



# Care Farming

at Middle England Farm

# Prospectus



**Alternative Provision in Warwickshire**

# Care Farming at Middle England Farm



## What is care farming and who is it for?

Care farming is the therapeutic use of farming practices to provide health, social or educational support through supervised programmes of farming-related activities. Care farms provide services for a wide range of people including those experiencing depression, special educational needs, such as autism and ADHD, through to disaffected young people and those

suffering with anxiety, stress, PDA and those who are being home schooled for various reasons.

## About us

We deliver care farming services at our 64 acre farm near Henley in Arden. We are farmers who enjoy 'sharing' our animals with everyone who would benefit from spending time with them. We are also level three qualified in Animal Assisted Therapy and have worked with and alongside animals for many years. One of our team is a trained SEN teacher and has worked extensively with children with additional needs along with the rest of the team.



We specialise in alpacas and have over forty

here on the farm, along with llamas, goats, sheep, pigs, emus, chickens, geese, rabbits, guinea pigs, meerkats and a giant tortoise. We are fully insured, follow the CEVAS code of conduct and are members of Social Farms and Gardens (previously known as Care Farming UK).



## How we work

We base ourselves on the ethos of 'Green Care' otherwise known as the therapeutic use of farming practices. Participants attend the farm on a regular basis either as individuals or in larger groups.

Care farming is a partnership between us the farmers, care providers (parents, teachers, etc) and participants. As a partnership we aim to offer the potential to improve mental health problems, family relationships, learn life skills and develop resilience to every day problems through the therapeutic use of farm animals as a type of 'co-therapist'. The use of animals can achieve outcomes such as addressing anger issues, helping with depression, coping abilities etc. It's not therapy where you 'sit down and discuss your problems'. It's therapy from animal contact, new responsibilities, fresh air, being surrounded by nature and 'living in the moment'.

Our therapeutic Interventions are generally for students aged 8-18 who are failing to thrive in their schools. It maybe they have been excluded, have poor attendance,



refusing lessons or suffering too much anxiety to attend lessons daily.

Whilst continuing to attend their schools, students can spend one day a week at the farm, taking part in purposeful work that gives them a sense of achievement. We help them explore the way they respond to situations and take more positive actions.

Schools we have worked with have commented on students improved motivation and communication. Ofsted have also given very positive feedback to a school who extensively reported their time on the farm.

An example of animal assisted therapy might be talking to someone, whilst on an alpaca walk about how the alpacas can be mean to new alpacas that arrive alone. The alpaca can be quite difficult to manage as he's harder to catch because he's scared to come near the others. They get along better now he's been here a while, but at times he needs somebody who



understands him to help him with his behaviour. When we talk about these kind of animal issues to a participant, they can often relate to it if they are finding it difficult to get along with people at school, for example. This can lead to them feeling more able to talk about their own situation and increases their understanding of what is happening in their own lives.

We also welcome participants onto the farm who may not have any big issues to address, but who would really just benefit from time with the animals, fresh air, nature and just 'getting away from every day life'.

We are also happy to offer sessions for people who want to get more 'hands on' with animals to improve future career prospects.

We also a sizeable greenhouse and vegetable/flower beds for those that are interested in gardening. Watching plants grow and thrive is very rewarding and students often get to take home the fruits of their hard work. We have a visiting horticultural expert who enriches our 'farming of the land' sessions.

### Activities on offer

All of our activities are designed for their therapeutic value and are normally offered in small groups or on a one to one basis.

Some of the activities include:

- \* Animal care - including husbandry, feeding, cleaning
- \* Animal handling - including alpaca and goat walking
- \* Gardening
- \* Talking in a relaxed way with staff to address every day problem solving in a none pressurised environment
- \* Arts and Crafts
- \*Den building
- \* Horticulture
- \* Homework - always based on animals, lots of fun and involving research both independently and with assistance (and totally optional).



Sessions, whilst being fun and enjoyable, will also have a good educational content, helping to fulfil many elements on the National Curriculum. Maths, Science and communication skills are formed in a practical way, which helps students to see the relevance of their education in the real world.

## Our approach

Whilst some children react well to rewards and sanctions, not all do and we're very mindful of this. We discuss poor behaviour rather than punish, allowing the student to regulate their behaviour and learn the natural consequences of their actions. For example, if a child refuses to help with the morning chores, there may not be enough time to walk an alpaca later in the day.

As we're outside for most of the day, children have plenty of space to calm themselves down and work out coping strategies with the help of our team.



## Reporting of progress

We very much like to keep in touch with parents and/or schools and at the end of each course we provide a written report, in discussion with the student, as to how they are feeling after their time with us. We look at their physical and mental wellbeing,

how they feel their self esteem has improved, whether new friendships have been formed etc. We're very proud that our students consistently report that they have hugely benefited from their time on the farm. Their schools back this up by saying they see far better engagement at

school as well as improvements in social engagement with friends and family.

## What equipment is needed

Wellies are a must! Even in the summer the farm can be a muddy place! A waterproof old coat will also be needed and we strongly suggest waterproof trousers for the wet days! In the summer months we recommend wellies as standard along with suitable clothing to prevent sunburn, a sunhat and the application of sun cream before arriving on the farm.

## Referrals

We accept referrals from schools, local councils and private referrals from parents or guardians.

We do group sessions and private sessions starting from an hour and 30 minutes a week, or every fortnight for a private session, or 10am-2pm for group sessions on Thursdays.



You can start the ball rolling by emailing [bookings@middleenglandfarm.co.uk](mailto:bookings@middleenglandfarm.co.uk) or [carefarm@middleenglandfarm.co.uk](mailto:carefarm@middleenglandfarm.co.uk)

# Care Farming Pricelist

- Private session £45 per session (1 hour 30 minutes accompanied by a parent or carer) Blocks of four sessions. Any age.
- Private group session for schools or social groups £25 per person (min 10 attendees 1 hour 30 minutes accompanied by teachers) Blocks of four sessions recommended.
- Care Farm day rate £65 (Students generally dropped off on Thursdays at 10am and collected at 2pm) minimum of four sessions to be booked. Long term bookings accepted ages 8-18. Bring a packed lunch.

Once a start date has been confirmed we will send you a new starter form to allow us to prepare for a student to attend and a risk assessment will be completed on the first visit.

## Our Team

Our team are very experienced in a whole multitude of attributes. Calmness and gentleness is at the core of everything we do, which ensures we are always able to respond positively to the students in our care.

As well as having an excellent understanding and experience in working with children with additional needs, we also have a strong knowledge of farming, animal care, horticulture, bushcraft, the arts and so much more.

Of course it goes without saying that we are all DBS enhanced checked and our staff to student ratio is always exceptional.

Middle England Farm  
Aibrean Grange  
Redditch Road  
Henley in Arden

[www.middleenglandfarm.co.uk](http://www.middleenglandfarm.co.uk)

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