

Trustees Annual Report

Riding for the Disabled Association, Craigantlet Group

1 April 23 – 31 March 2024

Charity No NIC104265

The Charity exists to provide therapeutic riding and contact with horses to children in the Ards and North Down area.

The principal address of the Charity and Charity Commission contact is Mrs Rosemary Spalding, 10 Ballyharry Heights, Newtownards, BT23 7GE.

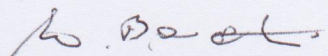
The Group met on Friday mornings for 18 weeks during term time with 6 children from Tor Bank Special School taking part. As well as riding the children can learn parts of the horse and the equipment used and RDA Grade tests are used to recognise achievement and certificates given to the children to show their endeavour in riding and/or horse care. Quite a number of weeks were missed due to staff and transport problems at Tor Bank but the children clearly enjoyed and benefitted from their riding throughout the year.

The Group meets at Birr House Riding Centre at Craigantlet and is fortunate to have the use of an indoor school and ponies thanks to the generosity of the owner Caroline McVeigh. Payment of £15 is made per pony hired each day. This is our main cost as all our coaches and helpers are volunteers. Other costs normally include insurance and membership of the RDA, training, and small gifts for supporters. The principal sources of income during the year were a donation from the Belfast Cathedral Sit Out Appeal Grant and a Danske Bank Charity Grant.

The Public Benefit delivered by Craigantlet Group is reflected in the achievements of the riders. Less easy to quantify but equally beneficial is the opportunity to have close contact with a horse and the sense of achievement and enjoyment which can be seen even in children who have initially been nervous or unwilling to take part. Physical benefits are apparent too such as improved core strength, balance and co-ordination.

The Group makes every effort to ensure that the rides are conducted safely by using qualified coaches and trained volunteers. All volunteers are required to go through an Enhanced Access NI check as well as provide 2 references. We have a Safeguarding policy which is reviewed annually. A qualified first aider is always in attendance.

We consider that we have had regard to the Commission's guidance on public benefit and have fulfilled our obligations in this respect.

Signed.....

Mr Bill Beattie

Chairman and Trustee

On behalf of the following Trustees of the Group:

Mrs Barbara Hanna

Miss Gloria Reynolds

Mrs Rosemary Spalding

Mrs Maureen Watson

Mrs Florence Gray