Lives changed, one session at a time

PEGASUS
"50 Years"

Pegasus
Annual Report
2025–26



> *I really don't think that I'd be the person I am today without the intervention I got from riding at Pegasus.*
>
> Daniel Bartholomaeus, Pegasus Ambassador

Pegasus acknowledges the Ngunnawal people as the traditional custodians of the land on which we operate. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

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KEY PARTNERS



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About us



Pegasus has been part of the Canberra community for more than 50 years.

On our 100-acre property at Holt, we provide opportunities for people with disability to develop skills, abilities and confidence through horse riding and related activities. Together our participants, families, volunteers, staff and horses create a welcoming community where everyone has a role to play, and every small moment of achievement has a lasting impact.

Vision

Our vision is to be a leading provider of equine and farm-based programs for people with disability.

Mission

Our mission is to support the development of skills, abilities and confidence in people with disability in the wider Canberra region, through equine and farm-based programs that are engaging, safe and fun.

Values

We embody the Pegasus values of Commitment, Respect, Quality and Connection in everything we do.

History

Half a century ago, Pegasus began with the simple belief that riding could open up new possibilities for children with disability, a mission tirelessly pursued by co-founders, horsewoman Bid Williams (pictured below) and hospital therapist Judith Burns. Horsewoman Ruth Squair and Marcel Judd at Forest Park Riding School quickly lent their support.

What started in the early 1970s as a small weekly activity with 2 borrowed ponies and a handful of volunteers grew into a formal organisation in 1975.

Since then, generations of participants, families, volunteers, coaches, horses and supporters have helped shape Pegasus into the treasured Canberra organisation it is today.

> *Continuing the legacy of our co-founders, respect and caring are key to all we do, as we support people with disability to discover what they can achieve.*



Our 2025–26 impact in numbers

NUMBER	DETAILS	OUTCOME
600+	Classes delivered	Developed abilities through fun
45	Participants	Built strength, confidence and skills
15	Horses and ponies	Created moments of magic
40	People living with dementia and disability	Experienced connection and community
200	School students	Helped to power Pegasus
136	Volunteers	Made what we do possible
6	Permanent staff	Kept things running
7	Coaches	Guided and encouraged
32	Members (with 13 Life Members)	Supported all we do
$278,145	Raised in events and appeals	Allowed us to do what we do
140	Supporters (from major sponsors to individual donors)	Shared our achievements at Pegasus

100 acres

554 hoof trims

2,295 bales of hay

400 arena games set up and packed away

Ongoing fence repairs

3 tractor boggings in sodden paddocks

Hundreds of kilometres walked

Countless precious smiles and laughs

Chair's report



It is a privilege to present my first report as Chair of the Board of Pegasus, having taken on the role from 1 October 2026.

After celebrating 50 years of Pegasus last year, we have been focused on how we work together to build a strong and sustainable future for Pegasus.

This has been a year of change, challenge and renewal, strengthening the foundations of Pegasus so this remarkable organisation can continue supporting people with disability, their families and our Canberra community for generations to come.

We have not shied away from the challenges before us. Pegasus entered the year facing significant financial and operational pressures, alongside the need to strengthen our governance, workforce, safety systems and long-term sustainability. The Board has worked closely with our leadership team to address these issues openly and constructively, with the interests of our participants, people and horses at the centre of all our decisions.

A significant milestone was welcoming Kirsten Baker as Executive General Manager. Kirsten has brought renewed energy, leadership and a deep commitment to Pegasus. Together, we have strengthened organisational accountability, clarified the respective roles of the Board and management, invested in our people and continued building a stronger safety and wellbeing culture.

At the same time, our community has continued to rally around Pegasus.

We have welcomed new partnerships with organisations including Canberra Toyota, Villaggio Sant' Antonio and Build Like a Girl, alongside the continued and strengthened support of partners such as SOILCO Corkhill Bros, Capital Chemist and Hayman Partners. Our fundraising community has been extraordinary, including an end of financial year appeal that significantly exceeded our expectations. We also welcomed Daniel Bartholomaeus as our 2026 Pegasus Ambassador, bringing an authentic and powerful participant voice to our work.

> *These contributions demonstrate how, as a small organisation we can do only so much, but as a whole community we can do so much more.*

Pegasus has been part of Canberra for more than 50 years. My responsibility now as Board Chair, which I take very seriously, is to ensure Pegasus is here, stronger than ever, for the next 50 years and beyond. And with the help of our amazing team and the broader Pegasus community, I have no doubt that the future is looking brighter than ever.



Our priorities for the future

1 **A STRONG AND SUSTAINABLE PEGASUS**
Our focus is on creating an organisation that is financially sustainable, well-governed and supported by a capable workforce, strong community partnerships and diverse sources of funding.

2 **MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTICIPANTS**
Everything comes back to why Pegasus exists. We want to expand participation, strengthen our programs and ensure more people with disability can experience the confidence, connection, inclusion and joy that Pegasus provides.

3 **PROTECTING OUR FACILITY AND PLANNING FOR THE NEXT 50 YEARS**
The Drake Brockman Drive duplication presents a significant challenge for our property and facilities. We will continue working with government and our community to ensure Pegasus has the safe, accessible and fit-for-purpose facilities it needs, including the relocation of our outdoor arena, while developing a longer-term vision for Pegasus, our herd and our future.

THANK YOU
None of this work happens without people. My sincere thanks to our participants and families, volunteers, coaches, staff, fellow Board Directors, supporters, government representatives and everyone who has stood beside Pegasus throughout this year.

Sarah Queenan
Chair of the Board

Executive General Manager's report



Returning to Pegasus in July 2026 felt like coming home, but to a very different role.

My lifelong love of horses and background as a coach and trainer first brought me to Pegasus in 2022. I spent 3 years managing the horses and coordinating programs. After leaving briefly, I was keen to return when the Executive General Manager role arose.

