

Trustees Annual Report
Cavallo Group Riding for the Disabled
1st December 2022 – 30th November 2023
Charity No NI 104212

The charity exists to enhance the health and well-being of children with disabilities through the delivery of effective and life enhancing therapy, in terms of greater mobility, balance and core strength, the opportunity to learn new skills and the chance to enjoy taking part in a social activity that promotes general well-being. The principal address of the Charity is Cavallo Farm, 141 Crawfordsburn Road, Newtownards and the principal contact for the Charity Commission is Mrs Liz Russell, 30 Loughries Road, Newtownards.

The Group meet on Tuesday afternoons during term time. We have four riders per session and our participants come from Mitchell House School.

We are fortunate to have the use of the indoor school at Cavallo Farm at no cost to the Group. All our ponies are owned by the group or are on long term loan. Our main costs are insurance and membership fees of the RDA parent body and maintenance costs for the ponies as detailed in the accounts and from which you will see our bank balance remains healthy. Income comes largely from donations. We are currently maintaining 5 active ponies and 2 retirees. All coaches and helpers are volunteers. No monetary value for the purposes of the Accounts has been placed on the ponies due to their advanced years. On retirement, the ponies will remain on the farm for the remainder of their lives. We are still trying to acquire a suitable 11.2HH pony.

We were greatly saddened this year by the deaths of one of our Trustees, Mr Tom McIlwaine in December 2022 and a volunteer, Mr Jonny Johnston in May 2023. Both were long standing supporters of the group.

The public benefit delivered by the Cavallo Group can be seen in the achievements of the riders. Less easy to quantify but equally beneficial is the opportunity provided by having close contact with the horse and the sense of achievement which can be observed in the participants. Relationships built with the volunteers help with social skills and the physical benefits of improved core strength, balance and co-ordination are also apparent.

We make every effort to ensure that the sessions are conducted safely by using suitably qualified coaches and trained volunteers. All have to go through an Enhanced Access NI check as well as providing two references. With effect from this year, all volunteers must renew their Access NI check every three years. The Group has a safeguarding policy which is reviewed annually and coaches must complete a safe guarding course every three years. A qualified First Aider is always in attendance.

We consider that we have had regard to the Commission's guidance on public benefit and have fulfilled our obligation in this respect.

Signed..........

Lady P Blackwood, Chairman and Trustee

On behalf of the following Trustees of the Group

Mrs Beryl McIlwaine

Mrs Heather Forrest

Attachments

1. Copy of the Accounts and list of Assets
2. Copy of Independent Examiners Report to the Trustees