



Fernie Branch of the Pony Club

Parent's Survival Guide

Good stuff to know....

A growing number of families have joined the club over the past few years that have either never been involved in Pony Club or haven't had for many years.

Our survival guide is both a warm welcome to our club and a pulling together of key bits of information that we've learnt through our own experience and hope is useful to share.

As with joining all clubs, we understand being new it can feel like a minefield of jargon, processes and stuff which makes absolutely no sense – We're here to help de-mystify everything so you don't have to worry and can concentrate on having fun and learning !

Our club is focused on being an open, learning orientated and family club, where everyone is welcome.

We proudly have a broad church of abilities, interests, goals, backgrounds and equestrian experience - with one common interest..... developing our members' horse mastership and riding, with enjoyment of their horses, ponies and friends !



FUN

Survival kit contents



What	How it helps you survive
The wider Pony Club family	Helps you know why we exist, what the whole PC family stands for. Great info for the Pony Care Quiz !
About our Club	Introduces you to our family 😊.
Who's who	When you're trying to work out who to ask about what ! Though we're a friendly bunch and will all try to help...
Our programme	The exciting bit – all about the stuff we do !
Location, location, location	We know there is nothing more stressful than getting lost on the way to a new venue..... Helpful tips on our most used venues.
Coaches	Find out who we have helping our members develop and reach their goals and dreams ! All the words and descriptions are directly from our members 😊.
Competitions	Introduction to Pony Club competing and competitions !
What to wear	Feeling confident that you're arriving with right kit at the event.
Riding safety wear	Think this might answer itself... 😊.

What	How it helps you survive
Fernie Kit	Guide to the Fernie kit – polos, jumpers, coats, saddlecloths and even Onesies !
Badges & badge club	Won't help, will need to get your sewing kit ready....
Tests	Overview of the Pony Club Training structure.
Camp	Intro to the absolute highlight of the year for our members (and us) !
Vaccinations	An explanation on the current Pony Club vaccinations rules.
Wellbeing & safety	Help you to be confident about our policies that underpin us creating a safe & supportive environment, with the expectations for each of our roles.
Our fundraising competitions	The two major competitions we run each year where WE NEED YOU !
Final survival tips...	Last thoughts as you embark on the journey that is Pony Club !



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The wider Pony Club family

The Pony Club Vision and Values

Our vision - to provide young people with opportunities for fun, friends and I

Our Values

Togetherness

We are one Pony Club, working together

Empathy

We support every individual to develop and reach their goals.

We celebrate success and learn to lose with grace

Respect

We treat all people fairly and equally. We are role models **Learning**

We grow through learning and education

Passion

The Pony Club is an international voluntary youth organisation for young people interested in ponies and riding. Founded in England in 1929, and granted independent charitable status on 1st January 1997, there are around 345 Branches and 480 Centres in the UK alone. The Pony Club has been the starting point for a large majority of equestrian team members and medal winners.

The Pony Club is represented in no less than 27 countries with a worldwide membership exceeding 110,000 making it the largest association of young riders in the world.

The objectives of The Pony Club are:

- to encourage young people to ride and to learn to enjoy all kinds of sport connected with horses and riding.
- to give instruction in riding and horse mastership and to educate Members to look after and to take proper care of their animal.
- to promote the highest ideals of sportsmanship, citizenship and loyalty to create strength of character and self-discipline.



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About our Club

- We are a small family feel branch based between Leicester, Uppingham, Market Harborough and Lutterworth – we pride ourselves on being open and welcoming to all, whatever your experience, interests or goals.
- Our members have access to activities ranging from quizzes, stable management, achieving badges and structured tests, social events, as well as subsidised training with top coaches, competitions and the infamous summer camps !
- We have members ranging from 2 up to 24 years, with a massive spread of levels, interests and aspirations – ranging from lead rein to competing at 1.10m, from competition focused riders to those that enjoy badges and stable management. What is common is a passion for horses and ponies, and a want to learn, enjoy and develop.
- There is lots to be excited about when becoming a new member of the Fernie, with members forging friendships that last a lifetime !
- We are proud to be one of the first branches starting in 1929, yet we are embracing the desire to be modern and relevant to young riders in our area today.
- Our goal as a committee is to create an environment where our members thrive and being part of the club has a positive and lasting impact of them through their childhood, teens and into adulthood.
- This handbook captures a snapshot of information including contact details, our current programme and more can be found on the website [https://branches.pcuk.org/fernief/](https://branches.pcuk.org/fernief) and our [closed Facebook page](#) for current members, parents and coaches.

