



Hope Meadows



Equine Assisted
Alternative Provision
2026/27



We offer a place where young people can settle, feel safe and engage with equine assisted learning at their own pace.

Hope Meadows

Our Vision

Hope Meadows' Equine Assisted Alternative Provision offers a genuinely different way back into education for children and young people who are struggling to access school full time. Set on our therapeutic yard in Lincoln, young people work alongside our horses and our team to rebuild confidence, wellbeing and a positive relationship with learning. For many of the young people we work with, this is the first time in a long while that education has felt safe.

We support children and young people with social, emotional, or mental health difficulties who aren't currently accessing full time education and are interested in equine-based learning. This includes young people who are out of school short term, long term, or are home educated.

Helping young people find their place in the herd.

The young people that come to us have often had very difficult learning experiences. Hope Meadows' AP is highly focused on students' wellbeing as part of their journey to re-engaging with education. Sessions are designed using therapeutic principles, such as psychological safety, attachment theory, and trauma-informed practice.

Our AP team facilitate sessions with the following principles in mind:

- Offering **equine assisted education** that genuinely suits the young person
- A **relational approach**, facilitating empathetic horse-human and human-human relationships
- Promoting **nature connectedness**

For more information please visit:
www.hopemeadows.co.uk/alternativeprovision

Get in touch: enquiries@hopemeadows.co.uk

Our Offer

Equine Assisted Alternative Provision



We work with young people referred by schools, local authorities, families and other professionals who recognise that a mainstream setting, or even a mainstream AP, isn't currently meeting that young person's needs.

This typically includes young people who are:

- **Struggling to attend** - Anxiety-based non-attendance, school-based distress, or part-time and reduced timetables that haven't resolved the anxiety.
- **At risk of exclusion** - Young people whose presenting behaviour in a mainstream setting is a symptom of unmet SEMH need rather than a discipline issue.
- **Carrying difficult experiences** - Adverse childhood experiences, attachment difficulties, or loss, where trust in adults and institutions has been damaged.
- **Overwhelmed by the classroom** - Sensory sensitivity, dysregulation, or a nervous system that stays in fight, flight or shut-down for most of the school day.
- **Disengaged from learning** - Young people who have come to see themselves as "not a school person" and need a different route back in. Those who need consistent, individual relational support.

What we offer:

- 1 to 2 days per week
- Short (1 term) to long term placements
- Staff who have extensive knowledge of working with young people with SEND
- Additional Equine Assisted Psychotherapy on request
- A bespoke equine assisted curriculum tailored to the EHCP and goals of the learner
- Regular communication with parents, schools and Case Workers
- An opportunity to gain industry recognised qualifications & prepare for life post-16

We work closely with the referring body to ensure that we are working collaboratively to create the best educational provision for our young people.

Our Approach

More Than Just Education



Trauma-informed Education

Difficult or distressing experiences can affect a child's learning, behaviour, and relationships. We respond to this by creating safe, predictable, and supportive learning environments.

By having a team trained in therapeutic approaches as well as education, we help every child feel confident, understood, and at ease. From this secure foundation, we offer three areas of learning:

Equine Learning

- Practical stable management skills
- Taking responsibility for looking after horses
- Gaining knowledge and understanding theory

Wellbeing Learning

- Learning about thoughts, feelings, behaviours, and mental health
- Self-awareness and identity work
- Understanding how to stay well and cope with challenges

Project Learning (optional)

- Projects and learning that open up further education pathways

Qualifications

If it's right for them, learners can achieve a range of certificates and awards in their time with us.

Each of our learning areas comes with its own booklet, certificate or award, which vary in complexity and allow us to be flexible to each learner's unique needs.

Equine Learning

- ABRS+ Basic Stable Management Rosettes
- ABRS+ Advanced Rosettes
- UKRS Level 2 Principles of Equine Yard Work

Wellbeing Learning

- Booklet 1 - Noticing My Thoughts and Feelings
- Booklet 2 - Understanding Myself
- Booklet 3 - Keeping Myself Well

Project Learning (optional)

- Functional skills Level 1 & 2 English and/or Maths
- CFI Integrative Award (project of learner's choosing)

Our Sessions

Learning Alongside Our Herd



Why Horses?

The equine assisted approach offers a completely different perspective, which creates space for things to really shift.

Most of the young people we work with have become stuck in some way. They might be stuck in patterns, their stress response, or in how they think about themselves.

Horses can help us get past this stuck feeling. They respond to our physical presence and how we feel in the moment by noticing our breathing, our stress, and our intention.

That responsiveness lets young people try out a new way of being, with real feedback from the horses.

Caring for the herd also gives a real sense of purpose and meaning, as well as an opportunity to learn new skills in a practical way.

For young people who have been finding education really difficult, they often find their happy place amongst the horses.

Outline of an AP Day

- Arrive at 10am
- Ground together before greeting the herd.
- Activity sessions with the herd
- Lunch
- Activity sessions
- Depart at 2pm

Activities may include:

- Working towards awards
- Rewards-based activities with the ponies
- Developing forage opportunities for the herd
- 1:1 or small group Functional Skills learning
- Habitat development
- Practical gardening skills and vegetable growing

Whether we're working with the horses, or thinking about our own wellbeing, the team and learners use the framework *Notice, Understand & Apply*.

We notice what's happening, we work to understand it, and then we apply our knowledge to make changes.

Our Outcomes

The Difference It Makes



We have put together this anonymised account of a young person who attended our AP for a year. Thank you to the young person and her parents for allowing us to share it.

