



Animal Assisted Education



Horses

- Took two approaches to this.
- Whole class workshop.
- Small group so more individual support.
- We worked alongside Simone McCambridge at Tullynewbank Stables.
- Combined some work with the British Horse Society 'Changing Lives Through Horses'.



Whole Class Programme

- Ran over 6 weeks
- 2 hours every Thursday
- Children were divided into 5 groups that rotated, with each activity lasting 25 minutes.
- Involved different instructors.
- Children learned skills at the stables, this was then connected with learning in the classroom.



Week 1 – Meet Our Friends

- Agreed the stable rules.

Explore the stables

- We found out where they sleep.
- Where they exercise.
- We looked at where they store their bridles and saddles.
- We seen the food store.

Meeting our new friends.

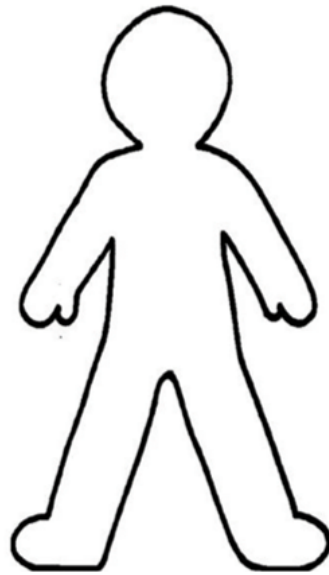
- We got to meet the new horses we would be working with.
- We talked about how to approach the horses safely.
- We say their name, make eye contact, approach slowly from the front.
- There were a lot of emotions when we met the horses. Some of the children felt scared, excited, brave, nervous or awkward.
- We heard all about the different horses personalities and seen that every one looked different.

How we connected this to the classroom...

- We discussed with the children how they felt the horses would have felt meeting all these strange children for the first time.
- We looked at how they felt and how they could identify those emotions.
- What happens when we feel nervous/happy/scared/cross in our bodies?
- We talked about how it feels to make new friends, and what way we should behave when approaching someone to be friends and when we play with our friends.

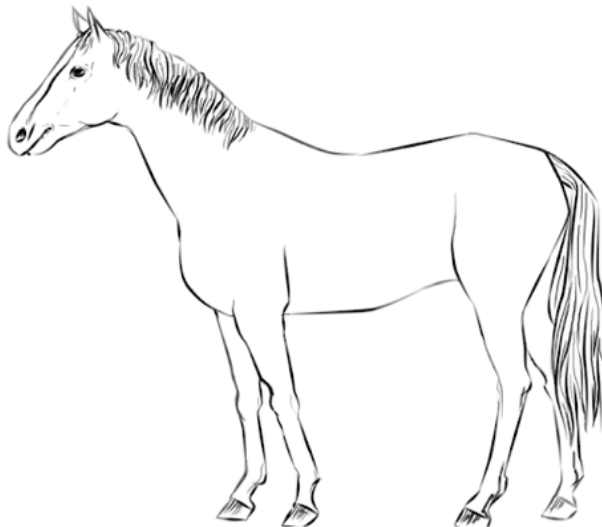
happy ◇ sad ◇ nervous ◇ admiration ◇ amusement ◇ anger ◇ anxiety ◇ awe ◇ awkwardness ◇ boredom

How did you feel when you met the horses for the first time?

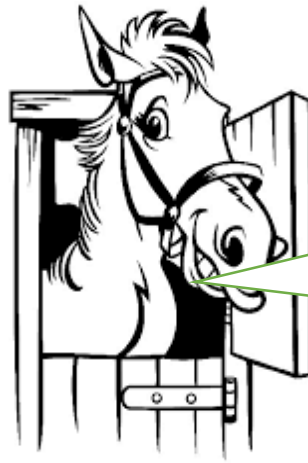


◇ calmness ◇ confusion ◇ pain ◇ excitement ◇ fear ◇ interest ◇ joy ◇ relief ◇ surprise ◇

How do you think the horses might have felt when they met everyone for the first time?



◇ calmness ◇ confusion ◇ pain ◇ excitement ◇ fear ◇ interest ◇ joy ◇ relief ◇ surprise ◇



Sometimes we can feel a little nervous when we meet new people. How did you behave to make me feel comfortable and for us to build a friendship?

Draw a picture of us together and record how you behaved around it.

Appreciating our differences...

- We looked at what was the same about each horse and what was different.
- We discussed what different things we liked about each horse and how unique each one was.

Pick your two favourite horses and complete the fact file.

Are we the same or different?

Name: _____

Age: _____

Hair colour: _____

Eye colour: _____

Likes: _____

Interesting fact: _____

Name: _____

Age: _____

Hair colour: _____

Eye colour: _____

Likes: _____






Interesting fact: _____

Appreciating our differences...

- We then looked at what things we have that are the same as our friends and what is different. We talked about how unique we each are. And how our uniqueness makes us special.

Are we the same or different?

Draw a picture of yourself and your best friend.