I loved my time at Pegasus and welcomed the chance to contribute at a broader level and help guide the future of this truly unique organisation.

Looking forward, together

Coming into the role, one of my priorities was to provide visible, accessible leadership and reconnect with our people, from stable staff and volunteers through to the Board.

My aim is to help reignite the passion I know is there and give our team confidence that, while we face challenges, there are opportunities ahead.

The past year has been pivotal for Pegasus, with financial and herd capacity challenges.

Finding the right horses for Pegasus takes time, so developing our herd sustainably is a key priority. An ageing herd has meant fewer horses available for programs, and at times we had to turn riders away. Bringing younger horses into a program where they must be incredibly patient, quiet and resilient takes time, but we now have 3 promising horses in pre-program training.

We have also worked to strengthen the organisation, reviewing our processes, policies, accountability, communication channels, and work health and safety. Our focus has been simple*: how can we make Pegasus even stronger?*

Alongside this work, there have been many reasons to celebrate.

The 50th anniversary was a wonderful opportunity to bring our community together and celebrate the people, horses and supporters who have helped make Pegasus what it is today. The Open Day and anniversary Golden Gala were highlights, with the Gala raising more than $106,000, an extraordinary result for our first event of this scale. Our 2026 end of financial year appeal again demonstrated the generosity of the Canberra community, raising close to $52,000.

We further increased awareness of Pegasus through our new Ambassador Program, more regular and targeted social media, a new website, and advocacy around issues affecting our future, including the Drake Brockman Drive duplication.

Extending our reach

Perhaps most importantly, we have explored new ways to support people with disability, extending Pegasus beyond riding to create opportunities to learn, connect and develop skills in different ways.

We welcomed school and community group visits to our farm and piloted a partnership with Little Hands Occupational Therapy, which enabled allied health professionals to incorporate Pegasus horses into therapeutic programs.

Participants in our Horseability program learnt about horses without riding, and we're planning more farm-based activities including gardening, chicken keeping, land management, fencing and horse husbandry. These opportunities are particularly important while we grow our herd.

Strengthening our presence

As we continue to diversify to service the community in new ways, we will also strengthen partnerships with local businesses and organisations.

We want more people to know that Pegasus is here, making a difference as an important part of our community. Strengthening our presence and telling more of the Pegasus story, including the stories of our participants, volunteers, horses and supporters, will be an important part of that work.

The coming 12 months will complete this period of transition, as we prepare our next strategic plan. Our immediate focus is on strengthening our position so we can move confidently into that next chapter.

Heartfelt thanks go to everyone who has supported Pegasus – our participants and families, volunteers, staff, Board, donors, partners and the wider Canberra community. Special thanks to John Riley, who most capably led Pegasus as interim Chief Executive Officer before the role transitioned to Executive General Manager and he handed me the reins.

> *I am excited about what comes next. Pegasus has a proud history and an extraordinary foundation to build on. Now, together, we can create an equally extraordinary future.*

Kirsten Baker
Executive General Manager

Our participants

Our participants – their needs, goals, safety and experience – are at the heart of everything we do and every decision we make.

The Pegasus community includes a diverse range of people with disability, from young children to teenagers and adults. Through our individualised approach, we support each participant to develop their abilities and achieve their goals.

Families and carers are an important part of our community, encouraging participants, sharing insights, building trust and lending a hand.

We supported an average of 45 participants throughout 2025–26. In addition, we were visited by 40 guests from Club Kalina's day program for people living with dementia and disability. We also hosted over 200 students from local schools, who helped around the farm.

One of our participants, 11-year-old Isaac, has been riding with Pegasus for the past 2 years. Despite having no previous experience with horses, Isaac quickly developed his riding skills and formed a special bond with his horse, Darby. He has become an enthusiastic and confident member of the Pegasus community.

Isaac's story is on page **10**.



Our volunteers

Our volunteers make Pegasus happen. Without them, there could be no Pegasus programs.

Volunteers range from teenagers to retirees. Their generosity of time, enthusiasm, skills and ability to connect with our participants creates the special environment in which we deliver our services.

For many of our participants, finding accessible and inclusive activities and opportunities can be challenging.

Our volunteers provide support systems that make Pegasus accessible. They enable our participants to learn, develop new abilities, connect socially, have fun and experience the magic of partnering with a gentle giant of a horse.

Their contribution takes many forms. They support riders directly in class, care for our horses, tend to our sensory garden, keep our farm and facilities safe, functional and well maintained, and help with fundraising out in the community.

> *Every volunteer plays a direct and valued role in making Pegasus happen for our participants.*

Pegasus currently has 136 volunteers actively contributing to our community. In 2025–26, our volunteers provided the equivalent of $396,785 worth of service through their time and skills.

One of our volunteers is Sue-Ann Martiniello, who first helped us as a teenager and was determined to return to Pegasus some 40 years later to give back.

Sue-Ann's story is on page **16**.





Isaac's story

Everyone assumes the best

When Isaac was offered a place at Pegasus through his school, his mum Kylie wasn't sure what to expect.

Isaac, who is autistic and has ADHD, had never been around horses and Kylie is very allergic to them.

"So, this was not on our radar at all," Kylie laughs.

"Isaac was hesitant at first, but he got on a horse in his first lesson," she says.

"Now he loves his weekly sessions, especially in the outdoor arena. He got the hang of it really quickly, even trotting successfully the first time, which his coach told us is rare."

Watching Isaac enjoy himself so much sometimes brings tears to Kylie's eyes.

"Seeing him do something that we never thought he would do – and be so brave because he was very unsure about going to see the horses – has been amazing," Kylie says.



Isaac (foreground) riding Darby, supported by our friendly side-walkers and experienced coach, John.

During sessions, activities are carefully designed to meet Isaac's particular needs and build his skills. He might collect hoops with a soft sword, follow a trail to find ribbons in the trees, or practise balance while riding.

