



44 Newcroft Crescent, Urmston, Manchester. M41 9NW

Tel: 07887 810035

Community Interest Company No. 11987734

Empowering Equine Alternative Provision Brochure

Menu

- About us
- What are we offering
- Animal Care
- Emotional Regulation and other skills building
- What is Equine Facilitated Learning (EFL)
- Our Therapeutic Services
- A Typical Day
- Industry Professional observations and workshops
- Career Opportunities
- Employability Skills
- Qualifications
- Our Premises
- Our Ethos
- Our Team
- Which children we are suited to
- Pathways from provision
- Pricing
- Pricing of additional services available
- Payment Terms
- Contact us

About Us

Empowering Equine CIC is a community interest company that provides mental health support for children with social, emotional and mental health needs. We provide equine facilitated learning (EFL) and therapeutic support for children, working closely with families, guardians, and schools to help children improve their mental health and wellbeing and learn emotional regulation skills. We are based in Mobberley, Cheshire, and cover the Cheshire and Greater Manchester area. As a CIC we have been supporting children and families for 3 years.

What are we offering

We are offering an animal based, therapeutic provisions offering a small group (4-8 persons) provision for young people aged 11-18. We will be offering a flexible combination of the below:

- Practical hands-on work with animals, learning both animal care, handling and training skills and theory on animal care, physiology and psychology.
- Learning emotional regulation skills, other important life and social skills and the opportunity to improve their mental health and wellbeing.
- Accessing therapeutic services and EFL (for more information on EFL, see the 'what is EFL' section below). This is then incorporated into our day-to-day work with the animals and practitioners.
- Opportunities for observations and workshops with real industry professionals within the animal care industry, from animal massage and holistic therapists, rescue organisations and trainers, to animal vets, dentists, farriers and physiotherapists
- Discussions around career opportunities, both with animals and other careers, and support to research how to access those careers and what those careers may look like. This also includes workshops on CV writing, employability skills, interview skills and communication and teamwork skills.
- Opportunity to gain qualifications in animal care.

We are open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday during term time and can offer from 1-3 days a week. Children will attend from 9-3pm, however they do have the option to come in from 8:30am where breakfast will be made available. Breakfast options will include fresh fruit, yoghurt, cereal and toast. Lunch and refreshments are included but children may bring their own lunch and snacks if they prefer.

We offer groundwork with the horses only and do not offer any ridden work. The best place to find riding opportunities is either riding schools or your local RDA (riding for the disabled association)

Animal Care

We work with the children to build practical skills in caring for and working with animals, finding out what they enjoy, and how this could be a potential career. Currently our animals include dogs and horses. We plan to include lambs, alpacas and/or donkeys in the near future. Skills we teach for the animals we work with include:

- Basic care (cleaning/ feeding and watering/ management/ health and care needs)
- Basic handling (leading/ grooming/ exercise)
- Understanding and knowledge of that animal's body language, communication and how to appropriately respond
- Understanding of basic species-specific animal psychology and physiology
- Applying knowledge of animal psychology and physiology into care, handling, management and training of the animals
- How to care for the physical and psychological health of the animal
- Training, working and exercising the animal
- Different roles and jobs each species of animal can carry out (e.g. leisure, police work, search and rescue, therapeutic work, assistance animals, riding schools, cavalry, security work, etc)

Emotional regulation and other skills building

We work with children to help them improve the skills they need to cope and succeed in life. They work with the animals and each other and access EFL and therapeutic services to improve their mental health and wellbeing and learn skills such as:

- emotional regulation

- communication and social skills
- teamwork skills
- self-awareness
- resilience
- strategies to make better choices around their behaviour
- awareness of the impact of their behaviour on others
- improved ability to understand themselves and others
- building self-esteem, empathy and confidence
- improving their relationships with others
- ability to respond rather than react and many more skills.

We help these children develop these skills and then apply them to their day-to-day life with the aim of helping them build a better, more successful future, both in their personal and working lives.

