such a small movement on others!



## MY FRIEND THE HORSE

These are the words of one boy who has ADHD:

"I find it hard to concentrate and I find it hard to stop fidgeting. It's really bad being at school because some of the teachers don't 'get' ADHD and if you're slow and you don't concentrate they will shout at you. That happened a lot where I used to live.

I got into a lot of trouble for being slow with my work.

Once I was diagnosed with ADHD my life became a lot easier. My Mum wasn't shouting at me for forgetting to do stuff.

They 'get' ADHD here [at the EAQ centre] and they don't shout at you and you meet other people who have the same thing.

It makes you feel nice just to be around the ponies. At first you find it freaky being around the ponies because they're big and it seems like they're against you but you get used to it.

It's just like having a very good friend around."

## POWER IN STILLNESS

**"Being with the horses can help those with ADHD to develop patience and stillness. Nervous horses may be influenced by someone who is constantly fidgeting and for the learner to see this can be very powerful."**



# ATTACHMENT

## Attachment Styles

A person's style of attachment can affect every aspect of their lives, from childhood through to adult relationships. Some people will develop 'secure' attachments while others will develop 'insecure attachments'.

Insecure attachment is usually the result of negative experiences in early childhood. This may start because a child feels abandoned, isolated or uncared-for. Attachment to the primary care-giver plays a key role in shaping the brain and will influence how people behave throughout their lives.

Being with the horses can help people to see their own patterns of behaviour and can enable them to practice managing this behaviour or their feelings.

Children with attachment issues often feel distrustful and may seem distant. They feel unsafe and want to protect themselves which can show in their behaviour.

They may:

- be disobedient
- have anger problems
- throw tantrums
- be very controlling
- avoid eye contact.

**One student said:**

***"Understanding my own [insecure] attachment style has enabled me to think about why I behave in certain ways in my relationships with other people and what I can do to change that in the future."***



*"I try my hardest to be the best possible person I can be and strive for perfection. I set myself a lot of goals which some of the time is unrealistic."*



# AUTISM



## “Exemplary Provision”

‘This is an exemplary provision for Autistic children and children with similar conditions.’

Ofsted, May 2014 for Rainbow Horses, an EAQ Approved Centre.

## Autism Spectrum Conditions

Autism is a life-long condition affecting the way that people communicate, behave and interact. Many centres work with children who are on the autism spectrum, helping them to learn in a completely different way to traditional schooling environments. Autism consultant Donna Williams talks about the ‘fruit salad’ that is autism. She refers to the range of autistic traits which are not always present in every individual but in her view the term ‘autism’ is an umbrella term which covers responses such as:

- compulsive or involuntary
- self stimulatory
- self protective
- distress reactions.

She says that some of these responses are the result of addiction to the person’s own chemistry highs or could be attempts to make sense of experiences when usual channels are emotionally, physically or developmentally blocked.

It is estimated that around 700,000 people may have autism in the UK, that’s 1 in 100 of the population.

Signs of autism may include:

- difficulty relating to others
- making friends
- difficulty communicating
- lack of engagement in imaginative play
- obsessions
- inappropriate eye contact
- hypersensitivity to sound.

## Intensive Interaction

Intensive interaction is just one of the approaches that is used by EAQ facilitators to help learners with their communication skills. It is a method developed in the 1980s and is proving to be extremely beneficial for some of those learners who are non-verbal.

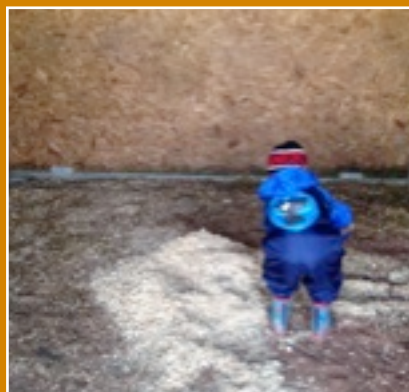
***“Another student who had entered the placement as an ‘elective mute’ engaged in extensive conversation with the Inspector.” Ofsted, May 2014 for Rainbow Horses an EAQ Approved Centre in Nottingham.***



[Watch the video of working with children with ADHD and autism.](#)



## PATHOLOGICAL DEMAND AVOIDANCE



## Pathological Demand Avoidance

Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA) is seen as part of the autism spectrum.