We are really lucky within our club with everyone pitching in to help, without the level of support we wouldn't be able to offer the diverse amount and quantity of training, opportunities and competitions. Our committee and a series of sub-committees take on a wide range of tasks from managing our assets to competition organising, fundraising to planning our programme of activities. A brief overview of some activities are listed below – More details are on the [contact the Fernie page](#) on our website.

Our committee are **Katy Knight, Amie Green, Sam Hilton-Jones, Stacey Buxton, Laura Hill, Sharon Whitmore, Claire Robinson, Nikki Hughes, Rachael Toone and Kate Wallett.**

Who	Role	Main responsibilities	Who	Role	Main responsibilities
Kate Wallett	District Commissioner	Oversees the running of the branch New members – trial days & new parents' evenings	Laura Hill	Lead Coach Committee Member	Oversees coaches and keeping them up to date. Works with Nicky on spread and range of training on offer. Coaches Tests & badges. Hat tagging.
Rachael Toone	Assistant DC Treasurer Residential Camp organiser	All things organising junior/ senior camp Accounting and treasury Signing off coaching hours Knows nearly everything about the branch having been on the committee since 2006 !	Nikki Hughes	Rally & Training Lead	With the Rallies and Training Sub Committee works hard to generate ideas, develop our programme, upload and manage bookings
Sharon Whitmore	H&S Officer Safeguarding	Risk assessments, first aiders, DBS checks Hat tagging Always checking for rule changes! Likes to keep on top of things !	Sam Hilton Jones	Rolleston Organiser Ponyclubresults	Leads organising our biggest event – Rolleston ODE and also is lead on using the pony club results
Claire Robinson	Branch Secretary	Keeps everyone updated Updates pony club IT for badges and tests plus makes sure were on track	Amie Green, Katy Knight & Laura Hill	Team Managers	Overseas all team events managing team selection and entries for SJ, Dressage and Eventing
			Stacey Buxton	Tet manager Day camp organiser	Tetrathlon manager and support Organises our day camp



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Our programme



What are rallies?	Rallies are all types of ridden and unmounted coaching sessions.
What type of activities are on the programme?	<p>We've got a range of activities throughout the year, from badge clubs, Horse and Pony Care, xc coaching, jump training, pole sessions to dressage mounted games rallies at different venues with different coaches. We also have different formats with some offering private, semi-private or group sessions depending on the focus and format of the rally.</p> <p>We are an inclusive branch, we aim to make every rally open to all our members. The only restrictions are where the venue won't facilitate it (e.g. a XC course starting at 80cm) or we may aim at a specific age group, e.g. The Cookie Club</p>
Booking, paying, closing dates & cancellations	We use Horse Events as our booking system. Details of what's on, how to book, pay, when closing dates are and what happens with cancellations can be read here on Calendar page - https://branches.pcuk.org/fernie/calendar/
Pricing	Our aim is to always make training as affordable as possible, and balance this with the groups being a size where everyone has a chance to learn something. We subsidise many of the rallies to really support our aim of being accessible for all ! We are lucky that some very generous parents past and present let us use their arenas for free or very discounted prices !
How are groups allocated	<p>Groups are split roughly according to ability and/ or age – though this always depends on who is booked on.</p> <p>Numbers rarely split perfectly, so don't read anything into which group your child is placed in – sometimes they may be at the top end of the group and other times at the bottom, sometimes with friends, sometimes with the opportunity to meet new friends. What we ask is to be supportive to the other members and think of the group rallies as being a supportive 'club' learning experience.</p>
Special requests	Organising is often like putting together a jigsaw puzzle with pieces from different puzzles – so ' special requests ' about timing, being with friends, etc. can sometimes be impossible to accommodate, we're pleading for the sake of our volunteer's sanity, please keep to essential minimum 🤔🤔🤔🤔.
If in doubt.....	If you're not sure what to wear, where to go, what you need or whether it is the 'right' session – just get in touch with the organiser which are listed with contact details on the Horse Events Booking system.