Helen was referred to Hope Meadows following exclusion from mainstream secondary school and significant difficulty settling into another provision. She presented with emotional dysregulation and underlying trauma, which frequently overwhelmed her ability to engage with education or relationships.

Helen attended Hope Meadows' Alternative Provision for a year, alongside weekly Equine Assisted Psychotherapy sessions. This combined therapeutic and educational model gave Helen the consistency and safety she needed to begin to make sense of her own responses and behaviour.

Through her psychotherapy sessions, Helen learned about her responses and began to recognise these patterns in herself, giving her language and understanding for feelings that had previously felt frightening and out of control. Working alongside the horses, she built genuine, trusting bonds and developed a deep knowledge of equine care, taking pride in the responsibility and routine this gave her.

Over the year, Helen's ability to regulate her emotions grew steadily. She progressed from a young person who found any challenge overwhelming to one who could sit with difficulty, ask for help, and keep going.

She began engaging voluntarily with English and Maths, and became able to cope with finding something hard, rather than needing to avoid or fight it. Helen also achieved several ABRs (Association of British Riding Schools) rosettes, marking tangible progress and giving her a real sense of achievement.

Helen's journey illustrates the power of combining psychotherapeutic support with a relational, equine assisted educational environment. By first feeling safe and understood, she became able to learn, trust, and grow.

Helen's Parent Said...

“Thank you for all your hard work this past year, I can not tell how much your AP has improved our lives, my child's outcome and going forward the best thing that's ever happened to her. The space you create for these growing minds amazes me, the support and effort that goes into it is incredible. Thank you so much for your incredible hard work and dedication we appreciate it.”

Our Hope Meadows *Learning Team*

Our team have a wealth of experience both in and out of the classroom; from mainstream schools to specialist provisions, and even supporting learners on farms.



Beth

*Alternative Provision
Lead & Designated
Safeguarding Lead*

Beth is an experienced qualified teacher with a passion for making learning accessible, achievable and meaningful. In addition, Beth is a qualified counsellor and coach, bringing a therapeutic lens to all that she does.

After a long career in mainstream education, Beth now leads the Hope Meadows Alternative Provision team - ensuring that sessions are developed to best support learners needs and help learners reconnect with themselves.



Georgie

*Alternative Provision
Facilitator & IQA*

Georgie loves supporting young people in her natural habitat - the outdoors. She has previously worked with learners in a variety of practical rural settings and brings this wealth of knowledge to Hope Meadows.

At Hope Meadows, Georgie leads the Equine Learning pathway, helping learners better understand the horses and themselves.

Georgie is also the quality assessor for all Hope Meadows' qualifications.



Clare

*Alternative Provision
Teacher*

Clare is an experienced, qualified teacher who has worked extensively within specialist education. As a long-term volunteer for the equestrian Special Olympics and trained in Therapeutic Riding, Clare has a wealth of knowledge in supporting learners with additional needs alongside horses.

At Hope Meadows, Clare leads the Project Learning Pathway, supporting learners to develop their practical Maths and English.



**Psychology
Support**

Where needed, we are able to work with Hope Meadows' therapy team. Our highly qualified therapists, led by chartered Counselling Psychologist Dr Emily Walters, support our learner's mental health and wellbeing through 1:1 equine assisted psychotherapy sessions and group work.

Joint Working

What You Can Expect

We know that lasting change happens when everyone around a young person is working together.

Before a young person joins us, we take the time to understand their story, speaking with parents, carers and school staff to build a picture of their needs and what we're hoping to achieve together.

Once they're with us, we work hard to keep everyone in the loop. We complete brief progress reports three times a year, making sure families and schools always have a current, honest picture of how things are going, but without breaking confidentiality for the young person.

We attend EHCP reviews and stay in regular contact with teachers, SENCOs and local authority case workers, making sure our work fits around what's already happening in a young person's life rather than sitting apart from it.

Parents and carers are never left on the outside. We see them as partners in the process, and we're always happy to talk things through, whether that's a quick catch-up or a longer conversation about how things are progressing.



Costs

Our standard cost is £215 per day, which includes access to all qualifications.

Placements are usually funded by the young person's school or Local Authority.

There are a limited number of places available for booking by the hour at £50/hr. These are reserved for families who are self-funding the placement (for example, home-educated children).

Additional Equine Assisted Psychotherapy sessions are available upon request, priced at £70.

Working With Us *Referral Process*



Schools

We know how busy school professionals are, so we work incredibly hard to make the referral process as simple as possible for you.

Step 1 - submit a referral form and one of us will come back to you as soon as we are able, usually within 48 hours.

Step 2 - once Beth has reviewed the enquiry she'll be in touch, usually by phone, to speak about your young person and your expectations of the placement. We will always be honest if we do not feel that we can meet their need.

Step 3 - we arrange a visit. We know you need to do your Due Diligence, so we arrange a visit to both meet the school team and if appropriate the young person.

Step 3 - we work together to complete our Schools Agreement before the placement begins.

Families with young people out of education

Finding a provision that suits your child can be challenging, so we want to make it as straight forward as possible.

Step 1 - complete our enquiry form with as much detail as possible. We will review and set up a visit at a mutually agreeable time.

Step 2 - your visit will usually be led by Beth, our AP lead, or Emily, our CEO. We'll speak at length about your young person and the placement that we would be able to offer. We will always be honest if we do not feel that we can meet their need.

Step 3 - we complete our Agreement form and set up a start date.

Please note, if your young person is registered at a school we must work alongside the school to secure them a place. in order to meet Safeguarding requirements.

We are more than happy to liaise with schools directly.