Main features of PDA are:

- obsessively resisting ordinary demands
- appearing sociable on the surface but lacking depth in their understanding
- excessive mood swings
- comfortable in role play and pretending
- obsessive behaviour
- controlling, especially when they feel anxious.

*"During the first or second session, one boy with PDA was asked a simple question. He flew into a rage and shouted "You know I don't choose!" at the facilitator.*

*A few weeks later, the boy was asked if he wanted to fill a bucket with water from the tap or the hose. He immediately said "the hose" without going off into a rage. It was an amazing change to witness."*

## Oppositional Defiant Disorder

Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) sounds very similar to PDA but there are subtle differences.

Those with ODD do not show the same level of avoidance as those with PDA. They tend to respond to positive reinforcement and can be highly motivated by rewards. However, they often have a lack of respect for authority. They are less likely than those with PDA to display behaviour that might appear weird or inappropriate such as drawing attention to themselves in public, shouting out or removing their clothes.

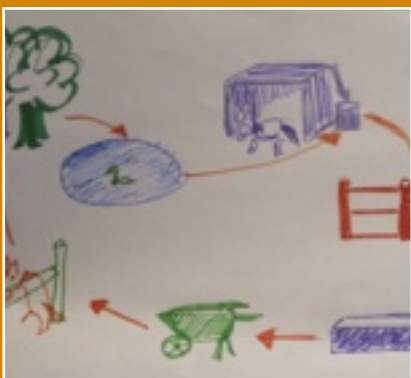
*One Mum said about her son who has PDA, "I think he finds verbal instruction intimidating whilst the horses don't. It's the verbal that sets him off. If you're not really careful with every word you say to him, that can spark him off where the horses don't and can't do that. So he can be much more accepting of animals in that way."*



Watch the video about working with children with PDA



# DYSLEXIA



## "Processing in his own way"

"My son was diagnosed with dyslexia when he was 7 years old and the horses have been amazing at helping him to cope with that and my subsequent divorce. It was a calm place for him and he was able to process things that were happening in a way that was relevant for him."

## Dyslexia and Divorce

"My son was diagnosed with dyslexia when he was 7 years old. It was good to have my suspicions confirmed as he had been struggling with reading and spelling. Before his diagnosis he would often get discouraged. He has an above-average IQ but he often felt as though he was really stupid because he couldn't read and write like the other children.

We found that when he was with the horses he was calm. No-one was trying to get him to write things down and he was able to process at his own pace and in his own way. That's been really valuable for him. No-one was judging him. He went through a stage of saying "I can't do that because I have dyslexia" but that's gone now. His confidence was very low and he kept comparing himself to other children his age and wondering if his dyslexia would ever go away. He hadn't learnt how to live with it at that time.

When he went to the horses it was a quiet and calm place and he could be quiet and calm too, without any demands being placed on him.

It was fascinating to watch how he would spend time in the field with the horses and they would come up and stand with him. They didn't push him around or anything. They just stood there. He couldn't understand why they would come up to him and stay with him like that.

A few months later, he was dealing with the fact that his Mum and Dad were getting divorced. He had a different way of being with the horses then. Where before he had gone to the horses and waited for them to come and be with him, now it felt as though he needed to be with the horses. He would go and want to hug them and touch them and was really more 'needy'.

He told me that he talked to one of the ponies and was able to tell her how he was feeling, even though he didn't do that with me or any friends or family."

## What does it mean to have dyslexia?

Some people are born with a condition called dyslexia and it often runs in families. People with dyslexia find it hard to process words so they have difficulty with reading and writing. They are not stupid or lazy. It's just that their brain functions in a different way to the way that most brains function.

Some famous people who have (or had) dyslexia are:

Leonardo da Vinci  
Albert Einstein  
Thomas Edison  
Richard Branson  
Cher

These people are among the most creative and successful people in their fields - proof that dyslexia does not have to hold you back!

## Overcoming Barriers

EAQ facilitators use audio, video, mind maps, colours and other techniques to enable people with dyslexia to take part in sessions and access qualifications.

