

# **Chestnut Ridge Camp and Retreat Center**

## **Horseback Riding Lesson Program**

### **Parent FAQs**

Welcome to our Chestnut Ridge family! We hope this form will answer your questions about riding lessons. If you have other questions, please feel free to contact Chris at 919-304-2178 or 919-414-3273 or [chris@campchestnutridge.org](mailto:chris@campchestnutridge.org).

#### **What should my child wear?**

- Long pants (for example: jeans, riding breeches, etc.) and riding boots are imperative! If your child is in our after school program or using our after school transportation, please send their riding clothes and boots with them to school! They will be given time to change once they arrive at camp.
- If your child does not own boots or hard soled shoes with a heel, we do have some pairs to loan them each week. If you would like to purchase boots for your child, either English paddock or Western-style cowboy boots are acceptable. When the weather starts to cool off, students should dress in layers, bring a waterproof jacket, and bring gloves.

#### **Are we required to purchase a helmet or other equipment?**

- Chestnut Ridge will provide helmets and all equipment necessary for riding (including saddles, bridles, halters, lead ropes, etc.). If your child has his/her own helmet, it must be ASTM certified for riding horses. Bike helmets are not approved.

#### **What will a lesson day look like?**

- If your child is in our after school program or using our transportation:
  - Pick up at school by a Chestnut Ridge bus/van
  - Drop off at our After School program
  - Snack, homework time, time to change clothes as needed
  - 3:50 Horse staff will pick up your rider at the pavilion and take him/her to Site 7 for riding lessons

#### **Where should I pick up my child?**

- If you are able to arrive by 5:30, you can meet us at Site 7 (home-base for all horse activities) to pick up your rider. Parking is available on either side of the road. Please be watchful for children and horses!

- If you are unable to arrive by 5:30, we will bring lesson students down to the Pavilion where regular after-school pick-up occurs. Please give us a few minutes to get all the children loaded in the van and back down the hill! You will have until 6:00 p.m. to pick up your student.

### **Can I pay for lessons in installments?**

- You may make a deposit and a maximum of 2 (equal or unequal) payments for the balance. Please discuss options with Chris.

### **What should I do if my child is sick on lesson day?**

- If your child has an illness, it's best for them to stay home, rest, and recover! **We ask that you give us at least 2 hours' notice if your child will not be at their lesson due to illness.** Call 919-304-2178 or 919-414-3273, or e-mail Chris at [chris@campchestnutridge.org](mailto:chris@campchestnutridge.org) or Carrie at [carrie@campchestnutridge.org](mailto:carrie@campchestnutridge.org) .
- Make-up lessons will be scheduled during the week after each lesson session ends. You'll be notified of a make-up date and time. If we were not notified of your child's absence, we will not be able to offer a make-up lesson.
- For riding students in our After School program, please notify BOTH the After School Director and the riding instructor of absences!

### **What will happen in the case of inclement weather?**

- As a general rule, we abide by Orange County School District decisions – **if school is released early or canceled, there will be no lessons.** Please keep informed of the school district decisions if inclement weather is approaching.
- In the case of inclement weather such as rain, mud, wind, etc., lessons will be canceled at the discretion of the instructors by 1:00 pm. You'll be notified by email and phone. You will still have the option to send your rider to camp to participate in our After School program if needed.
- If lessons have to be canceled on short notice because of sudden change in weather, riding students will be kept at our After School program and may be picked up at your convenience before 6 pm.
- Make up lessons will be scheduled for all weather cancellations. You'll be notified by e-mail. No refunds will be given for inclement weather, except in the case where a make-up lesson cannot be scheduled.

### **Am I allowed to watch my child's lesson?**

- Yes! Many lessons will take place, at least in part, in our arena. On these days, we welcome and encourage parents to stay and watch. We only ask that you remain quiet and allow us to work with your students without interference. For some lessons, however, we will go on the trail – making it slightly more difficult for parents to observe! You are welcome to wait at Site 7 for us to ride back in though!

### **Will my child ride the same horse each week?**

- We will assign horses based on several different factors, including your child's size, skill level, confidence, and personality. As your child becomes a more skillful rider, we will reassign horses to keep lessons challenging and interesting!
- It's very normal and a good thing for riders to get attached to their horse. We want them to feel a close relationship with the horses! In reverse, some horse personalities and people personalities can take more work to get together. Please feel free to let us know if your child is enjoying their horse or not!

### **How many other children will be in the class?**

- Our classes have a maximum of 6 students. One of our AAHS certified instructors will be teaching each lesson. An additional instructor or assistant will be available to help with younger student groups, saddling, and trail rides.

### **What lesson program do you follow?**

- We base our lesson program off of the AAHS program (<http://www.horsemanshipsafety.com/>) called Secure Seat, developed by Jan Dawson. This program is designed to help students develop and maintain a comfortable, balanced seat in the saddle, which will serve students in mastering more advanced skills. This provides an appropriate basis for either English or Western riding. Safety is our primary concern!

### **Do you offer English or Western riding?**

- Both styles of riding are used here, although we have mostly Western-style equipment. Our beginning riders will use Western equipment, but the Secure Seat program is non-specific, so the type of saddle will not be significant.
- As riders advance through the years, they will have the option of focusing on English or Western style of riding.
- Additionally, we can teach natural horsemanship techniques (for example, Parelli - <http://www.parellinaturalhorsetraining.com/>) that will help students become more skillful, confident horse people. Through these techniques, your child will build a closer relationship and a greater understanding of the horse.

## **What are your goals for riding students?**

- Our staff is dedicated to developing safe and confident horse people! We strive to teach all aspects of horse care in order to build a greater relationship between animal and person.
- Some lessons will have a “ground” component, where students will be learning horse care and handling skills out of the saddle. Please know that these skills are as important to your child’s learning and development as the riding is!
- Our staff seeks in all we do to fulfill the mission of Chestnut Ridge Camp and Retreat Center: to make visible the love of Christ through the practices of hospitality, responsible care for Creation, and meaningful fellowship that strengthens the community.

**Please feel free to contact our staff at any time with questions or concerns. Thank you for sharing your children with us!**