



Discovery boosts the **confidence, emotional well-being and life chances** of disadvantaged and vulnerable young people and adults through an innovative learning programme that brings them together with gentle rescued horses. This learning programme has seen results when nothing else has worked for the individual or group.

Every year Discovery works with over 200 children, young people and adults who are at risk of exclusion or who are **experiencing life challenges** due to their **social, emotional, mental health and learning needs**.

We are a registered part-time alternative learning provider and through a variety of carefully designed activities with horses and nature can support young people to realise what they can achieve in the right environment. The horses, which have been specially chosen for their calm nature, also bring about calmness in the young people, helping them to concentrate, communicate effectively and engage in their learning, all of which have a positive impact back in the classroom and at home.

Discovery provides a **safe, supervised, hands-on, learner-centred curriculum of activities**. All learning is carefully structured and begins with 'doing'. Each successive week builds on the skills learned in the previous week, at a pace suited to the individual learner. This allows for reflection on and development of skills over a period of time.

Discovery boosts confidence and self-esteem, supporting young people to discover skills they did not know they had and to see themselves as learners again, thereby improving life chances. Discovery is set up so that young people will achieve. Many young people who come to Discovery struggle in traditional learning environments and have 'switched off', believing themselves not to be 'good learners'. Discovery is a safe, non-judgmental space in which young people partner with horses who, by definition have no agendas or preconceptions. All learning is adapted to each student and the experiential nature of the learning provides alternatives to the 'pen and paper' learning many of them have come to fear. From the start, learners gain a sense of achievement and they rise to the challenge of taking responsibility for themselves and the ponies. For many, this is the first time they have engaged in and enjoyed learning for a long time. This has an incredible impact and raises their expectations of themselves.

At Discovery **learners develop skills that are transferrable to many areas of their lives** such as those of collaboration, concentration and leadership along with the ability to build positive relationships (with the horses, with each other and with staff members). Qualities such as confidence, reflection, empathy and calmness are also developed through working with horses. Discovery is based on a working farm that is home to the rescue charity, HorseWorld. This means that although **Discovery is a small and nurturing learning environment**, it is also a good introduction to the workplace and provides a chance to develop practical employability skills. The equine care skills that learners develop during the Animal Care Short Courses provide them with a sound basis for continuing learning in this field, should they wish to.

At Discovery we work closely with schools, social care, the local hospital education services and specialist provision units. We are on both the two Bristol City and South Gloucestershire Councils' Alternative Provision registers and work with many other local authorities and anyone can refer to the Discovery programme.

Do you know anyone who is experiencing daily life challenges of coping with?

- ❖ Autism/communication difficulties
- ❖ Learning difficulties
- ❖ Emotional trauma/distress
- ❖ Physical health problems
- ❖ A 'pushed-out' learner who is disengaged
- ❖ Low confidence and or self-esteem

Discovery could work for them. If you would like more information or want to discuss your learners' needs please don't hesitate to get in touch. Visit our website for more information, email [sharon.howell@horseworld.org.uk](mailto:sharon.howell@horseworld.org.uk) or call the number below.

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