"My son's dyslexia is not a barrier for him when he is with the horses."



## Managing Behaviour

One 10 year old boy was having trouble with a number of different areas in his life. His parents were living apart, he had younger siblings, he wasn't going to school, he slept in the same room as his Mum and was having frequent angry outbursts.

He began attending one of the EAQ Approved Centres and within a few weeks his Mum could see a change in him. She said "It's just unbelievable, the change in him. His whole general attitude is so much calmer, his whole body language, everything."

On his first session he was very anxious because it was something new. When he became stressed, his behaviour would change and he would become very angry and the 'bear would come out' but once he was at the centre and got settled in he loved it.

The boy hadn't been in full-time school for over a year when he started learning from the horses. As he was 10 years old and coming up to the transition to secondary school, his Mum was concerned about his education.

With the support of his facilitator, he began to stay in school an hour a day but he didn't go into class for a long time. Once he did return to class with the other children things began to change for him.

He has completed the unit 'Developing Personal Confidence and Self Awareness' which was a real turning point for him. His self esteem grew, he began to feel good about himself. He started to take risks and try things out which is something he would never have done before. That was three years ago. Now he is back in full-time education and happy at his secondary school, taking part in activities with other children and managing his anger.



## BEHAVIOUR



### BACK IN FULL-TIME EDUCATION

He hadn't attended school for over a year and found it hard to deal with the other students in his class. Then he began attending the equine assisted learning sessions and everything changed for him. Now three years later, he is at secondary school and taking part in activities with the other children.



## Children Looked After

EAQ works with carers and agencies to support children who are looked after.

Spending time with the horses can help in a number of different ways including:

- reducing the number of breakdowns of placements between children and their carers
- building healthy, productive relationships
- identifying familiar feelings and developing strategies for dealing with these.

There were over 69,000 children in care in the UK as at 31st March 2015, an increase of just over 700 compared to 2014.

## Developing Confidence

These are the words of a looked-after 16 year old who lives in a residential care home and goes to a school on site. She took a unit called 'Developing Personal Confidence and Self Awareness'.

"In the past my self-confidence hasn't been the best as I didn't used to come out of my room much or make eye contact with anyone and was very anxious all the time and my leg would always shake. I was on medication because I was always anxious and agitated.

When I first moved to the home I didn't want anyone to see me without make-up on so I would get up at seven in the morning to do my make up while no-one was up and then when everyone was settled at night I'd go to the bathroom and take my make-up off and then put a towel over my face and walk into my room so there is no way anyone could see me without make up.

Being a looked-after child isn't easy as people have stigmas that they do not attend school and have a criminal record and aren't very educated.

However I know this is not true and so do a lot of looked-after children and professionals that work with us.

55% of children looked after were boys and 45% were girls.

75% of children who are looked after are living with foster carers.



In December 2013 I got asked to go to an award ceremony as I have completed a lot of GCSEs this year and have done very well in staying in school despite all the situations at my placement.

Having a school in my back garden also does help as I don't have the added pressure of working in a big class and not having support.

When looking around college open evenings I used to say 'home-schooled' rather than 'I'm in a children's home'. This partly because of the stigma attached.

I try my hardest to be the best possible person I can be and strive for perfection. I set myself a lot of goals which some of the time is unrealistic.

When things at the house are chaotic I try to carry on as normal and do the right things to show the other girls that are struggling that you can still power on through and do get rewards for doing the right thing and working hard.

The animals help me deal with stress. Just being around them makes me feel better."

## Difficulties with Literacy

"One 15 year old boy came to my sessions for equine assisted learning. He had not attended school very often and struggled with reading and writing. He took part in activities such as writing the name of his favourite horse with hay out in the paddock, which helped him to develop his gross motor skills.

He worked on his fine motor skills by grooming the horses, using small tools such as hoof picks and brushes.

Then he worked on sequencing letters which helped him to develop confidence in his ability to write for himself on a piece of paper.

Even though he was 15 years old, he still couldn't write his own surname which was long and difficult. We spent some time writing the letters of his name onto post-it notes while the horse stood quietly in the round pen. Once he had written all the post-it notes, he stuck them onto the horse. We made up a rhyme about the letters and where they were on the horse. 'T' for the tip of his nose; 'N' for down to his knees (except knees starts with a 'K').



