

COMMUNICATION POLICY



Updated 01 December 2025

Overview

This policy sets out how communication should be handled at Stoke Lane Stables to ensure clarity, safety, professionalism, and a positive environment for associates¹, clients, and visitors.

1. Core Principles

All communication at the stables should be:

- **Clear and accurate** – especially where horse welfare and safety are concerned
- **Respectful and professional** – regardless of situation
- **Timely** – important information should be shared promptly
- **Consistent** – messages should align across associates and platforms

2. Internal Communication (Associates & Yard Team)

Daily Updates

- Yard updates (feeding changes, health concerns, turnout plans) must be shared at the start of each day.
- A central **yard board or digital log** is maintained and checked by all associates.
- Instructors' Whatsapp chat group updated with important information including passcodes etc.

Horse Welfare Reporting

- Any injury, illness, or unusual behaviour must be reported immediately to the Proprietor.
- Written records must be updated the same day on ECPPro under 'horses'.

Shift Handover

- Clear handovers are required between shifts, including:
 - Feeding completed
 - Turnout/stabling status
 - Health notes
 - Tasks outstanding

3. Communication with Clients (Horse Owners & Riders)

General Communication

- Be polite, approachable, and informative at all times.

- Avoid jargon unless the client understands it.

Updates on Horses

- Owners must be informed promptly of:
 - Injury or illness
 - Changes in routine
 - Veterinary or farrier visits

Response Times

- Messages (text, WhatsApp, email) should be responded to within:
 - 24 hours (non-urgent)
 - As soon as possible (urgent matters)

4. Emergency Communication

In emergencies (injury, fire, loose horse, etc.):

- Contact emergency services if required
- Notify Proprietor immediately
- Inform horse owners as soon as it is safe to do so
- Record the incident on ECPPro.

5. Digital Communication & Social Media

Messaging Platforms (e.g. WhatsApp)

- Use for quick updates and coordination using the yard 'community group'.
- Keep messages relevant and professional

Social Media

- Do not post photos or information about clients, horses, or the yard without permission. Please see *Social Media Policy*.
- Avoid sharing sensitive or negative information publicly

6. Visitor & Public Communication

- Greet visitors courteously and offer assistance
- Ensure safety rules are clearly explained (e.g., no feeding horses, supervised access)
- Direct any complaints or concerns to the Proprietor

7. Confidentiality

- Client information, horse details, and yard operations must be kept confidential
- Do not discuss private matters with other clients or external parties
- Adhere to *Data Protection Policy*.

8. Handling Complaints

- Adhere to *Complaints Procedure*.
- Listen calmly and respectfully
- Do not argue or become defensive
- Escalate to the Proprietor when needed
- Record serious complaints for follow-up

9. Review and Compliance

- All associates must follow this policy
- The policy will be reviewed annually or as needed
- Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action

¹ **Associate** - A self-employed individual engaged by Stoke Lane Stables to provide professional services, including instructors. Associates are not employees, and this term does not create an employment relationship.