location, location, location



Venue	Top Tips
The Folly, Soars Lodge Farm, Foston Lane, Foston, LE8 5WP Aka Nana Kay's	The location is directly off Foston Lane, Nana Kay will put out signs on the main road (Foston Lane) opposite the farm driveway. Don't follow the postcode on satnav as it will take you down Barley Lane and you can't turn around until to you get to Peatling! What3words – 'heads.dart.back' .
Hyde Lodge, Marefield Road, Halstead, LE7 9DG Aka Alex's	Postcode is very close with google. When turning left from the Oakham Road onto Hyde Lodge/ Marefield Road – the farm is the second property on the left What3words – 'monopoly.mandolin.blazed' .
New Barn, Theddingworth Road, Mowsley, Leicestershire, LE17 6NR	Postcode take you North of the property. From Mowsley, take the Lutterworth road within 200m, the entrance is on the right and the arena can be seen from the road. The What3words – 'slices.excavated.also' .
Isaac Hall Wayside, Covert Lane, Leicester, LE7 9SP	**Access onto Covert Lane is via Station Lane ONLY** Postcode is to outside the property. What3words to gateway is - 'hurt.urgent.dated' .

Venue	Top Tips
Hollies Farm, Main Street, Church Langton, LE16 7SY	Postcode takes you just to North of property. The drive is directly off the B6047, 10m South on the opposite side of the road to the Langton Arms Pub. There is small metal gate with passcode – details for access will be shared for rallies What3words for drive – 'cocoons.tram.fittingly' .
Glebe Farm, Lutterworth, Road, Blaby, LE8 4BY Aka Rachael TB's	With Chamney's Garden Centre on left, drive is 10m further, on right. There is a 'LINPIC Direct Carousel' sign next to drive and a BIG metal gate. Better than postcode is what3words - 'fire/ripe/gained' .
JLB Stables, Mill Lane, Blaby, Leicester, LE8 4FG	Postcode takes you 200m beyond the property along Mill Lane. The venue on the right and has sign for JLB Stables. More accurately is What3words to the driveway is - 'waddle.swan.dream' .
Green Lane Equestrian, Tilton Lane, Billesdon, LE7 9FH	Don't use the postcode, What3Words is 'juggled.mistaken.zealous' The drive off Tilton Lane is 15m West of Sludge Hall Hill/ Green Lane crossroads. The drive is flagged by two stone walls and sign. At bottom of the drive, turn left and go up the drive sloped upwards, the car park is through the gates.



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Coaches



We have built a team of coaches which specialise in different sports, interests and levels. Where we can, we'll include who is coaching – we know that not every member clicks with a coach and vice versa ! We have coaches targeted to building confidence, right through the coaching at the higher levels. Here's a brief overview with **words** and **descriptions from our members** – Full details for our coaches are on the [Fernie Website](#).

