

# Fermanagh Harriers Branch

# PONY CLUB



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Dear Parent

The purpose of this letter is to advise you of the arrangements for Camp, which have now been finalised. We're really looking forward to it, and we hope that all our members and parents enjoy camp from start to finish!

Please discuss the relevant parts of this letter with your child.

## Dates and Timings

Camp will commence on Wednesday 2nd July and conclude on Saturday 5th July. Members and their ponies can arrive from 8:15am on Wednesday morning. Ponies can stay for the duration of camp. Members will go home from camp each evening, with an option for members who will be in secondary school from September 2025 to stay overnight on Friday night, and to stay for 'twilight camp' on Thursday night – see further details below. Please ensure that you personally sign your child into camp each morning, by signing the register at the stable block. Please also follow the same procedure when signing your child out each evening. It is vitally important that this procedure is followed, so that an accurate record of members currently in camp is maintained.

## Camp Programme

The following is the outline programme for camp. Adjustments may be made each day due to weather or other unforeseen circumstances.

From 8:15am	Campers arrive Muckout
8:30	Feed Prepare ponies for inspection
8:45	Breakfast
9:45	Inspection (see notes below)
10:00	RIDE
11:20	Stable Management Lesson
12:30 pm	Feed Yard duties
12:45	Lunch
1:45	Stable Management Lesson
2:45	RIDE
4:00	Tack Cleaning and Arena picking

### Timetable notes –

The Gold Ride Group (the youngest campers) may be riding at a different timeslot to the other groups – this will be confirmed on the first morning.

Arrangements will be made for ponies to be checked and hayed at 8pm each evening.

The timetable on the final day of camp changes to allow for tests and a mini show.

4:40	Feed Evening Stables
4:45	Campers leave camp # see further detail below re: optional evening activities on Wed & Thurs evenings.

See note overleaf about evening Games and Pizza night on Wed evening and BBQ on Thurs evening

### **Camp Briefing**

On the first morning of camp, there will be a briefing for all members and parents in the tackroom, at around 9am (to coincide with breakfast/snack time). All members and parents must attend this short briefing.

### **Stabling**

For the convenience of parents, arrangements have been made for ponies to stay for the duration of camp. Bedding and hard feed will be provided. (If your pony has a specialized diet/feed, please ensure that you bring this to camp, and leave it in the feed room with the other hard feed and not in the tack room etc.) Please bring sufficient haylage/hay for your child's pony for the duration of camp. Members are expected to muck out their pony each day. Junior members can be helped with this task. It is the responsibility of each parent to ensure that the stable is left clean at the end of camp.

### **What to Bring**

Please ensure that your child's belongings are labelled clearly with their name. Items to bring include:-

- Water bucket
- Feed bucket
- Haynet (if required)
- Saddle
- Bridle
- Grooming Kit
- Tack cleaning items
- Hat (correctly tagged – anyone who needs to have their hat tagged will have this done at camp)
- Whip (if required)
- Gloves
- Back Protector (note – a back protector is not compulsory except for cross country riding).
- Riding wear (as listed above – jodhpurs, shirt, tie, jacket, sweatshirt, boots)
- Waterproof Jacket
- Change of clothes is useful in case we get wet
- Casual clothes for evening activities if members wish
- Mucking out equipment – barrow, shavings fork, pooper scooper or whatever you use at home.
- For those staying overnight – blow up mattress, sleeping bag, nightwear, and wash items.

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO NAME ALL OF THE ITEMS THAT YOU ARE BRINGING TO CAMP**

### **Pocket money/valuables**

Please do not send your child to camp with items of value. The Branch is not liable for any personal loss or any damage incurred.

## **Instruction**

Members are divided into groups called Rides at camp, and there is an instructor assigned to each Ride. The instructor will provide tuition in riding and stable management to their Ride during camp (2 riding lessons and 2 stable management lessons each day). The rides have been chosen in advance of camp, taking into consideration a wide range of factors. Although instructors may make minor changes after the first ride (at lunchtime on the Wednesday), ordinarily there are no changes to the rides. It is unacceptable to pressure instructors or camp organisers to make changes to rides, or to criticise ride groupings or riders in rides – this is a breach of the code of conduct.

The Pony Club is a training organisation, and its structure encourages members to take tests which enable 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 to help members become practical and knowledgeable riders, proficient in caring for horses and ponies. The Efficiency Tests begin at E, and progress up to A Test. All training provided in the Branch, including the training provided at Camp is in keeping with the Pony Club training structure, and will prepare members for taking Efficiency Tests, if they wish to do so. The E and D tests are usually run during camp, and more advanced tests are run separately.

In addition to these tests, the Pony Club has developed a series of badges, which are presented to acknowledge members' knowledge and skills in certain equine topics. During camp, members will also have the opportunity to work towards achieving one or more badges. The instructor for each group will discuss and agree with me the badges being worked towards, and which children are ready to be put forward for assessment. Assessment for Badges usually takes place during camp.

