

RA045 — Alpaca and pony handling

Naylor's Ark Soul Sanctuary · Risk assessment (Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999)

Activity: Home Education Hub session: supervised alpaca and pony meeting, leading and grooming

Programme: Home Education Hub — Home Ed at the Ark, term-time Wednesdays 11am–2pm

Assessment date: 20/08/2026 · Assessor: Liberty Naylor · Review: annually, after any incident and before each new term

Site: Naylor's Ark Soul Sanctuary · CPH 46/327/7111 · Vet: 608 Equine & Farm Veterinary Surgeons · Read with HSP-01, SSOW-01, RA031 biosecurity and the Home Ed session safety and hygiene checklist

Hazard	Who may be harmed	Control measures in place	Residual risk
Kicks, bites, treads and being knocked over by a large animal	Learners, parents, staff	Only roster-cleared, halter-trained animals used; a trained handler holds every animal while learners are alongside; learners kept out of the kick zone and never directly behind; no learner leads an animal unaccompanied; sturdy closed footwear required; group of no more than three at the animal.	Medium
Alpaca spitting, head-shyness and stress	Learners	Approach from the side at shoulder height, never over the head; no face-to-face contact; alpacas worked in pairs so none is isolated; session stopped if an animal humms, ears back or lifts the head; RA035 alpaca handling controls apply.	Medium
Ponies and food — laminitis, biting, mugging for treats	Ponies, learners	No treats or food of any kind for the ponies, including from home; grooming only; hands flat with fingers tucked; feed buckets kept out of sight during the activity.	Medium
Grooming kit, head collars and lead ropes	Learners, staff	Lead ropes never wrapped around a hand, wrist or body; ropes coiled and held safely; grooming brushes checked for damage; kit cleaned between animals to prevent ringworm and mite spread.	Medium
Animal contact — bites, knocks, treads, startling	Learners, parents, staff	Only animals cleared for public contact on the roster; a member of the team present throughout; approach from the side, calm voices, no running or chasing; no head handling where the roster says so; no entry to paddocks with unsettled animals; RA015 general visit controls apply.	Medium
Zoonoses and infection (E. coli O157, cryptosporidium, ringworm)	Learners, parents, staff	Hand-washing with soap and hot water after animal contact and before any food or drink; no eating, drinking, thumb-sucking or phone use in animal areas; cuts and grazes covered; supervised wash station signed and stocked; RA031 biosecurity and zoonoses controls apply; anyone unwell asked to rebook.	Medium
Supervision and safeguarding of children	Learners	Parents and carers remain responsible for their own children and stay with them at all times; learners never left alone with an animal or a volunteer; ratio confirmed at booking; DBS-checked lead on site; concerns reported to the sanctuary lead the same day and to the local authority safeguarding team within 24 hours.	Low
Slips, trips, uneven ground and weather	All present	Route checked and swept before the session; suitable footwear and outdoor clothing stated at booking; wet or muddy sections coned or avoided; walkways kept clear of hoses, buckets and tools; shaded and sheltered space available; RA037 adverse weather controls apply; session shortened or postponed in high wind, ice or heat.	Low
Allergies, medical needs and mobility	Learners, parents	Allergies, medical needs and mobility captured on the family registration and reviewed before each session; seated and at-distance options always offered; families keep their own medication (inhalers, antihistamines, auto-injectors) with them; first aider on site with a stocked kit; MNA-01 medical needs assessment applies.	Low
Emergency, fire or animal escape	All present	Site safety briefing and sign-in at the gate before every session; assembly point, fire point, first aid kit and toilets shown at	Low

Hazard	Who may be harmed	Control measures in place	Residual risk
during a session		the start; gates closed behind every person; register held by the lead; incident, near miss or animal concern reported and logged in the app the same day.	