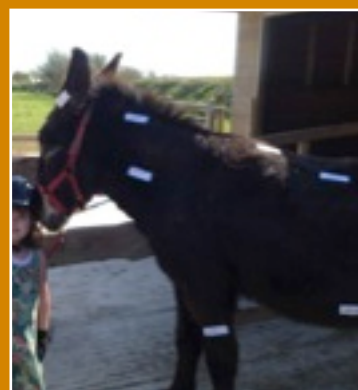
By using multiple senses, in this case, sight, sound, smell, touch, like this, there is a greater chance of remembering experiences. Linking the letters with parts of the horse's body and making up a rhyme helped the boy to remember where they were by reciting the rhyme and thinking of the sequence over the horse. The letters began at one part of the horse and flowed over the horse's body so as long as he could remember the starting point, the rest flowed easily.

Within twenty minutes, he had memorised the rhyme and the sequence of letters and was able to place the post-it notes in the correct sequence on the round pen fence.

Later he was able to write the letters again in the correct sequence on a piece of paper.

Identity and being able to write your own name is hugely important for self esteem and self confidence. The boy explained that it was much easier to say he 'couldn't read and write' than it was to admit that he didn't do it very well."

## LITERACY



### MY NAME - MY IDENTITY

One 15 year old was unable to spell his own surname until he spent time with the horses. Within 20 minutes he was able to remember the letters, their sequence and write them down on a piece of paper for the first time. Being able to write his own name had a huge impact on his self esteem and the way he viewed himself.



# MATHS



How many of your hands?	How high with your own measuring stick?	How high with the bought measuring stick?
13-3H	14 Hh	14 Hh
14-2Hh	14-2 Hh	15 Hh
13-2Hh	13-2 Hh	12-1 Hh
11-2Hh	12 Hh	13 Hh
14-2Hh	13-2 Hh	14 Hh



## "Higher Engagement in Maths"

**"For children who struggle with abstract concepts, being part of the EAL sessions has helped them to make sense of maths back in the classroom. Engagement in Maths has been higher for the equine assisted learning students as has acquisition of knowledge and skills."**

## Brisbane Maths

A group of four primary school students from a Special Education Programme (SEP) near Brisbane, have taken part in a 10-week programme to study the accredited unit *Measuring Distance and Length*.

What has been really valuable has been the evidence gathered by taking a cohort of four additional students through the same maths unit at school as a parallel study group.

The maths teacher has been with both the equine assisted learning group and the control group and he has been teaching both sets of students back in class. He said

***"For children who struggle with abstract concepts, being part of the equine assisted learning sessions has helped them to make sense of maths back in the classroom. Engagement in maths has been higher for the equine assisted learning students as has their acquisition of knowledge and skills."***

Working with children with special needs has presented its own unique challenges and has required adaptation to resources and a lot of planning to eliminate barriers to learning.

"One of the first approaches we took was to try and allow the children to feel safe in an environment which is home to two ponies and 16 Thoroughbred racehorses!" says EAQ facilitator, Hilary. "Allowing a real experiential element to the learning in the first few sessions allowed the children to relax and find out what they needed to know about the horses to remain safe and then fitting the maths into the equation at the right time and without losing the children's enthusiasm for the horses has been our aim".

The children who are around 10 years of age are probably one of the youngest group to have attempted

this unit and they came with a low level of understanding of maths.

Through repetition, exploration and games they have begun to understand some of the everyday units of measurement that we take for granted but they had no concept of. It's rewarding to know that in a practical sense they can visualize and measure centimetres and metres and have even walked a kilometre around the school playground to feel what it's like.

Many of these children are not auditory learners and need to experience maths in a visual or kinesthetic way in order to make sense of it.

Attaching the maths criteria to the horses and their environment has been a great motivator and activities have included:

- making a measuring stick
- measuring the height of horses
- walking the horses through paint and onto paper to check their stride length!

The children's enthusiasm for taking part in the maths activities is testament to the fact that given the right environment and method of delivery, maths can be an exciting subject and achievable outcomes are possible for students who are often disengaging from learning in the classroom.

