

COACH GUIDELINES for PONY CLUB

BOOKING COACHES

Volunteer coaches may be within a club, or an invited experienced horseperson or may be in training for an accreditation.

Volunteer coaches must present their WwVP Card and are covered by PCT's Club insurance for the rally day and can be offered a suggested travel fee of 34c a km but do not receive a coaching payment.

Travel fees are fine, but to gain a payment: accredited coaches to hold a current WwVP Card and present their PCA/PCT/EA qualifications or any other current accreditations and if required, proof of their own secured insurance policy. Qualified PCT Coaches and Official Panel are listed on the PCT website and EA ones on the EA website. Some professional instructors may charge a fee e.g. mechanic, farrier.

When booked: coaches are to be informed of what the club requires them to instruct, the groups if possible and describe the place/area they are to coach in. Some coaches may state preferred coaching disciplines. Rally days usually have four lessons: 2 or 3 ridden lessons, groundwork, theory/horse management. Coaches are encouraged to hold a 1st aid certificate, Covid Coaching and Play by the Rules certificates. Level 1 coaches instructing outside of Pony Club rallies should hold a 1st aid certificate.

There are times when Clubs, for varied reasons, have different outlines for rally/practical/training days)

Coaches plan lessons based on an 'educational equine goal following the PCA Instructional Syllabus, Proficiency Manuals, PCA active disciplines and PCT Handbook outlines, have safety outlines, encourage connections, are fun and offer positive outcomes. Coaches need to be aware that groups may be mixed ability and to cater from the Pony Club combination to the elite athlete.

Clubs to ensure their grounds/facilities/equipment are well maintained in preparation for rallies/events etc. And a designated 1st aid person for the day.

ARRIVING AT THE RALLY

On arrival coaches to introduce themselves to the DC or CC or designated officials of the day.

Coaches check with the Club official the groupings and confirm the lessons required to ensure their plans are appropriate. Coaches should be handed a copy of the groupings list and rally plan. Club to inform coaches of pre-existing medical conditions of any riders and medication that may be required.

All practical activities, theory/horse management, rally lessons/lunging etc should be based on the PCA Syllabus and PCA Learning Documents and Policies and [Proficiency Testing](#) criteria; plus, the lessons should be appropriate for the group being taught.

Coaches to be appropriately attired, take a water bottle, sunscreen/hat and given club contacts if they are instructing away from the main club area.

Coaches to enquire as to whom the designated Club First Aid Officer is, and where they will be stationed.

Coaches to physically check the area they are to instruct in. Coaches should immediately notify club officials if there are any safety concerns. Coaches to then set up ... the club should provide riders, or family members to help. ***Also be aware of Covid-19 Government requirements.

LINE UP and GEAR CHECK

Coaches may be asked to assist with an official gear check of riders at the start of the day mounted and at times unmounted to check e.g. helmets – to be tagged; safety vests encouraged – of own choice for rallies and training but must be of the required standard for competitions; etc

Aware of the use of phones and riders/people taking photos/videos; a health and welfare safety concern – check with the club their policy if concerned.

Coaches to be impartial and inclusive of all levels of riders and all types of pony club mounts and tack/saddlery/boots/etc. Safety procedures, current policies/rules, plus comfort for the rider and welfare of the horse should be considered.

RALLY LESSONS

Coaches to run a Safety Gear Check e.g. loose girths/helmets/stirrup length etc. at the beginning of each lesson.

Coaches to introduce themselves to the group of riders in each lesson they take and inquire tactfully about each rider's status in time.

Coaches to explain what the lesson outline is and the intended goal.

Coaches are encouraged to run through an 'emergency stop' and a 'bolt stop' in the introduction. During the riding warm up, incidentally determine the riders' and horses' 'brakes/control' (mounted and in led classes). This gives the coach time to observe the capabilities and any safety concerns of riders and horses.

Coaches to be able to ask for club assistance if required and club support should be on hand to help coaches so as the lesson is not held up for the other riders, e.g. group too big; gear changes; accident; unresponsive horse; rider needing individual support; horse or rider or coach welfare.

Coaches to place themselves, as much as possible, in a safe position where they have clear visibility of the group plus any individuals working out.

Coaches to keep all riders engaged and share their time equally and fairly among the group in the designated time; share lead rider and demo rider roles,

Coaches should never assume riders' and horses' capabilities. Coaches should work up and down the stages as need be; perfection is not the aim.

Coaches should stay to time as much as possible ... aiming for the cool down of horses and riders and for the conclusion/positive feedback of the lesson to be 5 to 10 minutes before the timed end.

Coaches to be tactful and helpful in their comments made to riders in the conclusion/feedback. Be mindful of ensuring equal response time for all.

In the case of a fall of horse or rider; follow safety procedures regarding first aid until the First Aid Officer/Help arrives.

(NO REMOUNTING UNTIL 1ST AID CHECK, EVEN FOR THE MOST MINOR INCIDENT -Follow the PCA Concussion Policy.) Coaches should be offered support if an incident has occurred.

If there are any concerns/conflicts with riders/spectators/families; coaches have been well-versed to respond in a calm, controlled manner from a safety perspective, and/or to ask for support from the DC/CC.

Coaches to guide riders to dismount at the end of each lesson; reins over horses' heads, stirrups run up, girths and nosebands loosened and lead correctly away. Coaches are encouraged to tactfully remind riders to have correct footwear and keep their helmets on until they have finished caring for their horse/pony.

END OF THE RALLY DAY

Coaches to meet with CC/DC/Club Official to pass on constructive notes about riders/the club OR receive feedback OR to diplomatically discuss any concerns.

Coaches to complete **INCIDENT FORMS** with clear details and pass them on to a club official and coaches to notify club officials when they are leaving.

Coaches ... everyone ... to be **aware of the pitfalls of MEDIA** - photos/Facebook/email/Twitter/Snapchat/Instagram/videos, conversations etc.
Everyone to follow the PCA Member Protection Policy and PCA Coaches Code of Conduct.