What is Equine Facilitated Learning (EFL)

EFL uses exercises and connection with horses to help people regulate their emotions and improve their quality of life, learning self-regulation and building self-confidence. At the same time, they will develop many other skills, including:

- Emotional and behavioural regulation
- Building positive relationships and support systems
- Communication and interpersonal skills
- Teamwork
- Resilience
- Boundaries (their own and other peoples)
- Self-awareness
- Problem solving and critical thinking
- Building self-esteem and empathy
- Improving the way people view themselves and others.
- Improving mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Keeping more active
- Improving confidence

EFL involves working with the facilitator(s) and the horses. It can be done in group of up to 6 or in a 1 to 1 setting. Horses are naturally very sensitive and responsive to our emotions, so horses respond accordingly to dysregulation and are good at recognising the young person's needs and responding accordingly. Sometimes the horse does this through co-regulation and sometimes by moving away to give a child space. The facilitators will also teach emotional regulation techniques and help the young person to transfer this to their daily life.

They are also great for building other skills, such as confidence, resilience and relationship building as horses are great teachers, and tend to seek out relationships with humans. They are non-judgemental, quick to forgive, cannot hide their emotions and very quick with giving feedback when people make changes. This can really help people feel more confident and give them the motivation to keep trying as the horse responds quickly to their changes.

People also tend to really enjoy working with the horses, as it is good fun and our horses are very friendly and gentle and interact well with people.

Our therapeutic services

The vast majority of the children attending our alternative provision will have mental health difficulties and many will have suffered from trauma, therefore an important part of our provision is to provide access to therapeutic services which will play a large role in a child's recovery.

We have a child's and young person's therapist on site 1 day a week. They are an integrative psychodynamic therapist who can work with children individually, in small groups and can also work with families where this is appropriate. Our therapist is qualified to work in animal assisted therapy and play therapy.

They are also qualified to offer therapeutic parenting courses, which we can offer to parents and guardians who are interested in accessing this support. Our therapist works flexibly and can adapt to the child's needs, working both room-based and in nature, with or without animals and integrate play therapy where appropriate.

We also have established and experienced EFL's available for group and 1 to 1 EFL sessions.

For children who are with us 3 days a week, a once weekly therapy session and once weekly EFL session are included in the price, as is the therapeutic parenting course if appropriate.

For children who are with us 2 days a week a once weekly 1 to 1 EFL session is included in the cost.

For children who are with us for less days you can still access services that are not included at an extra cost (see price list.)

We can also access other types of therapeutic support, including Occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, psychologists and a range of assessments including ADHD and autism assessments at an extra cost. We work with Intraquest community CIC to provide these services.

These services can be completed at our base or at Intraquest's base (in Oldham) and we do not add any additional fees onto these services, you can pay us or Intraquest CIC directly but we will only charge what they do. If you want one of their therapists to come to our base or your school this may incur extra travel costs, but use of our site is free for children attending the provision. Prices of these services are listed in our pricing section.

A typical day

We combine hands on work with the animals, learning about how animals think and learn, with therapeutic support, EFL, team-work and working on their own individual strategies and support. We have a flexible approach so our days won't all look the same, but here is an example of how a typical day may look:

- 8:30-9- option for children to arrive early and have breakfast
- 9-10:30- all children arrive by 9, doing the animals basic care (e.g. poo picking fields, cleaning and filling water troughs, grooming and feeding horses/ other animals, doing horses daily stretches, putting hay in fields if winter, etc)
- 10:30- 12- taking some animals for an in hand walk and/or training sessions with animals, potentially filling in workbooks/ presentations or taking videos for qualifications at the same time

- 12-1 lunch
- 1-3 combinations of 1 to 1 or group therapy or EFL, and/ or hands on skills practice with animals, animal theory teaching, looking into career options and how to get there, filling in workbooks/ creating videos/ presentations for qualifications, creating training plans for animals

Days may vary depending on any observations or workshops taking place, availability of therapists/ EFLs' changing plans/ timings due to weather or the needs and wellbeing of the animal.

Industry Professional observations and workshops

We also have days where animal professionals come in and do talks and demonstrations for the children around animal care and some potential animal careers.

Some of these talks are from people with careers that would be potentially good options for the children, eg dog groomers and trainers, equine and canine massage and touch therapists, other animal alternative therapists and farmers, sheep shearers, etc.