"There's a lot of thought that goes into it," Kylie says. "He's learning all these skills, but it's all fun."

For Isaac, Pegasus is about much more than learning to ride.

His school learning support assistant has noticed improvements in his executive functioning, while his parents have seen gains in his core strength, focus and ability to follow multi-step instructions.

For a child who usually has quite high support needs, Isaac's growing independence is also giving the family more time together, including with his older sister.

The experience is even helping Isaac learn about other people's differences. He attends Pegasus with another student who has different sensory needs. This has created opportunities to develop understanding, flexibility and resilience as they both learn to navigate those differences.

Importantly, Isaac has gained confidence in himself.

> *"I think it's really helped him understand that he can do hard things – try things that are new and scary," Kylie says.*

Finding activities where Isaac feels both included and appropriately challenged has not always been easy. Some disability-specific activities aren't quite right for him, while mainstream activities can be difficult to access.

"When you have kids who think and learn a bit differently, the rest of the world isn't always that inclusive," Kylie says.

"But Pegasus is so inclusive and so welcoming. It's really lovely for us and for Isaac to go somewhere where everyone just assumes the best of him."

Seeing the Pegasus community rally around Isaac has been particularly meaningful.

"To see all these kind people giving up their time for Isaac is heartwarming," Kylie says.

"It's bringing joy and hope that we otherwise probably wouldn't have had."

Our programs

All our mounted (riding) and unmounted (no riding) programs are tailored to support our participants develop their abilities.

During 2025–26, our program capacity was limited but we still delivered over 600 classes to our participants.

Developing abilities

We match the program, horse, coach and volunteers to best suit each participant.

Our accredited coaches, trained volunteers and, of course, our horses create a unique environment where participants develop physically, cognitively and emotionally.



PHYSICALLY

When riding, using simple and more complex movements over various terrain, participants engage and work their musculature against the movement of the horse. In this way they build fine and gross motor skills, strength, balance and endurance.

Even in the unmounted programs, they develop physical skills and abilities through groundwork as they learn grooming, leading and general care of the horse.

COGNITIVELY

As participants learn and practise riding skills through fun activities, they are supported in developing cognitive and intellectual skills.

This includes conceptual skills, the ability to understand and sequence multi-task processes, decision-making skills and improved executive functioning – all in an engaging social and recreational environment.

EMOTIONALLY

Our horses have a calming effect. When participants connect with their horse, supported by our reassuring and skilled coaches and volunteers, they become calm and focused.

In this environment, they can develop emotional regulation, manage anxiety, and build confidence in their own ability to influence and instruct their 500-kilogram Pegasus horse.

Expanding our programs

We began expanding our programs and reach this year. This included looking to add extra support programs to prepare participants for our equine programs and adding more complementary farm-based and skill-specific programs.

We also teamed up with Little Hands Occupational Therapy, which supports young children with disability or developmental delay. Together, we are providing a more tailored program to support their higher-needs clients, guided by their occupational therapists.

Another exciting development was establishing a relationship with Canteen Australia, so young people impacted by cancer can visit our farm and learn the basics of horse behaviour.

We will be working with similar organisations to further expand our support and connection to the local community.

600+

classes delivered in 2025–26

Expanding our skills

Our coaches will benefit from attending the inaugural Canter Con Workshop in July 2026, which brings together coaches across the country from Riding for the Disabled Australia, Pony Club Australia and Equestrian Australia.

While this event is a learning and upskilling opportunity for our coaches, it also encourages all the coaches to share ideas and experiences. Importantly, it will help promote the cross-learning and accreditation of coaches. This is something that will benefit all disciplines, but especially centres like Pegasus.



Our people and culture

Pegasus is a community united by a shared purpose: supporting people with disability across the wider Canberra region to develop skills, abilities and confidence through engaging, safe and fun equine and farm-based programs.

We aim to create an environment where each person is welcomed, valued and supported to participate with confidence.

How we work together

Pegasus is committed to a safe, respectful, inclusive and professional environment for participants, families, staff, volunteers, animals and the wider community. We are all accountable for acting with integrity, respect and care, and for contributing to physical and psychological safety. Those who supervise, manage, lead or govern have additional responsibility to model these standards and respond appropriately if conduct falls short.

Pegasus People

We refer to people who work for, volunteer with, govern, provide services to, or represent Pegasus as “Pegasus People”.

The conduct of all Pegasus People reflects our enduring values:

- **Commitment.** We are committed to our participants, our purpose and each other.
- **Respect.** We treat people, animals and our community with dignity, courtesy and care.
- **Quality.** We strive for high standards, professionalism, safety and continuous improvement.
- **Connection.** We work collaboratively and build constructive relationships across the Pegasus community.

Our values support our strategic focus on engaging our community, building strong partnerships, growing our reach, celebrating achievement, and governing responsibly.

In practice, Pegasus People act honestly, ethically and fairly, treat others with dignity and courtesy, perform their roles with care and accountability, follow applicable laws and organisational standards, cooperate across roles and address disagreements professionally, and raise concerns about unsafe, inappropriate or unlawful conduct.

The people behind Pegasus, as at 30 June 2026

6	7	136
STAFF	**COACHES**	**VOLUNTEERS**
Equivalent to 5 full-time positions	6 casual, 1 volunteer	Aged 16 to 77
Chief Executive Officer* Finance and Administration Officer Fundraising and Events Manager Volunteer Coordinator Horse Manager Stable Hand	Plan and deliver classes	Work in classes, in the garden, across the farm and out in the community helping with fundraising

* Changed to the Executive General Manager position in July 2026.



These expectations apply to everyone, regardless of role, seniority or length of association.

Our culture is sustained through everyday actions of listening to participants, supporting one another, caring for our horses, sharing knowledge, recognising contributions and learning from experience.

Work health and safety

During 2025–26, we updated our Work Health and Safety (WHS) Policy and began a comprehensive review of our WHS System under the guidance of an external expert.