	What words	Best known for		What words	Best known for
Laura Hill Head Coach	Reassuring, professional, thorough, endless patience, attention to detail, encouraging, confidence giving, lovely, kind & compassionate.	Makes dressage fun ! Dressage Tests and badges	Graham Savory	Funny, quirky humour, loud, serious, always learn something, teaches you & stands no messing	Show Jumping Master & Jump offs BS Course Designer Very technical and good balance Needing to understand his humour !
Kate Wallett	Nothing is impossible, aim high, organised, determined, thorough, interested , enthusiastic, energetic, funny, approachable & nice to be around.	Spreadsheets & House rabbit ! Getting the best out of individuals Being diplomatic, chatty ! Super kind and welcoming!	Sam York	AMAZING ! Encouraging, inspiring, fun, talented coach, supportive, technical jumping,	Giving riders confidence when jumping technical lines. Being very understanding about everyone's capabilities and very patient towards every rider.
Keeley Martin	Brilliant, assertive, inspiring, encouraging, calm, bubbly, in control, enthusiastic, very good at confidence building, thoughtful.	'The Fernie song' The little ones love her, tidiest tack room, camp diva	Amy Mc	Fun, bubbly, encouraging, helpful supportive, creative, nice & patient	Making everything positive and fun Bringing a smile to everyone's faces !
Alex Tordoff	Enthusing, talented, believes in you, thumbs up good, chatty, easy going, professional, jumping fun & Mums love him !	Eventing Getting you to jump massive ! Being really good at running ! Pushing you in a good way	Anna Meadows	Knowledgeable, technical, encouraging, funny	Large TV, good judgment, finding hidden bravery Horse and pony care training, PC Mounted Games coaching (represented England)
Bec Hewit	Fun, fun, fun, enthusiastic, energetic, really funny, excitable, loveable, loud, always happy, fab coach, and very thoughtful.	Gutsy jockey, young horses, hunting Iced Buns at camp.... & doesn't like wasps ! Won't pressure you into anything you're not comfortable with - encouraging you in every way	Justine Hare	Legend, encouraging, supportive, confidence building, positive, enthusiastic, kind, passionate, warm-hearted & patient	Confidence building sessions. Fabulous polework rallies ! Being very knowledgeable and fabulous at adapting to different riders (ability and confidence)
			Amy Burbage	Enthusiastic, active, confidence-giving, fun, chair-stealer !	Puts jumps up nice and big if capable, looks at things from different perspectives. Full on and fun lessons!



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Competing for the Branch

There are a growing number of sports in Pony Club, the most popular within our branch are Eventing, Show Jumping, Dressage and Tetrathlon – and we are just getting started with Games.

Competitions start with lead rein show jumping at 30cm, mini eventing and walk and trot dressage to competitions right up through the levels. They are great fun and a brilliant opportunity for members to have a goal or ambition to aim towards.

The main split of competitions are:

- **Inter-branch or branch run competitions** – which range from junior shows, eventer trials, ODEs to show jumping, hunter trials and tetrathlon.
- **Area league competitions** – these are inter-branch/ branch run competitions where points can be earned for that season's leagues. There are summer leagues for Eventing, and winter leagues for Triathlon, Dressage and Show-Jumping
- **Qualifying competitions** – Area and Regional competitions

We include the Pony Club competitions coming up locally via e-mail and on our [closed Facebook group](#).

As we know many of our members (and parents) may not have competed before, to encourage and support members we send (and fund) a coach at the most popular events. The coaches will walk courses, check tack, help them warm up, and give pep talks (for both parents and members 😊). We will advertise in the Facebook group if we are planning to send a coach.

In the inter-branch show jumping, you have the opportunity to be part of a team – there is always a good and supportive team spirit and a chance of coming home with a frilly even if 'it wasn't your day'. Though you can also represent the branch individually too.

For more detailed information, see our [Competing for #teamfernle](#) on the website. Or do grab Amie (Eventing), Katy (Show Jumping) or Laura (Dressage), Stacey (Tetrathlon) or Julie Collins (Games) for a chat.



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What to wear



Dressage & SJ Rallies

Cream, beige, black or navy jodhpurs/ breeches
Fernie PC Polo, Sweatshirt (No hoodies for safety)

Fernie PC coat (or dark coloured coat)

Black or brown jodhpur or long boots, if half chaps are worn they need to match the colour of the boot with no tassels or fringes

Hats must be tagged with a **PINK** hat tag

Plain hat silk— Navy, Black or Brown

A body protector is optional for dressage and show jumping

Plain saddlecloth – Fernie Navy or white embroidered or Navy, Black, Brown or Grey

Clean tack and groomed ponies



XC Rallies

As Dressage & SJ rallies, except

- Body protectors are compulsory
- Hats cannot have a fixed peak
- XC colours, silks and Pom Poms are optional, but encouraged 😊 !