## Reality to Abstract Concept

In order for learners to develop a sense of number they must first work with real objects in their environment before moving on to the abstract by using numbers on a piece of paper.



## Difficulties with Numbers

The facilitator for one 15 year old boy who had Attention Deficit Hyper-activity Disorder (ADHD) was told that he 'couldn't do maths' and that he struggled with number work.

He had a mobile phone and his facilitator knew that he understood his numbers from 1 to 9.

One day he brought polos and asked if he could give some to the horses. He dropped two polos and his facilitator asked him how many he'd put on the ground.

"Two" he said.

"You can count then!" she said.

The boy explained that he wasn't very good at maths and found it hard to understand.

The facilitator fetched a pad of paper and together they worked on some sums. You can see a photograph below of the page they completed and the crossings out in the second sum where the boy had the pen.

They took it in turns to look at the horses and use numbers related to the herd in the paddock.

"How many legs does a horse have?" asked the facilitator. The learner told her and she wrote it down and added the 'plus' sign. He asked the next question "How many grey horses?" and she wrote that down too. She checked he understood the equals sign and added the figure 5. As you can see, they quickly reached  $5 \times 4 = 20$ !

This facilitator knew how to make the activities relevant for each individual. She was able to help this learner to become more confident with his number work by allowing him to lead the process. Had she brought out a 'worksheet' at the start of the session and said "Today we're going to do maths" the level of anxiety would have risen for this learner and the results would have been very different.

Finding ways to be creative with number, helping learners to use all their senses and encouraging a creative approach has enabled learners to engage in maths, gain national units for their understanding and radically improve their chances of further education and employment.

## DYSCALCULIA



Dyscalculia is a form of 'number blindness' and is seen as a specific learning difficulty.

For those who have mathematical learning difficulties the impact on their school work, further education and job prospects can be devastating.

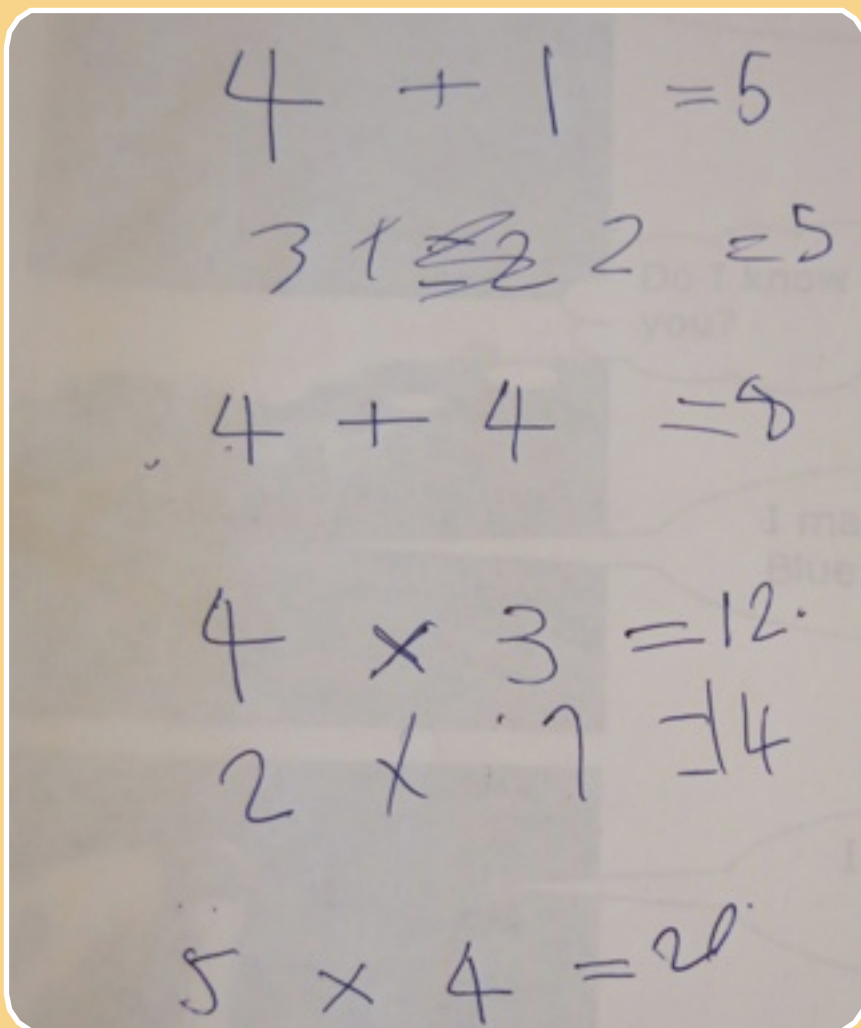
It is estimated that 25% of the population in the UK are affected.

