

Frequently Asked Questions

RIDING

- **What is the minimum age?** The minimum age for participants is 3 years.
- **What is the maximum age?** There is a maximum age for participants of 85 years.
- **What is the maximum weight?** In order to ensure the wellbeing of our horses, we have imposed a maximum weight restriction of approx. 80 kilos (dependent on the horses).
- **What disabilities / special needs do we cater for?** Our participants have a wide range of disabilities which include, but are not limited to - Autism; Cerebral Palsy; Down Syndrome; Multiple Sclerosis; Muscular Dystrophy; Parkinson's Disease; Spina Bifida; Thalidomide; amputees; injuries resulting from accidents; intellectual disabilities; special needs; specific learning disabilities; visual and hearing impairments.
- **How long are the sessions?** Our sessions are 60 minutes in duration (including mounting and dismounting), however on the odd occasion, if we are understaffed by volunteers, the Coach reserves the right to split the session. Please note that Hippotherapy is a total of 45 minutes.
- **Are riding sessions held over the school holidays?** RDA Carine work during school terms only with no sessions held over holidays. However, we do run occasional horse day camps over the holiday period. Please note that we start our program at the beginning of each year a week after the school term resumes and we conclude at the end of year a week before the school term finishes.
- **Are riding sessions held regardless of the weather conditions?** Yes, regardless of the weather conditions, we hold sessions engaging with the horses. We will not put participants or volunteers at risk if the weather is harsh but will ensure sessions are held in a safe and protected environment. In extreme conditions, we may modify the session to accommodate the conditions for both horses and participants so instead of riding, the participant may be assisted in leading or grooming their horse.
- **What happens in the event we don't have enough volunteers?** As a volunteer-based organisation, we are reliant on volunteers to support the program. On the odd occasion, if we do not have enough volunteers to safely deliver the session, we will split the lesson.
- **Are assessments required?** To participate at RDA Carine, an assessment is required. The assessment is a meet and greet with our Head Coach (not a horse ride) and an opportunity to determine the level of ability, comfort being around horses, availability etc, so that we can place them in a lesson with riders of similar age, ability etc.
- **Are medicals required?** We require a comprehensive medical form to be completed before participants are permitted to commence. The medical form includes all medical conditions, past history, medication, emergency contacts etc. The medical report is required to be updated every three years unless there is a change of circumstance (i.e. medication; medical incidents etc) and / or deemed necessary to have annual reports.
- **Are children/adults with Downs Syndrome permitted to ride?** There is increasing evidence from medical research that up to 15% of individuals with Down syndrome have a condition known as Atlanto-axial Instability, which is a malalignment of cervical vertebrae C-1 and C-2 in the neck. This condition exposes individuals with Down syndrome to the possibility of injury if they participate in activities that hyper-extend or radically flex the neck muscles. The responsibility shall remain with the parent/guardian to provide proof that the individual has NOT been diagnosed as having Atlanto-axial Instability and shall be permitted to participate with RDA Carine.
- **Can siblings ride?** Unfortunately not as we do not have the capacity to take participants that do not have a disability.
- **What do participants need to supply?** Participants are recommended to supply their own gloves, and own helmets.
- **Are participants and volunteers insured?** Yes, all of our participants and volunteers are insured under Riding for the Disabled Association of Australia policies. Copies of the Certificate of Currencies are available upon request.
- **What times are your sessions?** Our 60 minute sessions are held Monday to Friday between the hours of 9am and 4pm (depending on the demand) and also on Saturday mornings between 9am and midday however on the odd occasion, if we are understaffed by volunteers, the Coach reserves the right to split the session.
- **How many participants per session?** 4 to 6

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COST

- **How much does it cost to attend RDA Carine?** An annual Participant Registration Insurance fee of **\$125.00** additional to the Support Fees is payable on the commencement of each year. This fee MUST BE PAID before participation can be permitted. This fee is NOT covered by NDIS.