SJ/ Dressage Competitions & tests

Cream or beige jodhpurs or breeches

White shirt and tie (Fernie competition stock are often worn by older members for COMPETITIONS ONLY)

Tweed jacket, blue or black jackets

Boots, hats, silks, hair, jewellery and body protector as per dressage & SJ rallies

White Competition Fernie saddlecloth or plain saddlecloth

Metal Fernie Badge worn on LEFT lapel

Riding safety wear

- Long hair needs to be tied back and in a **hairnet** (scalping risk 🤢🤢🤢).
- **No jewellery, earrings or hoodies** - risk of getting caught.
- **Hats** are checked to be at standard and **tagged** with a **PINK** tag (contact Laura or Sharon BEFORE your first rally) *'no taggy, no ridey'*.
- Body protectors must meet BETA 2018 Level 3 standard (**blue and black label**).
- From **1st Jan 2025**, members wanting to wear spurs will need to have training and pass **the spur test** or have their C+ test. This is to ensure members understand and can use spurs effectively with horse welfare in mind. Members will have a **YELLOW** hat tag to show they have achieved this.



Fernie kit

The Basics:

The best items to start with are the **Fernie Polo Shirt** and **Club jumper**.

Apollo Saddlery, near Leire do all our embroidery for the club – with items being made to order at Apollo Saddlery or **Welland Valley Feeds**, Market Harborough. Welland Valley keep our **Polos and Jumpers** stock for us to give easy access for our members – Thanks WVF Team 🙌 !

Competing & tests:

The next stage would be getting a **PC tie**, and if you wanted to really splash out a **WHITE Fernie Saddlecloth** for competing in. Older members (usually 12+) often like to compete in the **Fernie Competition Stock**

Then there are extras:

Whether it is Fernie socks, a Fernie Coat, a navy saddlecloth for rallies or skins for XC – there's a lot of choices! There is more information on our [Fernie Kit page](#) on what and where !



Badges & badge club

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There are **over 100 badges**..... covering equine, non-equine, competitions.....

- 39 [Mini achievement badges](#)
- 59 [Main achievement badges](#)
- 15 [Advanced achievement badges](#)
- 18 [Sports Badges](#)

For many of our members collecting ALL the badges has become an ambition - although there are always new ones coming out... !

Our **badge clubs** give an opportunity to come without ponies and have fun and learn with friends..... with members split into age groups – we have members from 4yrs to 20yrs+ coming along. **Badges** are also covered at **both camps**.

AND with 21 Achievement **Badges** they gain the **Gold** achievement **badge** and certificate, and 14 mini **badges** for the mini **gold badge** and certificate !

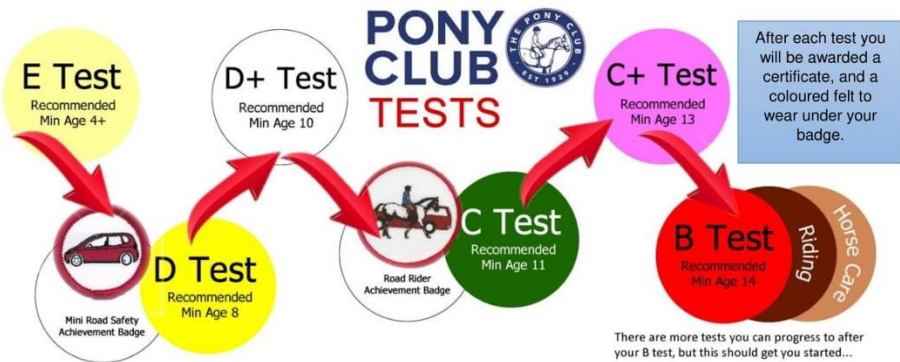
At the **badge clubs**, just come **wearing** your Fernie Polo/ Jumper, jods or jeans and footwear suitable around horses.