Typical symptoms include:

- difficulty counting backwards
- poor sense of number and estimation
- difficulty remembering facts
- avoidance of tasks they perceive as difficult or likely to result in a 'wrong' answer.

Because maths concepts build one on top of another, if there is anxiety about early number work this will impact adversely on later topics which is why it is so important to return to basics if dyscalculia is suspected.

EAQ uses a variety of different techniques to help with understanding a range of mathematical concepts.





## Child and Adolescent Mental Health

Children and young people are affected by many factors in society and there are many pressures and challenges which can contribute to a range of mental health problems.

Teenage years in particular are usually a time of change, from internal changes for the young person, changing schools, developing relationships and coping with unfamiliar or challenging situations.

Being with the horses can help people to develop the skills they need to reflect on their feelings and experiences and find strategies to cope with these.

Headteacher, Rachel said "Horses provide a great tool to develop a secure therapeutic alliance particularly with the girls I work with who have often

spent time in mental hospitals and therapeutic institutions where their experiences of therapy have not always been positive.

They often do not engage with "talking therapies" when they come to us so using a therapeutic approach that does not require "talking" or at least not directly talking to the therapist makes them feel more secure.

I saw it in the "Playing with Magic" video [one of the resources evaluated on the course] that when Erika was talking about her family and their expectations of her she did so while looking at the horse and not making eye contact with the therapist.

This is much less threatening or confrontational, and I have found girls will tell the horse things they would not just come out and say to us."



## MENTAL HEALTH



Mental health problems affect about 1 in 10 children and young people.

They include depression and anxiety and are often related to what is happening in the lives of children and young people.

Issues including divorce, exams, relationship breakdown, moving schools, being diagnosed with a life-limiting condition or being bereaved can all cause short-term or long term difficulties.

We work with CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) and other specialist services to support children and young people, enabling them to spend time with the horses and explore the issues which are affecting them.

# NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

The following qualifications have been approved by Ofqual and are listed on the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF). EAQ has been approved by Ascentis, a national UK awarding body, to offer these qualifications by enabling learners to work out of doors with the horses at one of our EAQ Approved Centres. We also have accreditation with the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) to offer qualifications in Scotland.

The concept of units and credits now form the basis of the RQF. This allows learners to achieve bite-sized chunks of accredited learning in a flexible way that best suits their needs and abilities.

There are no formal entry requirements for the qualifications listed on this page and all are suitable for young people under the age of 16.

We register learners for qualifications at an appropriate level and size and tailored to the needs of the learner.

## Character Development

The suite of qualifications in Character Development have been designed for learners who would benefit from reflection and adaptation of their own behaviour and character in order to establish themselves within modern society. They are also suitable for learners who need development of the skills necessary to work effectively with others, whether in the world of work or in further study.

The Ofqual approved purpose of the qualifications is to recognise personal growth and engagement in learning and the sub-purpose is to recognise development of knowledge and/or skills to operate independently and effectively in life, learning and work.

The qualifications provide learners with the skills and confidence to integrate

with other people more successfully. On completion, learners are therefore better placed to take up employment opportunities or progress on to vocational or academic studies at a higher level.

## Work Preparation for Land-based Industries

These qualifications are available at Entry 3, Level 1 and Level 2 and are suitable for those aged under 16 as well as those over the age of 16.

The aims of the qualifications are to:

- Prepare learners for the world of work in Land-based Industries
- Prepare learners for further work-related study
- Ensure learners have an understanding of values and attitudes relevant to employment in Land-based Industries
- Help learners develop the general employability skills needed for successful and fulfilling employment.
- Help learners identify specific occupational areas in which they may wish to pursue a career
- Help learners develop the skills necessary to find and gain employment.