Some are from professionals that work within animal care and training that the children may be working alongside or receive/make referrals to or from if they did choose to work with animals, for example: equine dentists, veterinarians, equine and/or canine physiotherapist, animal behaviourists, farriers, etc.

These workshops and talks will be supervised thoroughly by our team and children will not be left unattended with anyone other than our team, and professionals delivering the workshops will not be counted towards the staffing numbers.

Career opportunities

We help children look at career routes with animals. We help them research what they may enjoy, any qualifications they may need and how they get them, routes into the career and employment/ business opportunities within that industry.

There are lots of potential careers working with animals that don't require GCSEs or academic qualifications, or only require basic Maths and/or English GCSE. Examples of these include:

- Dog groomer
- Dog trainer (some training providers do, but many don't)
- Animal massage therapy (some training providers do but many don't)
- Other animal holistic therapies (eg aromatherapy, reiki, etc)
- Horse groom
- Animal care worker
- Dog handler, for example at a rescue
- Doggy daycare provider
- Dog rescue
- Freelance horse groom/ pet sitter/ animal care provider for when people go on holiday etc

There are many other careers we can help young people look into if they are interested in a career working with animals and we can help them look at the pathways to get there.

We also help children look at other career routes if they enjoy working with animals, but this isn't something they want to do as a career. We help children look at what other careers they may enjoy,

any qualifications needed, routes into those careers and employment/business opportunities within their chosen industries.

Employability skills

We also have training professionals come in to offer employability skills workshops. They help the children with various skills that will assist in gaining and then keeping employment. These include (but are not limited to):

- CV writing
- Interview skills
- Communication skills
- Teamwork skills
- General employability skills
- Customer Service skills
- Conflict resolution skills

Qualifications

We will be offering gateway qualifications to the children coming through our provision. There is a wide variety of different qualifications we can offer through gateway, including more traditional qualifications, such as animal care, through to less traditional qualifications like communication skills. These qualifications can go right up to GCSE equivalents.

These qualifications could help the children access further education in a range of settings, for example, apprenticeships, animal care courses at colleges (Reaseheath College do not require GCSEs and have bases in Cheshire, Oldham and Merseyside).

For children who will be staying with us longer term, we can also look at qualifications which result in a career, job or apprenticeship straight after leaving, such as dog grooming or training, equine and canine massage therapy, animal care assistants (for example at rescues) or a horse groom. We treat each child as an individual and are prepared to look into additional qualifications or routes where this is appropriate on a case-by-case basis.

Our Premises

We have a small farm in Mobberley, Cheshire. This consists of 4 stables, a storage area, a kitchen and seating area, toilet and handwashing facilities, a car park, an arena (sand and a rubber surfaced fenced off area for working with the horses) and 4.3 acres of grazing land, fenced off with wooden post and rail fencing. We have access to lots of rural trails that the children can take the horses and dogs out walking on. You can set up a visit via email to come and see the premises. We come under Cheshire East Council.

Our address is:

The Sheilings

Burleyhurst Lane

Mobberley

Cheshire

SK9 4LX

Our Ethos

Strapline

Helping horses to help people

Mission Statement

To Empower young people to succeed and improve their mental health and wellbeing, helping them to create a fulfilling, enjoyable future that they choose for themselves.

Values

Empower young people to make positive choices

Utilise a holistic approach flexible to individual needs

Support the family system around the young person

Empower our human and animal team to be the best they can be

Helping young people improve their mental health and wellbeing

Helping young people make long lasting positive changes to their lives

Approach

At Empowering Equine we believe when a child is feeling better, they do better. We believe in helping children address the underlying causes for challenging behaviours and/or mental health difficulties and helping them find techniques and strategies to help them remain under threshold and therefore more able to learn.

We do this through a combination of many different things. We have high quality therapeutic support, offering family support where this is appropriate and access to EFL. We have a team of trauma informed staff bringing different skills to the table, a fantastic team of animals helping the children learn many different skills and a positive and flexible attitude towards the future.