You can also buy records of **achievement booklets** – available to buy at Badge Club from Laura.





Tests



- The **Pony Club Training structure** encourages members to take tests which enables them to learn progressively about horse and pony care and riding.
- The tests are taken at recommended ages and are designed with certain objectives in mind.
- Starting with the 'E test' at 4yrs and go up to the prestigious 'A test'.
- E is taken at camp, then Road Rider badges and D test and above we organise standalone programmes and tests which are subsidised by the club.
- To show what level they have achieved they get a 'coloured felt' that goes under their metal PC lapel badge, a sew on badge & certificate.
- For more details - [detailed syllabi and descriptions](#) .
- And number of the tests allow [direct entry into BHS exams](#).
- Still not sure where to get started – get in touch with Laura.



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Camp

Pony Club just wouldn't be Pony Club without our summer camps !

They are a unique experience where members from 2 to 22 years come together for learning and fun.

Junior / Senior Residential camp - 4-day

- Designed for members who can independently manage their pony, jump small courses SJ & XC, and are confident to stay at a residential camp and are usually 10yrs +
- Everyone are in groups for the week with others of a similar age and/or ability
- Through the week they have coaching on flatwork, SJ and XC. With the chance to take tests and badges
- There is entertainment and demos too !
- Members sleep in our infamous Bell Tents !

Mini / Junior Day camp – 3-day day camp

- Designed for members up to around 10 yrs, and those that the fun of this camp would suit them better 😊
- High fun focus – Games, SJ, XC, fun activities and learning built in

The emphasis is on fun and friendship and making friends and memories that will last a lifetime 😊.

Applications and details for camp usually come out in October.





Vaccinations

Vaccinations protect both yours and others' horses and ponies from Tetanus and Equine Influenza. There are slightly different rules:

- For all Pony Club competitions (and camps)
- Regional and Area competitions, Spring Festival Finals
- Events being run under other bodies rules

If you have any questions about which rules apply after reading the [Vaccination Rules 2024](#), just shout 📣 !





Wellbeing & safety

As well as being warm, open and welcoming – we are very serious about have a safe environment for our members, parents, coaches and volunteers.

The Pony Club has a number of policies designed to help all our members be safe and promote their wellbeing. So, grab a cuppa ☕ and have a read 📖 :

[Social media](#)

[Bullying and Harrassment Policy](#)

[Recognising and Reporting Child Abuse or Bullying](#)

[Action in Cases of Bullying](#)

[Whistle-Blowing Policy](#)

[Member code of conduct](#)

[Parent & guardian code of conduct](#)

[Official & volunteer code of conduct](#)

Sharon Whitmore is our Well-being, Health & Safety, and Safeguarding Lead, any questions just get in touch.

Our fundraising competitions

As well as other ad hoc events, we have two major competitions we run each year:

- Rolleston Hall One Day Event in the summer
- The Winter League Table Series in Show Jumping and Dressage – with 10 competitions over 5 months

The purpose of the events are twofold – they give our and other branch members the chance to compete and with Rolleston raise valuable club funds. The funds from Rolleston enable us to pay for coaches at competitions, subsidise test training and other events so we don't need to add a Branch Fee to subscriptions 🙏🏻.

For all fundraising especially these events WE NEED YOU, the ODE takes between 100-200 volunteers to run before and on the day, the Aug BH competition a smaller but vital team – we will match your skills to jobs, and it can be very satisfying !

