

EAST CHESHIRE BRANCH OF THE PONY CLUB CAMP SELECTION POLICY

We appreciate that camp is the highlight of the members year in most if not all Pony Club Branches and we do our very best to try to fit in every member who applies to attend. However, it is almost always the case that we have more applications to attend than we are able to accommodate.

We have for very many years held our Junior and Senior Camp at Somerford Park Farm where the facilities are second to none. However, the way in which we have to book the camp accommodation means that we have to fit in with a fixed matrix and it is not possible to vary the numbers by even the smallest of margins. Furthermore, in order for the costs to remain affordable, we need to ensure that all our allotted accommodation is filled.

We do not want to disappoint any member but every year there are likely to be more applications than places and for this reason we decided some years ago we needed a formal Camp Selection Policy in order that members will be aware of the basis upon which decisions are made. The policy is as follows:

All camp selection will be done as fairly and openly as possible. Once the closing date for applications has been reached, selection for places will take into account a number of factors including:

- 1. Commitment of the member to the Pony Club** - in all respects - to the Branch, to training and rallies, to Pony Club organized competitions, both within the Branch and inter-Branch, and to their fellow members. There will be an expectation that the member will have attended **at least three** working rallies since the 1st January of the current year. Whilst Working Rallies can include unmounted rallies, more weight will be given to mounted rallies at which both rider and mount have been able to be observed.
- 2. Commitment of the parents/guardians/carers** – in all respects - to the Branch, to assisting with training and rallies, to volunteering help at Branch organised competitions and events. There will be an expectation that a parent/guardian/carer for the child/children in question has performed voluntary duties at **a minimum of one event per child member** during the preceding 12 months. Where the member in question is new to the branch, having joined since the 1st February of the current year, the expectation may take that fact into account.
- 3. The age and/or ability of the member** – the camp organiser will need to be satisfied that members are able to cope with the challenges presented at camp and that balanced groups can be achieved. For example, it may be appropriate to suggest a younger, less experienced member attends the minis camp rather than junior camp. When allocating members between Junior and Senior Camp, it will be considered an advantage for Senior Camp that the member has spent at least one school year at Secondary/High School.
- 4. The date the member joined the Pony Club** - giving a degree of priority, but not absolute priority, to those who have been members for the longest period of time.
- 5. The date the member joined the East Cheshire Branch** - giving a degree of priority, but not absolute priority, to those who have been branch members for the longest period of time.

None of these factors in themselves will be treated as an absolute requirement but all will be weighed into the balance.

This may sometimes mean that a member is disappointed. It is almost inevitable - but that adds to the learning curve upon which all children will travel and, hopefully, will act as a spur to future commitment and performance.

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Camp selection will be carried out by the person best qualified for the task, that is the Camp Organiser for the Branch, together with such additional support as they feel necessary and appropriate. They will try to take into account all factors but most particularly will assess overall commitment. Where there is a conflict, they may refer the matter to the District Commissioner for advice.

Any member not initially selected for camp may be placed on a waiting list for cancellations unless they opt not to do so.

Horse and Pony Selection

Those attending senior camp are expected to be able to manage their horses/ponies with the minimum of supervision and advice. Those attending junior camp will be given full support and guidance from camp helpers with regard to horse and pony care, including tacking-up, but it is expected that they will, so far as their physical limitations allow, have progressed to carrying out most tasks supervised but unaided by the end of camp.

It is expected that members will attend camp on the horse or pony that they have ridden at branch rallies, events, competitions during the weeks and months' immediately preceding camp. Occasionally an emergency or other factor arises which may make this impracticable or impossible. If such a situation arises, members should contact the camp organiser immediately, explain the difficulty and discuss the proposed options(s). If it is proposed that the member attend camp on a horse/pony which that member has not previously regularly ridden under Branch supervision, the camp organiser will need to satisfy him/herself as to the suitability of the combination to attend camp. In very exceptional circumstances, the organiser MAY agree to the member attending the first day of camp for an assessment to be carried out.

A decision as to whether or not the member is allowed to attend, or to remain at, camp on an unfamiliar mount is in the absolute discretion of the camp organiser. Safety must be our prime consideration.

Refunds

Once a member is offered a place at camp, full payment becomes due. In the event of a member not being able to take up the place, every effort will be made to fill that place from any waiting list which may be in existence. In the event of the place not being filled, there will be no refund of any monies which have to be paid by the branch to a third party.

Mini-Camp

The arrangements for mini-camp allow for a degree of flexibility and therefore this policy does not apply although the same principles will be applied where necessary and appropriate.

Geoff Bell, District Commissioner

East Cheshire Branch of the Pony Club

May 2022.