We look at lots of different potential careers, dependent on the child's skills set to help give them hope and goals to reach for. We help children work together, hear each other's opinion and viewpoints and learn how to compromise both with each other and with the animals. We spend a lot of time and effort building positive relationships with the child, aiming to build mutual trust and respect so we can work with them rather than against them.

We believe in teaching children the skills they need to navigate the challenges in life and working with them to help build those skills and find the strategies to help them put them into action. We experiment with and teach these first when the child is calm and well under threshold and then build up to practicing them in more challenging situations. And when this doesn't go to plan, we help the child reflect on this and if there is a way of making this easier next time.

We also believe in supporting our team to be the best they can be, both animal and human.

For our human team this looks like building a positive working environment, and supporting them with regular de-briefs, supervision and training to help them maximise their potential. It also involves making sure everyone feels heard and has chance to contribute to the curriculum and to their own personal and professional development.

For the animals we make sure we meet their needs as best as we can, both emotionally and physically, and ensure they are well cared for and happy. It also means making sure they have choice over how and when they work and engage with people and ensuring both we and the children are listening to them when they are communicating.

Our Team

Human:

Our facilitators are passionate about helping young people to get the best out of their time with us! They are trauma informed, calm and patient, and adapt their approach to the needs of the young person. All our facilitators are insured, DBS checked, and have relevant safeguarding and first aid training.

We have several different types of facilitators here with complimentary skills sets. We have a combination of EFL practioners, EFPs (equine facilitated psychotherapists), therapists, and animal professionals and trainers to help the children work on improving their mental health and emotional regulation skills and gain skills in animal care and management at the same time. Working with industry professionals also helps young people see what these careers look like in practice and to gain advice and support on getting there. At least one of the facilitators present will either be a therapist or EFL professional.

Our EFL practioners must be fully qualified and registered with LEAP Equine, a leading EFL and EFP training provider. This helps ensure a high quality of sessions as to remain registered with LEAP a practitioner must have attended and passed full training and assessment, attend regular supervision sessions and remain up to date with continual professional development.

Our therapists must also be qualified, registered with an appropriate governing body, and up to date with supervision and CPD (continuing professional development).

Our animal professionals must all be force-free professionals, meaning the methods they use for working with and training animals must be completely non-violent and not be based on dominance theory. Our reasoning for this includes both animal welfare and the message we want to pass on to the children about how animals (and therefore people!) should be treated. So any methods based on force or about being dominant over an animal are not used with our animals and the children will not be taught these methods. All animal professionals must be suitably qualified for the role they are carrying out (this varies between professionals depending on their role) and registered with their appropriate governing bodies or training provider.

Animals:

The animals are obviously a hugely important part of the team here at Empowering Equine CIC. Currently our team includes 3 horses and 1 dog and it will be growing in the near future, and we are hoping to introduce sheep and hopefully alpacas. Our three horses are Toby, Minnie and Fudge, and we have a dog called Saskia.

Children will be working with animals that suit their needs and abilities. Our horses and dogs are all good with children, well-mannered and interactive and our team know our animals well enough to

know which situations they are comfortable working in and which they are not, to ensure we match up the right animal for both the children we are working with and the task we are doing.

We work with our animals using consent and relationship-based methods. This means our animals get to choose how much they interact and do have the choice not to interact with both clients and facilitators. It would be extremely rare that all animals chose not to interact at the same time, except for external stressors (e.g. child having a large meltdown, severe weather, etc). However, if that happens, we discuss the possible reasons why, and either look at ways to rectify that (for example, if a child is very dysregulated help them to regulate) or if it's part of the environment that is out of our control, then we do something else.

We spend a lot of time making experiences pleasant for the animals and building positive relationships with them. We believe this is important to both the animal's welfare and willingness to work, and for the children to learn how compromise, build relationships and learn boundaries and respect that can be carried over to humans too.