The Ofqual approved purpose of this qualification is to recognise personal growth and engagement in learning (Entry 3 and Level 1) and Prepare for employment (Level 2).

The sub-purpose is to recognise development of employability skills and/or knowledge (Entry 3 and Level 1) and prepare for employment in a broad occupational area (Level 2).

Progression for learners is likely to be:

- Directly to employment
- Onto Traineeships
- Onto Apprenticeships
- To higher level qualifications in the Work Preparation suite
- To a wide range of other training and qualifications.



**EAQ is able to create individualised learning programmes tailored to learners' needs, enabling those learners to achieve single units or work towards a national qualification and improve their opportunities for their future training or employment.**

The aims of the qualifications are to:

- Engage and motivate learners to identify their individual and personal strengths for progression to post-16 study and/or employment.
- Provide learning opportunities that enable participants to realise their potential to progress to further and higher education.
- Provide information and advice to learners on possible progression routes, including to higher education.
- Recognise learning achievements through credits and other recognised qualifications to provide coherence and progression.
- Provide learning opportunities that are stimulating and engaging.

## Popular Qualifications

Character Development  
Work Preparation for Land-based Industries  
Skills Towards Enabling Progression

Qualifications are available at Entry Level 3 as well as Levels 1, 2 and 3. Level 1 is roughly equivalent to GCSE grades D-G and Level 2 roughly equivalent to GCSE grades A-C.

## Popular Units

Developing Personal Confidence and Self Awareness  
Developing Confidence Working with Animals  
Healthy Living  
Improving Own Learning and Performance  
Understanding Perimeter and Area  
Measuring Distance and Length  
Drug and Alcohol Awareness  
Health and Safety in a Practical Environment



## Acknowledgements

My thanks to all those who have helped with the planning and publication of this book and to those who have so kindly allowed us to use their photographs.

The case studies have been included to give you an idea about how equine assisted learning can be effective at helping people to learn more about themselves. I have omitted the names of learners and facilitators to protect the identity and location of all involved.

The author, publisher and all associated with this publication accept no liability whatsoever for any accident, incident or injury caused because people have followed or not followed the guidance contained within this publication. Horses and ponies can be unpredictable however well handled and it is up to you to keep yourself safe.

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[Getting Started with Equine Assisted Learning Activities](#)

[Apple Activities for Equine Assisted Learning](#)

[Festive Activities for Equine Assisted Learning](#)

If you are interested in becoming a facilitator, setting up a centre or learning more about handling horses in a different way, please visit our websites:

[www.equineassistedqualifications.com](http://www.equineassistedqualifications.com)

[www.eaqnetwork.com](http://www.eaqnetwork.com)

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# WHY CHOOSE AN EAQ APPROVED CENTRE?

## External Standards of Excellence - Quality Assurance - Monitoring

EAQ offers equine assisted learning through a network of approved centres. It sets and monitors quality standards within these centres in the following six areas:

- Horse Welfare and Handling
- Personnel
- Approach to Learning
- Environment
- Health and Safety
- Policies and Procedures

EAQ provides specialist training and qualifications for facilitators in how to plan and manage equine assisted learning sessions and facilitators are expected to take part in continuing professional development.

Learners who attend an EAQ Approved Centre also have the opportunity to take part in nationally-recognised qualifications which are a recognised outcome for the work that they have been doing with the horses.

*"The changes that have happened because of the horses has affected not only my grand daughter but the rest of the family, her school friends, her education and ultimately her chance of getting a job. Thank you!"*

**Your Local EAQ Centre is at:**  
Rainbow Horses, Barkestone-le-Vale  
Nottinghamshire

**07960 031312**

For details of other centres, contact  
01747 828150

email:

[centre@equineassistedqualifications.com](mailto:centre@equineassistedqualifications.com)

[www.equineassistedqualifications.com](http://www.equineassistedqualifications.com)



## EAQ Approved Centres

Cambridgeshire  
Derbyshire  
Devon  
Dorset  
Hampshire  
Isle of Wight  
Lincolnshire

Shropshire  
Surrey  
Warwickshire  
Wiltshire  
Scotland  
Wales  
Australia