Staff and volunteers received training in identifying psychosocial hazards and fire awareness and safety. We will provide further training as the review identifies specific needs.

We also refreshed our Code of Conduct, which applies to all Pegasus People, and introduced an Employee Assistance Program to support our people. These initiatives reflect our Board and Executive's ongoing commitment to a safe, respectful, inclusive and supportive culture.

Thriving into the future

By bringing our values to every interaction, Pegasus People create the conditions for participants to thrive and Pegasus to continue serving Canberra and the surrounding region with confidence.

> *This collective effort is the spirit of Pegasus, and the foundation for a sustainable and successful future.*

Sue-Ann's story

The highlight of the week

When Sue-Ann Martiniello was in Year 9, she chose volunteering at Pegasus for her Friday afternoon extra activity. Decades later, when she retired, she returned – just as she promised herself she would.

"I always said when I finished work, I'd go back and volunteer again," Sue-Ann says. "I've been back for nearly 2 years now."

Horses were part of her life growing up, while her career centred on working with young children, including children with disability and diverse learning needs.

"It's horses and children," Sue-Ann says. "It's the perfect place for me to give back."



Sue-Ann Martiniello with Flicka. After 40 years, Sue-Ann returned to Pegasus to volunteer again.

As a Pegasus volunteer, Sue-Ann leads horses in the Little Hands Occupational Therapy class, works as a side-walker, helps with the weekend feed team, and supports community events and fundraising.

“There’s a job that everyone can do. You can give as much time or as little time, and you never, ever feel judged because they appreciate any time we can give,” she says.

Over nearly 2 years, Sue-Ann has witnessed children make extraordinary progress, sometimes in ways that are almost impossible to predict when they first arrive.

One child was non-verbal and highly anxious when she began at Pegasus, unfamiliar with horses and avoiding eye contact. Within a month, she was talking directly to her side-walker. Now, she loves trying to make her run and laughing together.

“The difference you see and the progress they make is incredible,” Sue-Ann says.

She has also seen children develop balance, gain core strength and find new ways of communicating.

But sometimes the most powerful moments are the quiet ones.

During an occupational therapy session, a young participant in a wheelchair was introduced to Flicka, a horse with a gentle but strong personality. Flicka walked towards the participant and began breathing softly on her. Everyone fell silent as the horse appeared to settle the young woman, and she began happily vocalising.

“It was beautiful,” she says. “Every day is fantastic with all of the children, really.”

> *That’s the special quality of Pegasus – participants benefit no matter where they begin.*

The impact extends beyond the Pegasus farm, with parents saying their children are more confident and willing to participate at school.

“We can’t lose this program,” she says. “It is unique, and I feel very, very privileged to be part of it.”

For all that Sue-Ann gives as a volunteer, the rewards come back to her in equal measure.

“It’s good for my soul,” she says. “It’s the highlight of my week.”

Our horses

Since 1975, Pegasus horses have been creating moments of magic, sparking confidence, connection and joy for people with disability and their families.

Our horses and ponies are trusted partners in every Pegasus session.

We manage them as equine athletes whose physical fitness, mental wellbeing and suitability for therapeutic work are fundamental to participant, volunteer and staff safety.

Individual care, shared responsibility

Every Pegasus horse receives an exceptional standard of welfare management. This includes veterinary, farrier and dental care, tailored nutrition, appropriate reviewing of saddles and equipment, and close monitoring of soundness and behaviour.

Individual Fitness Plans bring these elements together for each horse, setting clear goals for conditioning, rehabilitation, core strength, workload and review.



FITNESS FOR PURPOSE

Conditioning and schooling prepare horses for the distinctive physical and mental demands of disability programs.



WORKLOAD COLLABORATION

Horse-to-participant ratios and session limits protect each horse from discomfort, fatigue and overuse.



RESPECTFUL SUCCESSION

Retirement, lease or rehoming plans honour each horse's service and support a home-for-life commitment.

We also honour our responsibility to make humane, expert and professionally advised end-of-life choices when it is in a horse's best interests.



SAFE SELECTION

Prospective horses are assessed for temperament, soundness, movement, education, size and long-term suitability.

To join the Pegasus herd, they must be patient, quiet and resilient.



A herd in transition

Pegasus began the year with 15 horses, 2 fewer than last year, and an urgent need to strengthen our capacity for riding programs.

Several older horses are approaching retirement, with some soundness issues among the horses reducing available sessions and increasing veterinary and farrier needs. While this limited our program capacity, we are assessing, schooling and preparing new horses to integrate into the Pegasus herd.

> *By investing in skilled people, disciplined management and carefully selected horses, Pegasus is building a resilient herd where horses thrive, so our participants can soar.*

Our 2026–2028 pathway

Our 3-year strategy is to stabilise the herd, rebuild capacity, and establish a sustainable replacement cycle.

- **2026 – Stabilise.** We will optimise the health and longevity of our current herd, implement Individual Fitness Plans, evaluate capability gaps and make timely decisions about rehabilitation, retirement and acquisition.
- **2027 – Rebuild.** We will replenish the herd through rigorous sourcing, a defined 9-month Pegasus Schooling Program and careful integration into riding programs.
- **2028 – Mature.** We will transition to a rolling replacement model, maintain a balanced mix of age, size and ability, and embed best-practice protocols for our staff and volunteers.

Our supporters

Year after year, our sponsors and donors make it possible for Pegasus to deliver meaningful programs and opportunities to our participants.

We know our supporters have many worthy organisations to choose from.

Their generosity and belief in what Pegasus can achieve for our participants is deeply valued.

> *Every dollar received through partnerships, individual donations, grants or horse sponsorship contributes directly to delivering our programs and supporting the infrastructure behind them.*

We sincerely thank all our supporters for making a meaningful difference to the work we do.

Hayman Partners' support

Our relationship with Hayman Partners is a wonderful example of what a long-term community partnership can achieve.