The fees are structured as following;

- Therapeutic Riding Support Fees - \$60.00 per session
 - Vaulting Fees - \$60.00 per session
 - Hippotherapy Fees - invoiced through Andersons Neurological & Developmental Services
- **When are payments due?** All privately funded participants are invoiced prior to the beginning of term and payable within 14 days and NIDS funded participants at the end of each term.
 - **How can we make payments?**
 - Bank transfer
 - EFTPOS
 - Cheque
 - Cash

NDIS

- **Is RDA Carine a registered NDIS provider?** As a small not-for-profit organisation and based on financial and resource constraints, the RDA Carine Committee decided to become an unregistered NDIS provider effective Monday 10th October, 2022. We are required to, and will continue to, provide high quality service in accordance with the NDIS Code of Conduct and Riding for the Disabled Australia regulations.

Participants whose NDIS plans are Self-Managed or Plan-Managed can use their funds to access our program services. Unfortunately, participants whose plans are NDIA Agency Managed are unable to utilize their funds at our centre, however they are still welcome to attend our program with alternative funding options.

OUR HORSES

- **What horses do we use?** We have many different horses who have come from various different homes and backgrounds. All our horses go through an intense trial and assessment process before they are deemed suitable to enter our programs, and all have individual ongoing exercise and education plans, carried out by the coaches.

OUR COACHES

- **Are our Coaches accredited?** Yes all coaching staff at Carine have undergone training and accreditation by RDA Australia.

CANCELLATIONS

- **What are the rules regarding cancellations and absentees?** Please refer to the RDA Carine Cancellation Policy at [Click here](#)

VOLUNTEERING



- **Are our volunteers accredited?** All of our volunteers hold current NDIS Worker Screening Checks OR Police Checks / Working with Children accreditation and are trained under RDA Carine coaches.
- **Is there a minimum age for volunteers?** Yes, it is currently 14 years of age.
- **Do I need to be an Australian resident?** Yes, to ensure we can complete all necessary compliance documentation.
- **Do I have to volunteer on a permanent basis?** We do encourage volunteers to participate on a weekly or fortnightly basis. We also ask for a minimum eighteen-month commitment.
- **When are the programs held?** The RDA Carine programs are held throughout the school term. We close for the school holidays but often hold a School Camp/s which require volunteers.
- **What days can I volunteer?** Any day from Monday to Friday anywhere between 8am and 5pm and then again on Saturday mornings from 8am to midday.
- **Are there any rosters or schedules?** Whilst it is preferable for volunteers to commit to regular times, we do not have rosters or schedules for our volunteers as we acknowledge that volunteers have busy lives and their day to day routines can change. We welcome volunteers to come and go as they please but do request a minimum of two hours volunteering at any one time.
- **What accreditation do I need?** All volunteers will be required to complete a NDIS Worker Screen Certification OR a Working with Children Check and a Volunteer National Police Clearance Check. RDA Carine will arrange on induction.
- **What induction do I receive?** All volunteers will be expected to commit to three trial sessions where you will be placed under the guidance of a current volunteer. The trial sessions are intended to determine if the potential volunteer is suited to the work and the potential volunteer is a good fit for the organisation. At any time, RDA Carine reserves the right to terminate your volunteer application if deemed unsuitable.
- **Is there a probation period?** Yes, after completing the three trials, and on receipt of all compliance documentation, you are permitted to commence the volunteer role under a three month probation period. At any time, RDA Carine reserves the right to terminate your volunteer role if deemed unsuitable.
- **What training do I receive?** During your trial days, you will be required to complete a series of training modules followed by a quiz and practical assessment. This is to ensure you can work safely around our participants and horses. RDA Carine also hold regular day and evening training sessions of numerous topics. The training sessions are compulsory.
- **Who will my supervisor be?** The Coach for the day will be responsible for all the volunteers.
- **What shall I wear?** We recommend long pants, closed in shoes or boots (not steel capped boots), SunSmart clothing (long sleeved shirts) cap or hat and jackets weather permitting. We also recommend fly nets during fly season.
- **Am I supplied with a uniform?** Volunteers have the opportunity to purchase a volunteer shirt for \$25.00.
- **What happens if I am unwell or going on holidays?** That is no issue. Just a courtesy text message, email or call to let us know. We encourage our volunteers to go on holidays as family and work come before RDA Carine.
- **Are participants and volunteers insured?** Yes, all of our participants and volunteers are insured under Riding for the Disabled Association of Australia policies. Copies of the Certificate of Currencies is available upon request.