Name: _____	Name: _____
Age: _____	Age: _____
Hair: _____	Hair: _____
Eye colour: _____	Eye colour: _____
Likes: _____	Likes: _____
Interesting fact: _____	Interesting fact: _____
_____	_____

Week 2 – Caring for the Horses

- We learned how to groom the horses.
- It is important to care for pets when we have one. We have responsibilities to ensure they are clean and well cared for.
- We found out that when we are calm around them they will also be calm.
- We learned the parts of the horse.
- We got to lead Pepsi around to get him some exercise. Pepsi is blind in one eye.

How we connected this to the classroom...

- We discussed how we care for ourselves and our own bodies.
- We looked at healthy eating and how a balanced diet helps us to grow and be strong.
- We talked about how we can look after our mental health as well as our physical health. We looked at the 5 steps of wellbeing and how these can help us.
- We discussed disabilities and how these make us unique.
- We got the children to note that like Pepsi even if they need a little help sometimes that is ok, sometimes these differences can even turn out to be our superpower.



Life Skills

- There are six Life Skills weaved throughout the programme. The journey of each young person, as they progress along the scales, were monitored throughout. The scale of 1-5 was used for each Life Skill.

Communication

Communication (two-way exchange of opinions, news and information by writing, speech or gestures including body language and facial reactions)

- 1. No verbal communication with other people or horses; may use facial reactions and body language to communicate;
- 2. Will answer questions specifically asked to them, sometimes using verbal language; will use facial reactions and body language to communicate with other people or horses;
- 3. Answers questions using verbal language; holds short conversations with others of a similar age;
- 4. Holds a conversation with others of a similar age; will offer longer answers to questions; starts to ask specific questions;
- 5. Starts conversations with others of a similar age; looks at who is speaking or to whom they are speaking; asks questions; can keep a conversation going with others for an extended period of time sticking to the relevant topic.

Confidence

Confidence (a feeling or belief that you can do something well or succeed at something):

- 1. Will not attempt an activity; does not engage with others, including people well-known;
- 2. Will attempt an activity with excessive guidance and support, especially from people well-known;
- 3. Requires lots of guidance and support to attempt an activity;
- 4. Will attempt an activity with support, especially regarding how to achieve successfully;
- 5. Will attempt an activity with guidance rather than excessive support; will try something again where they may have not been successful previously.

Relationships

- Relationships (the way in which two or more people or things are connected; the way in which two or more people or groups and behave towards each other
- 1. Struggles to look in the direction of someone else or a horse; chooses to be on their own over with another person/horse;
- 2. Will look at someone else or a horse; will answer when someone greets them by name, especially if well-known to the participant;
- 3. Will greet another person or horse by name; will answer when someone else greets them even if they are not well-known by the participant; smiles at other people/horses; is interested in other people/horses;
- 4. Cooperates with others if it is instigated by another person/horse; actively shows interest in other people/horses;
- 5. Demonstrates listening skills; tries to cooperate with other people/horses; shows a preference towards people or horses they know over unknown.

Teamwork

- Teamwork (the process of working collaboratively with a group of people in order to achieve a goal; teamwork means that people will try to cooperate, using their individual skills and providing constructive feedback, despite any personal conflict between individuals)
- 1. Struggles to work as part of a team; spends the majority of the time working alone;
- 2. Tries to work in a pair, especially if the other person is well-known; may either try to lead everything when working with a partner or to follow the other person with very limited contribution from themselves;
- 3. Works in a pair with someone who is not well-known; will both listen to others and contribute their ideas whilst working with a partner; may become quite reliant on working with a particular person when working as a team;
- 4. Tries to work in small groups, especially with other people who are well-known; will contribute ideas when working with others; will listen to others' ideas;
- 5. Works in a small group with other people who are not necessarily well-known; will listen to others' ideas and consider them; will contribute their ideas; can work in the group without adult support.

Responsibility

- Responsibility (the ability or authority to act or decide on one's own, without supervision having a duty to deal with something; being accountable for something):
 - 1. Struggles to follow instructions or to act in an appropriate way; finds consequences of actions difficult to understand;
 - 2. Is starting to show a limited understanding of consequences of their actions; is beginning to show the ability to act appropriately in very supported situations;
 - 3. Occasionally shows the ability to act appropriately if this is explained clearly to them; demonstrates some understanding of the consequences of their actions;
 - 4. Acts appropriately the majority of the time if it is explained clearly to them; shows an understanding of the immediate consequences of their actions;
 - 5. Is beginning to show progress in making their own decisions and, at times, can act appropriately without support; shows an understanding of the consequences of their actions.

Perseverance

- Perseverance (something that has been done or achieved through effort: a result of hard work and training; something accomplished through continued focus or courage)
- 1. Struggles to remain focused on an activity if they find it challenging or do not understand straight away; will complete activities which are well within their comfort zone with minimal effort;
- 2. Is starting to complete activities within their comfort zone with more effort; demonstrates some effort when faced with an activity which they find challenging, often with adult support;
- 3. Beginning to show some enthusiasm for favourite activities; is able to recognise in which activities they have previously been successful – this then impacts positively upon their attempts to complete similar tasks;
- 4. Demonstrates enthusiasm to complete activities which they enjoy and are able to complete independently; are willing to have a go at activities which are outside their comfort zone, providing they are well supported by an adult;
- 5. Keen and enthusiastic to join in a large number of activities; is beginning to show a willingness to learn; will stick at an activity if at first they do not succeed, usually with adult support and supervision.