Their enduring support reflects shared values and commitment to community.

Hayman Partners' support over the years has always gone well beyond traditional sponsorship.

They turn up and get involved, bringing their people, skills, contacts and enthusiasm.



Golden Gala contribution

For our milestone 50th anniversary, Hayman Partners contributed an extraordinary 1,147 volunteer hours, attended 18 organising committee meetings and approached more than 100 businesses to support the event.

Their connections helped secure $55,000 in direct sponsorship from 8 organisations, as well as 9 live auction items and 41 silent auction items for the Gala.

Hayman Partners' contribution helped make the Golden Gala the most successful fundraising event in Pegasus' 50-year history.

They also introduced new people, businesses and supporters to Pegasus, establishing relationships that have continued after Gala night.

1,147 hours

$55,000 sponsorship

50 auction items

We were proud to see Hayman Partners named the 2026 REIACT Community Service Award winner. The award recognised their work with us during 2025–26 and support for our 50th anniversary Golden Gala.

Congratulations and thank you to Leisa Newman, Brett Hayman, and the entire Hayman Partners team for continuing to stand so strongly beside Pegasus in support of our participants.



Our community

Pegasus serves the Canberra community, but we are also a community within ourselves: a welcoming, inclusive place where everyone can be themselves, and find calm and belonging.

Everyone involved is an essential part of the Pegasus community, including all our valued sponsors and donors, partner organisations, Board members, volunteers, ambassadors, coaches, staff, and participants and their families.

Community highlights

Community highlights in 2025–26 included:

- successful fundraising events, including our sponsored Golden Gala, Race Day and Golf Day, and our successful end of financial year appeal
- our partnership with Accessilife, which provides a single platform for disability services, products, programs and events, for accessible living
- our new relationships with Little Hands Occupational Therapy and Canteen Australia, so we can offer the Pegasus experience to more young people
- a stronger operational focus on adapting our skills and facilities to provide more inclusive, diversified and complementary services for people with disability in the Canberra region
- and, *most importantly*, the smiles, laughter and achievements of our participants.

Advocating for the future

We have strengthened our advocacy and relationships with the ACT Government and Australian Government, welcoming visits from Yvette Berry MLA, David Smith MP, Chris Steel MLA, Suzanne Orr MLA, Peter Cain MLA, Senator the Hon Katy Gallagher and Senator David Pocock.

They all expressed genuine appreciation for our work and are helping to raise awareness among their colleagues.







We will continue to work with governments and our regulatory partners to build understanding of the support we provide to participants and identify ways to sustain and grow our services.

This is particularly important as we navigate ongoing funding challenges and a changing community and city.

> *By strengthening our connections across the greater community, Pegasus will continue to adapt, grow and secure the best possible future for our participants.*

Our members

Pegasus is a members-based organisation. Our members play an important role in running Pegasus, guiding the organisation's future through the Board and voting on key governance issues. We reviewed the membership program this year and are looking to future improvements that will provide additional benefits and opportunities for members to participate.

Our Ambassador Program

During 2025–26, Pegasus launched our Ambassador Program, with our long-term friend, former participant and ongoing supporter Daniel Bartholomaeus appointed as 2026 Pegasus Ambassador.

Daniel is the first of other like-minded individuals who will use their community profiles and influence as ambassadors for Pegasus.

Our ambassadors will represent Pegasus. They will help raise awareness of our work supporting people with disability and inspire more individuals and organisations to help us make a difference.

We sincerely thank Daniel, and all our future ambassadors, for their time, skills and influence in support of our shared goal.

Daniel embodies the Pegasus values, and his story shows just how much can be achieved when someone is surrounded by people who support them to believe in themselves and reach for their goals.

Daniel's story is on page **24**.

Daniel's story

From anxious to Ambassador

When Daniel Bartholomaeus first arrived at Pegasus as an anxious 5-year-old, horses were big, unfamiliar and quite intimidating.

"I was really anxious the first few sessions," Dan says. "But the staff put me at ease."

That early experience of being supported, encouraged and gently challenged stayed with Dan as he rode until he was 13 – progressing from riding with side-walkers to riding independently, learning dressage and even jumping.

"Pegasus was good at taking me out of my comfort zone, but in an environment where I would feel relaxed and comfortable with the staff and the horses," he says.

The Pegasus coaches tailored the experience for Dan and gradually built his confidence. Their patience was particularly important because he had an auditory processing and language delay and needed instructions to be explained differently or repeatedly.



Daniel began participating at Pegasus at age 5 and is now our first Pegasus Ambassador.

"As a young person living with autism, ADHD, anxiety, and later mental health challenges, I often found the world overwhelming," Dan says.

"Being around the horses, staff and volunteers helped me in ways that are hard to explain. They gave me confidence, connection and a sense of peace. I learnt communication, coordination, trust and resilience through riding, but I also gained something even more important – a place where I could just be myself."

Over the years, Dan learned how to care for the horses and take on responsibilities, eventually volunteering after he grew too big to ride.

The experience gave him a taste of the working world, learning to follow instructions, take responsibility, receive feedback and complete tasks.

Dan's experiences at Pegasus have continued to shape his life.

Today, he is an artist, mental health advocate, 2025 ACT Young Australian of the Year, 2023 Young Canberra Citizen of the Year (Arts & Multimedia), recipient of the Chief Minister's Inclusion Award for Emerging Young Leader, and can be seen on the ABC program, *The Assembly*.

He promotes inclusion, self-expression and empowerment, particularly for young neurodivergent people and people with disability.

> *"I really don't think that I'd be the person I am today without the intervention I got from riding at Pegasus," Dan says.*

As Pegasus Ambassador, Dan will help raise the organisation's profile, build relationships with potential sponsors and encourage others to discover what Pegasus can offer.

"Pegasus means kindness, inclusion, healing and community to me," he says.