Which children are we suited to

We are a therapeutic animal based alternative provision. Below we have listed which children we would be particularly suited to:

- Children who struggle to or cannot engage in school due to their mental health, with or without challenging behaviours
- Children who have suffered trauma, abuse and/or difficult events/circumstance in their lives that they are struggling to live with and process
- Children with mental health needs that also have additional needs such as autism, ADHD, FASD, SPD, etc
- Children who struggle to cope in larger busier settings and need smaller groups with a more flexible, slower-paced learning environment
- Children who struggle to engage in the typical classroom setting and would learn better in a more outdoors, nature-based environment and would learn well working practically
- Children who struggle to regulate their emotions, struggle building relationships and struggle with their communication and social skills
- Children who need therapeutic support or input
- Children who struggle with anxiety and coping with the pressure and challenges of school life
- Children who may not achieve traditional GCSE qualifications and would suit a less academic career route
- Children who like animals and would benefit from engaging with them
- Children who like being active and spending time outdoors

There are also some young people who would not find this provision suitable due to the risks associated with this provision. These risks include working in groups of 4 children, the nature of animal care work (including the tools needed to carry this out, such as scissors, pitch forks, etc) and the risks involved, our site not being security fenced, outside professionals coming in for workshops, the potential for working off site, etc. We do also offer a EFL and relational horsemanship provision which can accommodate some of these children. More detail of this below. Children for whom the Therapeutic Animal based Alternative provision may not be suitable for include:

- Children with violent behaviours: by this we do not mean children who have had some fights with peers. We understand most children will do this at some point. We mean children who are prone to violent outbursts and physically attack staff or their peers when angry or upset, or children who are at risk of bringing weapons or using the equipment at our facilities (e.g. pitchforks, scissors and knives which are needed for animal care) as a weapon to harm others. We also cannot admit children with a high risk of arson.
- Children who are a high risk of absconding even with staff members present
- Children who are a high risk of self-harm or attempted suicide during provision hours to the level that they would need constant supervision. We understand many children with mental health issues self-harm and have suicidal thoughts, impulses and actions, and we have plenty of experience working with these children. However, we are not a secure unit and we do not have the facilities or the staffing to monitor any child 24/7 and do not have staffing that can accompany children to the toilet or personal care to prevent suicide or self-harm attempts. We also use equipment such as pitch forks, knives, scissors etc as part of our day-to-day animal care. If a child is a very high risk of attempted suicide or self-harm whilst on site they are better suited to a provision that can provide 24/7 monitoring and is a secure unit.
- Children who have committed sexual assault. We are a mixed gender provision and for the safety of the other children unfortunately cannot take children with a history of committing sexual assault. Many of the children at our provision are vulnerable and may well have been sexually abused or sexually assaulted themselves so it would be completely inappropriate to increase the risk of this happening to them again.
- Children who are unable to work in small groups. If a child needs to be the only child on the premises and work completely 1 to 1, this unfortunately is something we cannot offer currently, but may be able to accommodate with 1 to 1 EFL or animal care sessions upon discussion.
- Children who wouldn't be able to physically navigate some of the challenges of outdoor working, for example, uneven floors, gates, etc. If you have a child with physical challenges or disabilities that this would affect, we would be more than happy to discuss if we would be able to meet their needs in offering 1 to 1 EFL, animal care or therapy sessions. However, the day at the alternative provision is very active, involving lots of hands-on animal care and lots of walking on lots of different surfaces.
- Children whose inability to control their impulses and/or follow instructions would make being at our provision dangerous for themselves and/or others. There may be times when our staffing ratio can be as low as 4 to 1 e.g. lunchtime or in the classroom, so the children need to be able to have an appropriate level of impulse control and ability to follow instructions to be able to attend this provision. However, we would be happy to discuss if we would be able to meet their needs in offering 1 to 1 EFL, animal care or therapy sessions where we can have higher staffing ratios and select appropriate animals.
- If children have any medical issues or allergies that would make working with animals a medical threat or very uncomfortable. Many children with allergies, either to the animals or hay, dust and grass can manage this with medication and limited exposure (e.g. not filling haynets) but if allergies are severe and cannot be managed with medication or reasonable adjustment then unfortunately children may not be able to take part for their own health and safety.