Volunteering is a pre-requisite for applying for camp 🙏🏻

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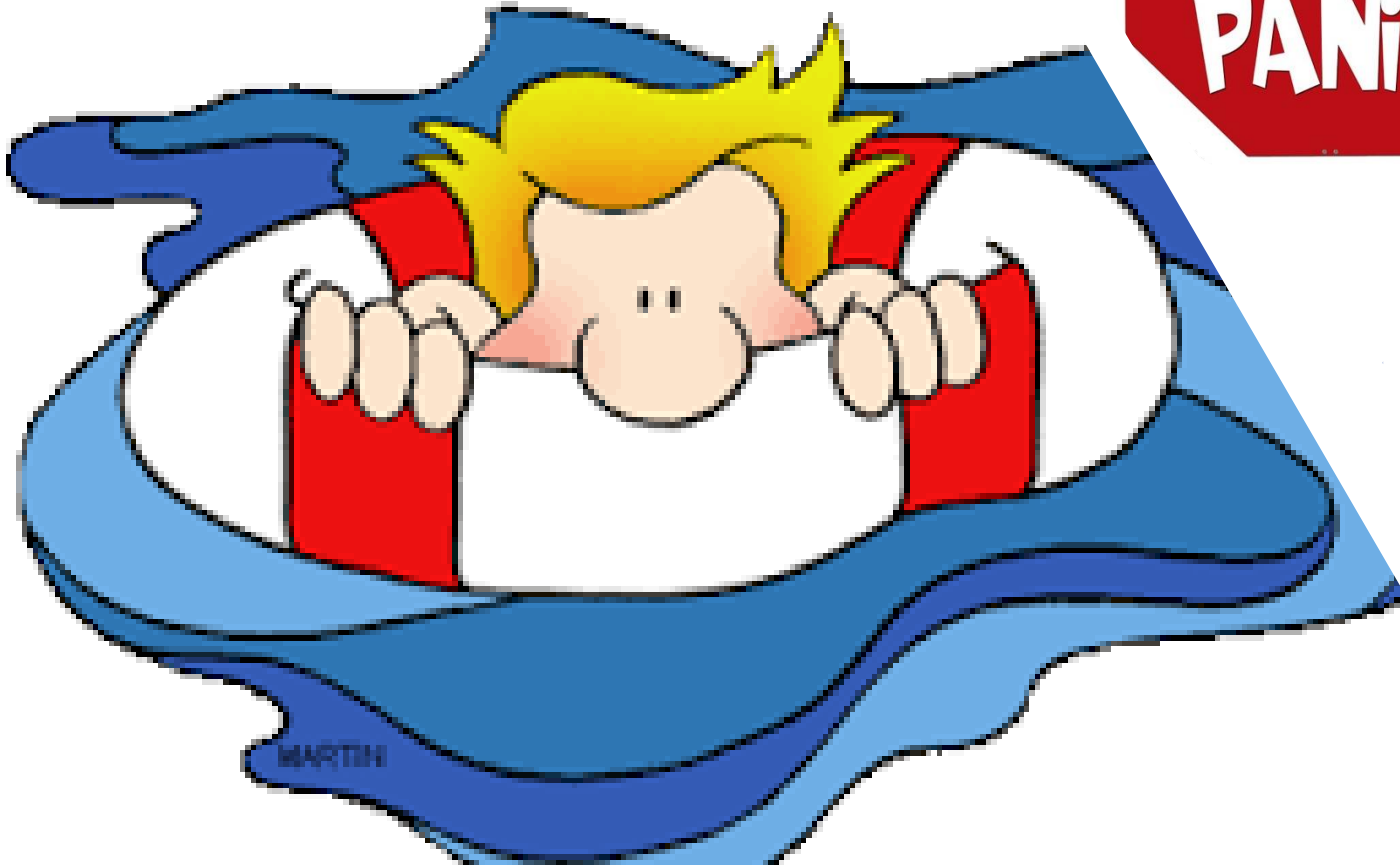


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Final survival tips.....

- If in doubt, ask – we will ALWAYS aim to support you and most importantly your child 😊 !
- If you don't know why we've done something, talk to us..... we spend an insane amount of time thinking before we do things... 😨
- Finally, have fun & don't sweat the small stuff, if you turn up at an event with the PC equivalent of white socks & sandals, or forget your girth...then you're normal and we'll do our best help 😊 .