## **Inspection**

Inspection will be carried out each morning before the first ride. The instructor will check the cleanliness of the pony, tack and rider and award marks. This is a traditional part of camp. For riding, all members should preferably wear light coloured jodhpurs, boots, hat (correctly tagged), shirt and Pony Club tie, Pony Club Sweatshirt (or dark coloured sweatshirt), and Pony Club badge. For inspection (and to get some extra marks 😊) most members wear a riding jacket for inspection and then change to a sweatshirt. Branch kit can be ordered via the links on the Kit tab of the Members' Only section of our website – [click here](#).

Please do not plait manes before arriving at camp. Members will be taught how to plait at camp and the senior rides will be expected to plait 3 plaits in their pony's mane for inspection each morning.

## **Patrols & Duties**

Members will be divided into 4 Patrols. Each patrol includes both younger and older members. Patrols must work together to do duties during camp, such as sweeping yards, wiping tables after lunch etc. These arrangements will be explained to members on the first day of camp.

## **Parents and helpers**

Camp is run by parents of members and volunteers, and the support of all parents is essential during camp – please consider what you can do to help, and sign up via [this link](#). A parent or another adult must be available to help with campers of primary school age with mucking out and

tacking up etc at camp. All parents are welcome at any time to observe the lessons and be part of what's going on. (Please do not interrupt any lessons during camp).

### **Catering**

Keeping our campers and parents fueled up is important! Orange squash will be available all day for campers. Coffee and tea will be available all day from the dining area for parents/helpers. [Please see note below regarding disposables]. Snacks will be provided in both morning and afternoon. Lunch each day will be provided, for example sausage rolls, chicken wraps, hotdogs, baked potatoes etc plus yogurt, fruit, crisps and a chocolate bar/ treat. Roisin is overseeing the catering arrangements, with support from Ruth and other parents (thank you), but we require parents to participate on a rota of helpers to assist with the preparation and serving of food, including both lunch and snacks. Please [click here](#) to 'sign-up' to help out. Also – please don't forget what you have volunteered to do – there are a lot of kids depending on getting fed! So please turn up on time for your duty and give your support to the catering sub-committee. (We suggest that parents of younger children sign-up to help out with lunches instead of morning snack/breakfast, as younger children are likely to need more parental support with mucking out etc in the morning whereas in the run up to lunchtime, younger children are unmounted, and taking part in stable management with their instructor, therefore these parents are more likely to be available.)

We also welcome some traybakes/goodies/treats/cakes/buns/crisps, which always go down well, and we ask that each family provides a donation to the kitchen please. Again – please note on the 'sign-up' what you will be dropping off at the kitchen – [click here](#). If your child has any special dietary requirements, please ensure that these are listed on the welfare section of the camp [booking form](#) online.

### **Breakfast**

Some kids don't want to eat before coming to camp in the morning. With this in mind, the catering sub-committee has arranged for the morning snack to be served just after ponies have been fed, and a bit more 'breakfast like'. It's therefore up to campers if they want to eat breakfast at home and just 'top-up' at camp, or enjoy breakfast at camp. The breakfast menu includes mini bacon rolls, breakfast muffins, pancakes and scones over the 4 days, served shortly before 9am.

### **Water Bottles and Coffee Mugs**

In an effort to be more environmentally friendly, we're trying to reduce the number of disposables we use at camp. Therefore, can each member bring their own water bottle please, marked with their name. We will provide juice and water at the tackroom area and in the kitchen for topping up during the day. If adults can bring their own mug for tea & coffee, that would be helpful too.

### **Honesty Box**

We're aware that some parents may be around at mealtimes, and it's easier to get your lunch and snacks at camp. Meals will be provided for campers. Parents are welcome to eat after the children have been fed, and help themselves to tea, coffee etc, but please acknowledge this by contributing to the Honesty Box. As mentioned above, please try and remember to bring your own coffee mug too.

## Evening Activities

Previously, campers normally left camp around 4:45 / 5pm each evening, and this is still an option for everyone. However, in order to give kids the feel of a more extended day at camp, we have arranged some evening activities for the Thursday evening, to include a pizza night. Everyone is invited (parents, siblings etc), so that everyone can be fed and watered by the time you get home.

On the last evening of camp (Friday), we traditionally have a barbeque. Again, this is open to everyone to attend, and is a great social evening for all the family. We encourage all families to come along. If you have any camping chairs, please bring along, so you can enjoy the BBQ in comfort.

To cover the cost of the pizza and the BBQ, there will be a fee of £5/head up to a max of £20/family for each evening. Please book in on the [bookings page](#) by Wed 25<sup>th</sup> June so that we know how many are coming, and we can order enough food 😊

Although I'm sure the kids could stay up all night, we parents need our sleep, so we plan that both the Thursday and Friday evenings will draw to a close by around 7.30pm, although, please read on to see details of options for Twilight Camp on Thursday evening, and overnight camp on Friday evening.