"It's a place that changes lives, and I feel incredibly grateful to still support Pegasus through my artwork and advocacy. Basically, it's thanking them for what they did for me when I was a little kid."

The ambassador role brings Dan's Pegasus story full circle – from an anxious child learning to trust people and horses, to a young adult using his own experience to help create opportunities for others.

Sometimes, the most important steps forward begin by taking one small step outside your comfort zone.

Our leadership and governance

Strong governance is fundamental to a resilient and sustainable Pegasus.

Throughout 2025–26, we continued to strengthen our leadership and governance, with a focus on clear accountability, sound decision-making and ensuring Pegasus is well positioned for the opportunities ahead.

A skills-based Board

Pegasus is governed by a volunteer, skills-based Board, whose Directors bring significant senior leadership experience across government, business and the not-for-profit sector.

Collectively, our Directors contribute expertise spanning governance, law, finance, human resources, risk, cybersecurity, strategy, policy, stakeholder engagement, marketing, inclusion and community leadership.

The Board met formally every month during the year, with Directors also undertaking significant work between meetings.

During a period of considerable organisational change, the Board provided oversight and leadership across financial sustainability, organisational strategy, workforce matters, risk and compliance, government and stakeholder engagement, sponsorship, fundraising and infrastructure planning.

Strengthening governance

Welcoming Kirsten Baker as Executive General Manager strengthened the partnership between the Board and management and created clearer accountability for the day-to-day leadership of Pegasus.

We also continued to modernise our governance framework, including:

- introducing a new Board Charter
- strengthening Board and management delegations
- clarifying governance and operational responsibilities
- enhancing financial, risk and organisational oversight
- reinforcing contemporary standards of corporate governance and accountability.

> *These changes reflect an important principle for Pegasus: the Board governs, sets strategic direction and provides oversight, while management is empowered to lead daily operations.*

As Pegasus is a member-based, not-for-profit organisation, the Board remains accountable to our members and responsible for ensuring Pegasus continues to deliver our purpose safely, responsibly and sustainably.

Our Board



Sarah Queenan
Chair

Vice Chair in 2025–26



Erin Harriott
Vice Chair

Director in 2025–26



Kevin Bhadra
Director

Chair in 2025–26



Liz Dowd
Director



Raffy Sgroi
Director



Martin Priest
Acting Treasurer



Barbara Anderson
Secretary

3,328 HOURS

of volunteer board leadership during the year

8 DIRECTORS

8 HOURS A WEEK EACH ON AVERAGE

52 WEEKS

CONTRIBUTING

Relationships, Advocacy, Judgement, Professional expertise, Personal commitment

Volunteer leadership is one of Pegasus' most significant in-kind contributions.

Our Directors give their time because they believe in what Pegasus makes possible for our participants, families, horses and broader community. We sincerely thank every Director for the expertise, energy and commitment they continue to give to Pegasus.

Note: Board positions are from July 2026. During 2025–26, there were 8 Board members, Kevin Bhadra was Chair, Sarah Queenan was Vice Chair, Erin Harriott was a Director and Steve Momcilovic, who resigned in early 2026–27, was Treasurer.

Our finances

While Pegasus had a positive year in many ways, from a financial management perspective it was challenging.

In terms of revenue, fundraising, including the Pegasus 50th anniversary Golden Gala, was very positive, as were strong share market conditions that resulted in a $61,000 uplift in the value of our investments.

Volunteer “value” was again strong, reflecting the significant commitment made by many.

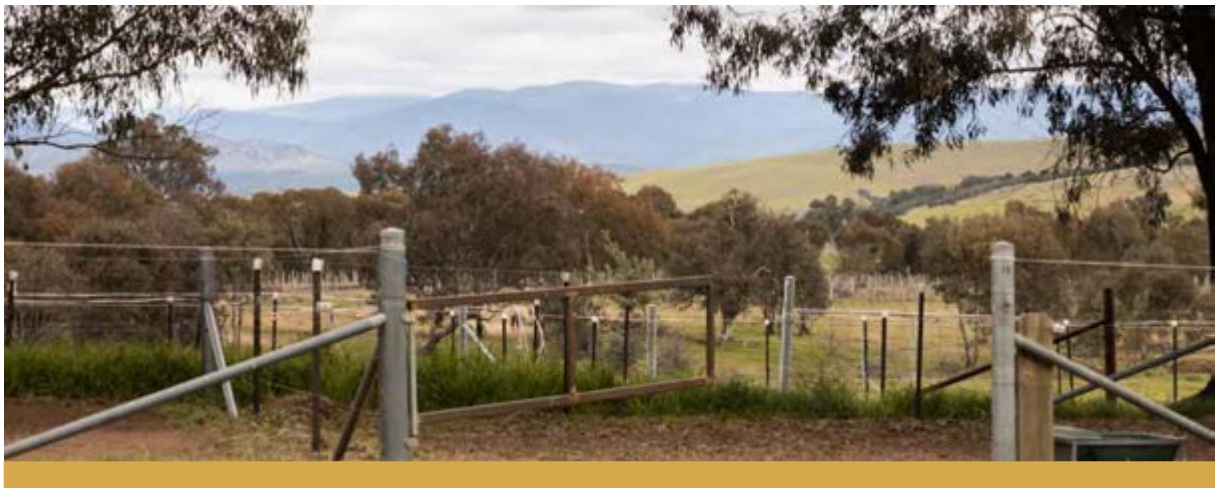
Escalating program delivery and other operational expenditure, including horse care and salary costs, combined with the absence of larger one-off donations (which have historically contributed on average $220,000 each year) have resulted in negative operating cashflows and a deficit for the year.

