



Where People and Horses Thrive

SAFE GUARDING OUR RIDERS

OUR ATTITUDE

We have an outstanding record for keeping our riders safely in the saddle because of our attitude towards rider falls.

You might have heard sayings such as “falls are part of learning”; “you have to fall off 7 times to become a rider”; “if you get on a horse you have to expect to fall off” and “horses are unpredictable and you ride at your own risk”. These abdicate responsibility. At Lavant Equestrian we instead operate by the HSE sanction: “there is no such thing as an accident”. We have a duty of care to protect the safety of our riders and horses at Lavant Equestrian and take every rider fall extremely seriously. We seek to eliminate falls as we believe clients ride for pleasure and should be in control of their own rate of progress.

Over the years, we have applied the mantra “there is no such thing as an accident” to every rider fall, gradually eliminating many of the multiple triggers that cause these to happen. Our current statistic is for 99.1% of our riders to remain steadfastly on board. This means, on average a client will ride 147 times before a fall – equivalent to riding every week for three years.

At our riding school, CCTV cameras cover all riding arenas. After a fall, events are studied in minute detail until the trigger/s are spotted. This enables us to identify the cause and prevent a repeat. Strategies have been developed over time, without compromising progress. Rider falls are analysed by all our experienced staff to ensure we’re constantly improving solutions. Everyone at Lavant Equestrian takes rider falls seriously.

THE HORSES

We keep our horses as nature intended, living outside in small, compatible herds. They are always surrounded by familiar horses and staff. Living in this manner encourages relaxation and good physical health. This means our horses are less likely to display signs of anxiety or stress that can be seen in stabled horses.

Beyond the highly professional care and correct welfare regime, there is the horse himself. We view hundreds of horses every year and for every five that are of a standard to purchase, around one of these five will make it into the riding school. Our criteria is strict and standards are high. Geldings are favoured as they tend to be amenable, their temperament must be kind and willing. Finally they have to be well conformed so they are balanced and comfortable to ride. On arrival they undergo a period of training not unlike that for

police horses. We focus on conditioning them to our busy environment and less able riders as well as schooling them to be more educated to ride. Training can last for months before they are ready to be graded. We grade horses for the level of rider ability, as are our riders graded for level of horse, lessons themselves are also graded, so everything slots together smoothly and safely.

THE INSTRUCTORS

Our instructors are experienced, highly qualified British Horse Society equestrian coaches, most of whom work on a freelance basis. This means we have a wide range of talent, with diverse specialisms and personalities available to teach at our school. They all work within the Lavant Equestrian framework regarding rider safety and lesson content. Importantly, every client has their own assigned instructor. This ensures instructors have insight into a rider's strengths, weaknesses and goals which also contributes towards improved rider safety.

END NOTE

Whilst we cannot say it is impossible to fall off, what you can expect from all of us at Lavant Equestrian is that we will do everything we possibly can to prevent a fall from happening.

We will never stop learning and improving in this area and won't rest until our riding school has a consistent 100% success rate keeping our clients where they should be – enjoying themselves in the saddle on top of our lovely horses.

Updated January 2020