## Twilight Camp

Last year, we offered the opportunity for our older members to take part in 'Twilight Camp'. This meant that these members could stay later at camp and experience a more extended day. This year, we will be offering Twilight Camp on Thursday evening after the Pizza Night. Members who are will be in secondary school from September 2025 are welcome to stay for Twilight Camp until 10:30pm and take part in a Night Line/Treasure Trail activity followed by hot chocolate.

## Overnight Arrangements

This year – due to popular demand, we hope to offer members the chance to stay overnight on the last night of camp if they wish. However, this will be dependent on sufficient parents offering to supervise. We need a minimum of **3 parents supervising**, who have gone through the appropriate criminal record checks and safeguarding training. At least 1 parent must have the relevant first aid certificate also. If you can stay overnight on one of the nights, please let us know asap via [the sign up](#), so that we can get the criminal record checks done in time (if not already completed). If there are insufficient volunteers for overnight supervision, unfortunately kids will be unable to stay.

Eligible members for staying overnight are those who are in secondary school from September 2025. For those staying overnight, mobile phones **MUST** be sent home with parents (or other adults) when the evening activities are over. There are no exceptions to this rule.

For those who are staying overnight, please put your name on the list on the noticeboard by Thursday lunchtime if you wish to stay overnight on Friday night. You will need an air mattress/camp bed and a sleeping bag, plus pyjamas, wash items etc. Please also bring your cereal in a Tupperware box. We will provide milk, tea/coffee for breakfast, plus the usual campers breakfast.

## Mini Campers

For our mini campers (those who are 7 and under), separate arrangements are being made for mini camp. We will contact you directly to confirm this, but it's likely that this will take the form of shorter camp days on Thursday and Friday, and then joining in for the full final day.

## Summary of Camp Timings, Twilight Camp and Overnight Options

Camp timings, evening activities, twilight camp and overnight options are summarized below:-

	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Day Camp Ends	5/5:30pm	5/5:30pm	5/5:30pm	4/:30pm
Evening Activity Option – everyone welcome	NONE	Games Night Pizza Night Everyone welcome Draws to a close by 7:30pm	BBQ Everyone welcome Draws to a close by 7:30pm	
Twilight Camp Option *		Night Line/Treasure Trail Activity Draws to a close by 10:30pm	Popcorn PJs and Movie Night	
Overnight Option *		NONE	Overnight	

\*Twilight and Overnight option only for members who are in secondary school from Sept 2025.

## Test Day and Prizegiving

The Final Camp Competition and Test Day will be on Saturday. The mini show will start around 1:30pm, followed by camp tidy up and finally prizegiving at approx 3/4pm. These timings will be confirmed on the Friday of camp. Everyone is invited to come along.

If you have a cup that you won last year at camp, please remember to return it to Ruth on or before the first day of camp, nicely polished and ready to be presented to the next recipient.

## Camp Clear Up

On the last day of camp, all ponies must be loaded, stables cleaned out, passages swept, and kitchen cleaned before prizegiving.

## Codes of Conduct

The Pony Club has a Code of Conduct for both members and parents, which each Branch must adopt. I am attaching the Parents' and Members' Codes of Conduct. Please read, print and sign the Parents' Code of Conduct. Please read and discuss the contents of the Members' Code of Conduct with your child(ren), then please print off the signatory pages and upload the responses – [link here](#). Members will be unable to attend camp if the Code of Conduct has not been signed and uploaded by Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> June.

## Payment

The cost of camp this year is £180. This includes stabling for ponies, bedding, hard feed, instruction, lunches and snacks for 4 days, and prizes. There are 2 payment options. Payment can either be made in full, or an initial payment can be made, and a payment plan can be arranged for the balance to be paid over a 4 month period, at times that suit parents. In order for us to finalise numbers, please book via the [Bookings Page](#) and choose one of the payment options by Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> June. As outlined above, there is an additional cost for the games & pizza night on Wednesday evening, and the BBQ on the Thursday evening.

### **Camp Info on the Website**

If you need to refer back to anything about camp, we've posted all of the information on the Camp tab of the Members' Only pages of our website – [click here](#).

### **Welfare**

Camp is for your child to have a fun few days with their pony so that they can improve their riding and learn more about good stable management. Please ask your child to tell either myself or one of the instructors immediately if they are unwell or unhappy. As part of the [booking arrangements](#) you must complete the [welfare questionnaire](#) about your child so that we have appropriate and relevant information to hand at camp. Please complete this by the deadline of 22<sup>nd</sup> June.

If you have any concerns about any aspect of camp, please raise it with me in the first instance.

I hope that your child has an enjoyable camp. Camp is hard work, not only for the members, but also for the volunteers that make camp happen. Please work with us to ensure that everyone gets the most out of camp in a positive environment.

Please contact me if you have any queries or concerns.

Kind regards



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**Frances Rolston Bruce**  
**District Commissioner**

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