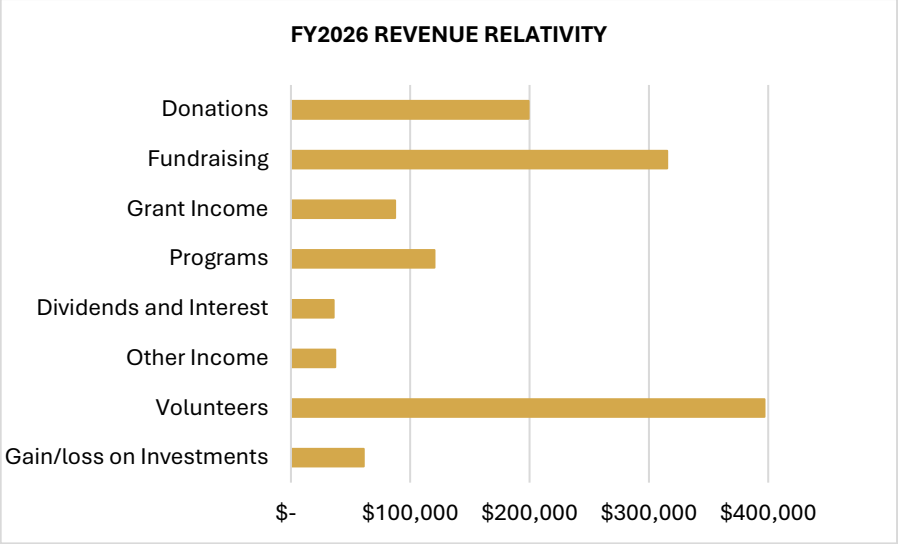
Assets continue to exceed liabilities, however, cash balances and investments in managed funds have reduced to fund increased expenditure across the year. The Board and Executive have implemented new budget management strategies that are designed to strengthen financial sustainability and operating cashflows for the coming year.

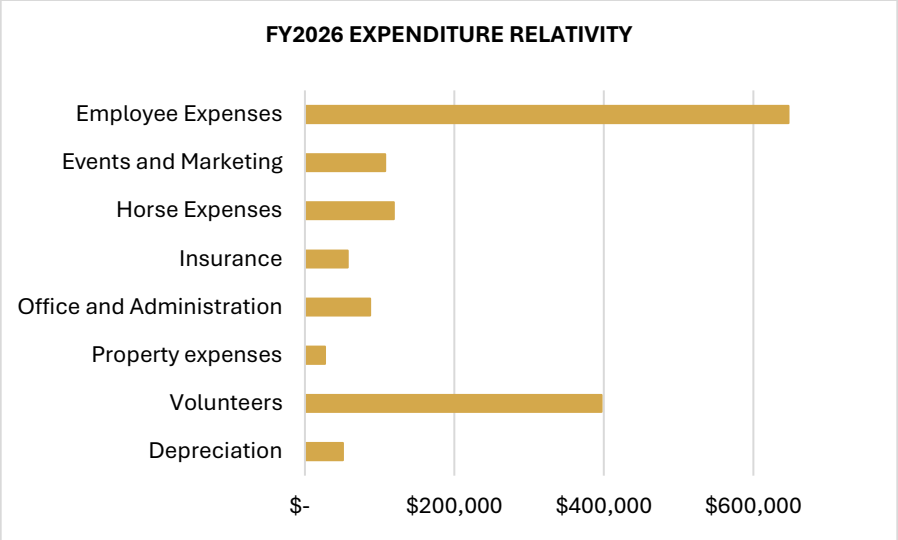
Income statement

REVENUE	FY2025 ($)	FY2026 ($)
Donations	441,144	199,154
Fundraising	166,868	315,416
Grant Income	95,794	87,429
Programs	123,496	120,172
Dividends and Interest	35,807	35,710
Other Income	29,806	37,131
Volunteers	286,966	396,785
Net Fair Gain on Investments	25,907	61,134
Total Revenue	**1,205,789**	**1,252,931**
EXPENDITURE	**FY2025 ($)**	**FY2026 ($)**
Employee Expenses	549,588	647,021
Events and Marketing	76,542	107,426
Horse Expenses	77,503	118,773
Insurance	59,668	57,426
Office and Administration	115,621	87,209
Property Expenses	26,265	26,667
Volunteers	286,966	396,785
Depreciation	59,982	50,918
Total Expenditure	**1,252,135**	**1,492,225**
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	**– 46,346**	**– 239,294**

Note: Total lines have been rounded to the nearest dollar.







Financial position

ASSETS	FY2025 ($)	FY2026 ($)
Cash and Cash Equivalents	463,696	217,450
Accounts Rec and Debtors	28,070	45,925
Prepayments	34,027	26,907
Accrued Income	1,327	-
Investments	469,215	430,348
Property, Plant and Equip	628,923	591,644
Total Assets	**1,625,258**	**1,312,274**
LIABILITIES	**FY2025 ($)**	**FY2026 ($)**
Accounts and Other Payables	45,269	63,470
Contract Liabilities	175,298	102,601
Employee Provisions	31,521	12,327
Total Liabilities	**252,088**	**178,398**
EQUITY	**FY2025 ($)**	**FY2026 ($)**
	1,373,170	**1,133,876**

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AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION TO THE BOARD OF RIDING FOR THE DISABLED OF THE ACT

In accordance with Subdivision 60-C of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, I am pleased to provide the following declaration of independence to the Board of Riding for the Disabled of the ACT.

As the lead audit partner for the audit of the general purpose financial statements of Riding for the Disabled of the ACT for the year ended 30 June 2026, I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 30 June 2026 there have been no contraventions of:

- the auditor independence requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* in relation to the audit; and
- any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

Ian Hollow
Partner and Registered Company Auditor
Charterpoint Pty Ltd

Dated this 22nd day of October 2026

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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE BOARD OF RIDING FOR THE DISABLED OF THE ACT INCORPORATED

Report on the Financial Report

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial report of Riding for the Disabled of the ACT Incorporated (the Association), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2026, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the members' declaration.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of the Association has been prepared in accordance with Div. 60 of the *Australian Charites and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, including:

i) giving a true and fair view of the Association's financial position as at 30 June 2026 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and

ii) complying with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and Div. 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulations 2022*.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the Association in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110: *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Responsibilities of the Members for the Financial Report

The members of the Association are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and for such internal control as the members determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the members are responsible for assessing the Association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the members either intend to liquidate the Association or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE BOARD OF RIDING FOR THE DISABLED OF THE ACT INCORPORATED

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detects a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Association's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the members.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the members' use of the going concern basis of accounting and based on the audit evidence obtained whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Association's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Association to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluated the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the members regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.



