

Sheans Horse Farm – Leading a horse

We will be asking you to help look after and lead your child while riding with us.

You must understand that:

- Any horse that we are asking you to lead is a very experienced horse.
- Horse riding is a risk sport. Riding or working with horses at any standard has inherent risk and all horses may react unpredictably on occasions e.g. biting, kicking, spooking
- Any instructions we give you are for your own safety and you must follow all instructions given by staff and instructors at our centre. These must be followed at all times, NO DISTRACTIONS must divert you from your role
- Children are at particular risk around horses and you must keep any children that you are responsible for, under close supervision when at our centre.

Here are some simple points to help ensure you and your rider are safe:

1. When leading a horse, make sure that you lead it from the left side meaning that the horse is on your right-hand side.
2. Grasp the reins under the horse's chin with your right hand.
3. DO NOT wrap the reins around your hand thinking you'll have a better grip. You must be able to let the reins go quickly if something dangerous happens.
4. To make the horse move forward, gently tug the reins forward but remember to release pressure as soon as the animal moves forward.
5. By default, you must maintain your grip on the horse's reins at all times. In many cases your instructor will direct you to let the child ride without your grip on their reins. In this case you may release the reins and MUST stay on the horse's shoulder level when walking, don't let the horse run in front or behind you. Your hand must be close enough to the reins to grasp them if the horse spooks, begins to move in the wrong direction, or if your instructor or guide asks you to do so for any reason.
6. To stop your horse, you should stop walking and say, "whoa". A little backward tug on the reins is another way of cueing the animal to stop.
7. Keep a 2 metre distance between you and the horse in front
8. Be careful that the horse does not stand on your foot
9. If the horse tries to reach down to eat some grass, gently pull the horse's head back to the direction that the trek is going.
10. Don't forget that you have a rider on board and to continually check on their wellbeing throughout the ride. Ensuring rider safety is paramount. DO NOT wander off to take photos, speak to others or for any other reason. You MUST be constantly vigilant for danger and to be in a position to grasp the reins and protect your rider

Remember:

1. Keep 2 metres between you and the horse/pony in front
2. The horse/pony can bite. Most likely to happen when the girth is being tightened
3. Watch out for horse/pony standing on your foot
4. Watch out for the horse/pony pulling the reins out of your hands