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A farming education

Henk Geertsema joins CLA Charitable Trust Trustee Giles Bowring on a visit to charity Jamie's Farm's newly-launched Yorkshire location



Small groups are key in giving one-to-one attention and support. Weekly day visits will increase to three or four a week by the end of 2023.

Over the next two or three years, there are plans to convert farm buildings to host residential visits for up to 12 youngsters and two supervisors.

Giles Bowring, longstanding CLA member and CLACT trustee, says: "The visit to Jamie's Farm in the north illustrated exactly why the Trust has historically supported this charity. Seeing young people immersing themselves in outdoor and indoor farming activity was delightful. Most striking was listening to youngsters reflecting confidently on their experiences at the farm."

Jamie's Farm was founded by ex-teacher Jamie Feilden and his psychotherapist mother, Tish, in 2009, and has since worked with more than 13,000 children through its residential and day-visit programme. Of those at risk of exclusion before visiting Jamie's Farm, 75% were no longer at risk six months afterwards.

Commenting on the launch of the latest farm, Jamie says: "It is an incredibly exciting time for us supporting our partner schools in the Yorkshire and the families in the local community. The funding support provided by CLACT has been vital in strengthening our offering to enrich and transform young people's lives."

Educational charity Jamie's Farm, which has received CLA Charitable Trust (CLACT) grant funding, recently opened its first farm in the north at Coniston Cold near Skipton. It is a welcome addition to its other locations in Bath, Hereford, Monmouth, East Sussex and London.

The 245-acre commercial farm with 400 ewes and 60 heifers is managed by Mark and Emily Carnie, who relocated from Herefordshire last year. Mark manages the regenerative farming operations while Emily co-ordinates visits with two volunteers.

Jamie's Farm uses nature and animals to help vulnerable young people transform their lives through therapeutic support focused on farming, family, therapy and legacy. Practical, purposeful work is key, and includes hands-on group activities such as collecting firewood, mucking out enclosures and preparing food.

With each visit, phones, fizzy drinks and other treats are handed



in, enabling youngsters to focus on practical on-farm experiences. Emily adds: "We hear from so many of our children and our visiting teachers how well they are then able to translate these changes into achievements in their school lives, too."

Day visits are initially capped at two days per week, and the first intake involved nine children from the Beckfield Co-op Academy in Bradford, who visited over a five-week period.

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cla.org.uk/about-cla/charitable-trust-jamiesfarm.org.uk