Ian Hollow
Partner and Registered Company Auditor
Charterpoint Pty Ltd

Dated this 22nd day of October 2026

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Making a difference across 2025–26

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RIDER SCHOLARSHIP FUNDERS

Belconnen Bowling Club Inc.

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Kevin Heindl

Rotaract Club of ACT

Samantha Fox

Tall Foundation

The Lions Club of Canberra Belconnen Inc.

The Lions Club of Canberra Kambah Inc.

The Lords Taverners ACT

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Tall Foundation

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Silos Estate Winery
Sophie Edwards
The Q Dining
Thoroughbred Park
Two Blind Mice
UK Farriers – Arlo Stephens
White Fallow Studios
Xibit Printers

NEW SUPPORTERS

Since the start of 2026–27, we have already welcomed exciting new partnerships with supporters, Build Like a Girl, Villaggio Sant' Antonio and Canberra Toyota.



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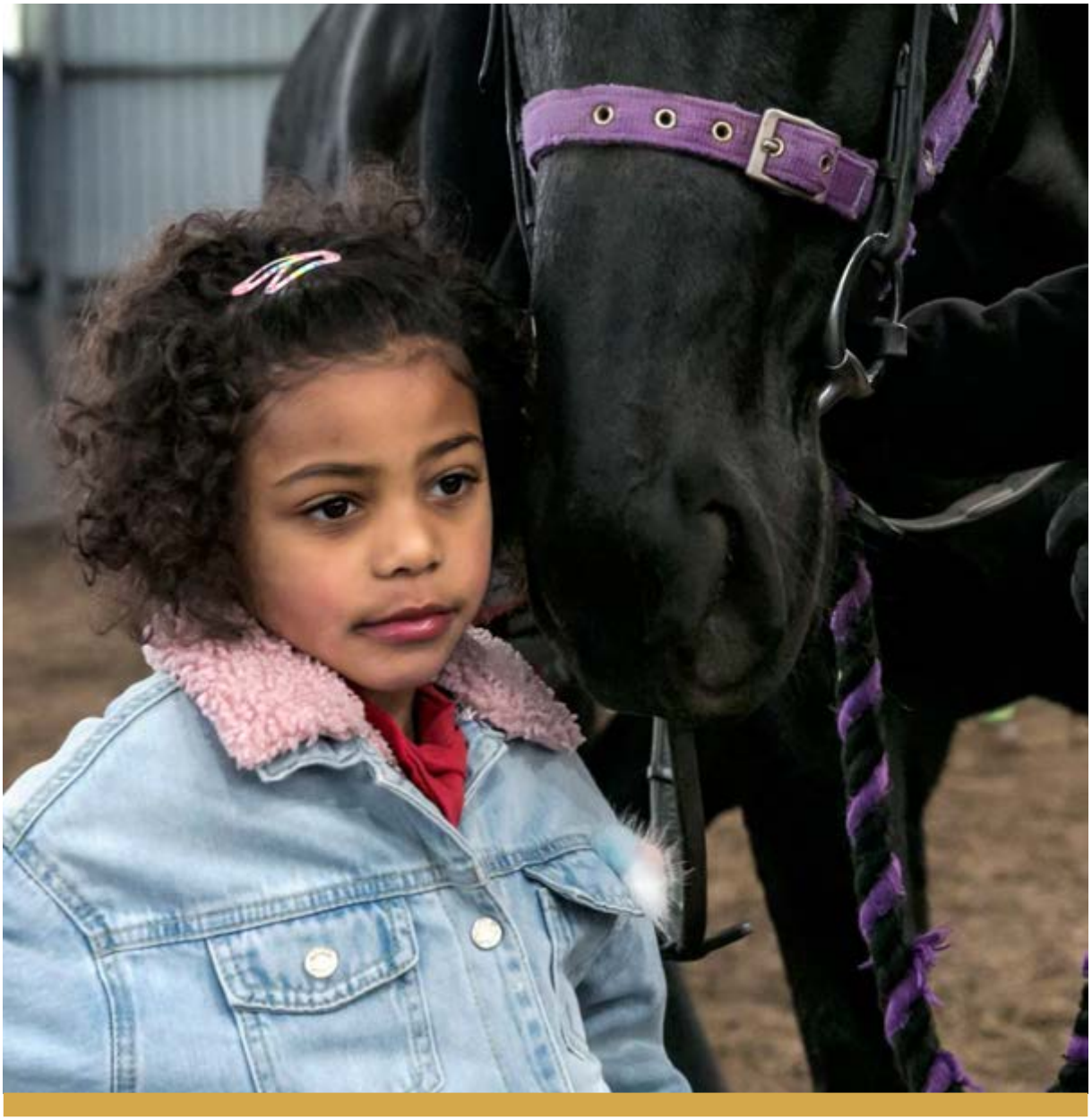
Today I picked up my children from their first day at Pegasus. They were so content! I saw them happy to chat to the staff, and delighted to be outside, to show their craft, to talk about their horses. They were so deeply content and happy in the car on the way home.

It is so rare to have somewhere where the children feel safe, a sense of belonging and where their sensory and social needs are accepted and the environment is suitable for them. And to be able to take the siblings together to the same place, and for them to be together with such trusted care, is such a gift to our family.

Katherine and David

Thank you to everyone who recognises the value of the work Pegasus does in the community and so generously ensures we can continue to make a difference.



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