We do also offer a EFL and relational horsemanship provision which may be a better alternative for many of these children where we can work with them individually or in small groups of children with

similar needs and adapt activities and staffing levels to appropriately respond to those risks and some of the therapeutic services can be added to the EFL and relational horsemanship provision at additional cost. If you feel this may be more beneficial to the young person in question please email us and ask for the brochure. There may be occasional cases where we are not able to accommodate a child at our provision due to not having the facilities or staffing to appropriately manage that child's level of risk to themselves or the horses. We would discuss this with you on referral.

Pathways from Provision

There are several potential pathways for children that come to our provision, listed below:

- Back to the referring school. If the child makes significant improvements and shows ability to work within the school environment of the referring school, we can start to look at reintroducing the young person and/or increasing their hours at their school. We can provide help and support with this, and techniques to help the child integrate and cope on a day-to-day basis where this is an appropriate option
- To a different school. Sometimes a child may not be able to return to the school referring them due to mental health, additional need, etc. In these cases, it may be appropriate to start looking at other types of schools that may be helpful for this child
- To a different alternative provision. Some children may not be able to return to the school environment, however as their mental health and coping skills improve they may do well at an alternative provision with a lower needs level focusing on more practical career based skills and qualifications with less of a therapeutic focus.
- To a college/ apprenticeship. For some children It may be appropriate for them to move directly from our provision to a college/ apprenticeship environment, for example Reaseheath College does animal care courses and are used to adapting to students with additional needs or mental health difficulties. Some children may thrive in apprenticeships where they can learn on the job whilst they work. Some colleges offer places to student 14+ for limited courses.
- Staying and qualifying within our alternative provision. For some children, although their mental health and regulation skills may improve, they may struggle to cope in an environment that is busier and less adapted to their needs, and/or continue to need the high level therapeutic support. These children may benefit from staying with us until they leave education. For these children, if appropriate we may look at alternative qualifications they could do that could lead them straight into a job or career from leaving us.

Pricing

Our day rate is £300 per child. This includes all food and refreshment.

This is based on a child being able to work in small groups of up to 4-8 children and being able to work with a staffing ratio of 3-1 child to adult some of the time, and 2-1 most of the time. If a child needs 1 to 1 support but with this support could work within a group, we can discuss options around whether we could provide this at a cost or whether the school could provide that 1 to 1 assistance.

If a child does 2 days week with us, the price includes one 1 to 1 EFL session per week, which would normally cost £80-£100 (depending on length of session). If a child spends 3 days per week with us the price includes both the 1 to 1 EFL sessions and one 1 to 1 therapy session each week worth £78-£156 (depending on length of session) and access to the therapeutic parenting course for their parents/guardian (worth £2,880). These services are also available for children not doing 2/3 days a week at an additional cost.

Pricing of additional services available

Through us

- EFL £80 per hour 1 to 1 (VAT exempt)
- EFL and relational horsemanship alternative provision- see full EFL and Relational Horsemanship brochure for price list

Therapeutic Services

Our Therapeutic services are conducted through Intraquest CIC.

You have the option to either take the child to Intraquest's site at Oldham or use our site, but they may charge mileage to travel to our site

- 1 to 1 integrative or play therapy- £65 per hour plus VAT- (£78 total)
- Bespoke therapeutic parenting course- 12 x 2 hour sessions at £2,400 plus VAT
- Additional needs Assessments (autism, ADHD, etc)- approximately £2500 plus VAT
- Sessions with a psychologist- £100 per hour plus VAT
- Occupational and Speech and Language therapy- individual quotes will be given for this dependent on the child's needs.

Payment Terms

Payment for the half term is to be given before the beginning of that half term. We are also happy to be paid at the beginning of each term. Six weeks' notice is needed to remove a child from our provision. We will also give 6 weeks' notice if we feel our provision is not a suitable match for a child's needs, except in extreme cases where safety is compromised, in which case we retain the right to withdraw a placement without notice.

Contact us

Please feel free to contact us about any information you may want. We can arrange phone calls and visits for you to come and see us and what we do, with or without the child you are considering the placement for to see if we would suit your needs. We are also happy to send over risk assessments, policies, procedures and any other paperwork you may want to see.

Telephone: 07887810035

Email: sarah@empoweringequine.com

Website: www.empoweringequine.com