



Monday 9.16am

Wow! I'm actually here at Pony Camp! At last!

Jody, who runs Sunnyside Stables gave me this fabulous Pony Camp diary to write down my adventures this week. There's even a space on the cover to stick a picture of MY pony – I can't wait to meet him ... or her! I wonder who I'll get?! Typically, Mum and Dad got me here mega early and no one else has come yet, so I'm starting right this second! Jody gave me a map, too, and a timetable, and we're having a gymkhana on Friday with prizes and everything – SO exciting!! I've never entered any competitions before and I'd love to win a rosette for my pony pinboard at home. That would be brilliant!



When Mum and Dad were registering me in the office, which is in the yard, I had a sneaky peek around and this place is amazing!



I saw a really huge horse in the stables, the kind that pulls ploughs. I hope I don't get him 'cos he's massive!

There were these two cute cheeky ponies tied up in the yard too, getting their tails washed by a girl with curly blonde hair, but they'd be too small for me. Then I noticed a huge field up the track that had lots more ponies in, including a cute cobby piebald and a prancing palomino. I can't wait to find out which one will be mine!

I'm so nervous it feels as if my Rice Krispies are doing a dance in my stomach!



I've never stayed away from home on my own before and I'm extra specially jittery 'cos of this secret thing I did. On the booking form, in the comments section, I put that I would like a forward-going pony!



This is a big wow because at my riding school I always get stuck with plodders. I'm too shy to say anything though, so people think I like lumbering along at the back of the ride having to kick like crazy just to get a tiny trot. But I'm ready for a challenge now – and Pony Camp is it! No one knows me here so I'm going to be a different girl. Not Megan who still has a nightlight on in the hall and won't join in with football in the park in case she gets whacked in the head by accident. But a whole new kind of Megan...



I'm even hoping to do some more jumping while I'm here (I've only had a couple of tries so far).



I'm lying on my bunk bed writing this. I've bagsied the bottom one which is cool 'cos you can hang your towel down from the bed above and it makes a secret camp. I've already hidden my tuckbox under my bed in case we get to have a midnight feast! I can't wait to meet the girls I'm sharing with. And most of all I can't wait to see which pony I'm getting!

Oh, gotta go, some of the other girls are here now... (I really hope they like me!)

P.S. I just met my room-mates, Millie and Gabrielle. Millie is Jody's daughter and she lives here all the time (how lucky is that?!) and she's got her own pony, called Tally (how even luckier is that?!). Gabrielle is really nice too (phew!). She has these cool pony hair bobbles, and me and Millie just helped her plait her long wavy blonde hair and it looks really cool. I'm going to buy the exact same ones the second I get home.



Gabrielle's hair bobbles



Still Monday,
after yummy lunch

I GOT MY PONY!!

He's called Mischief and he's completely gorgeous. Here's a quick profile of him:

Megan's Pony Profile

NAME: Mischief

HEIGHT: 13 hh

AGE: 6

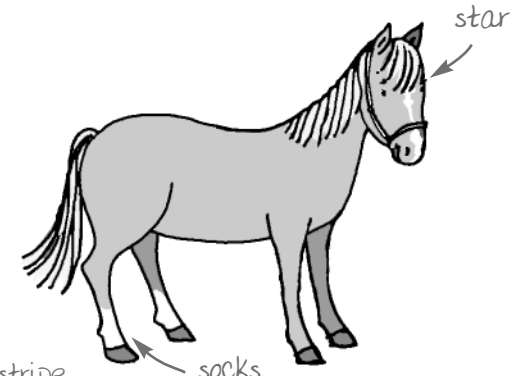
BREED: Arab cross

COLOUR: Palomino

MARKINGS: Star and stripe,
and white socks on hind legs

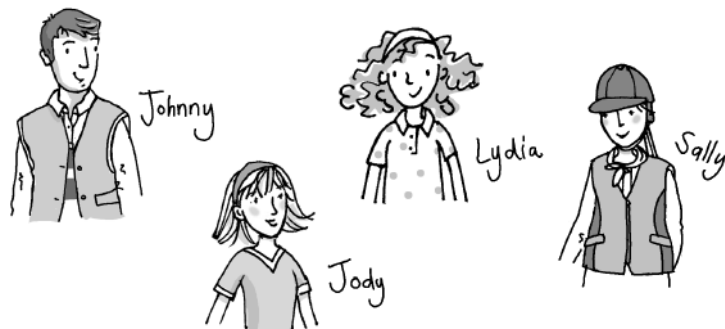
FAVE FOODS: Pony nuts and carrots

PERSONALITY: Really sweet and cheeky,
but quite naughty (I'll write more about that later!)





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Before we got our ponies, Jody did a welcome talk and introduced us to all the staff. Lydia is the girl with blonde curly hair who I saw before. She's a stable hand, which is my dream job – imagine getting paid to look after ponies all day! Sally is the instructor and she has these cool army print half chaps that I've wanted since I saw them in *Pony* magazine. Jody looks after us and does all the cooking (we're all going to help too, but she's in charge) and her husband Johnny is the Yard Manager and Millie's dad!

Next Jody got us to say our names and where we were from. There are nine of us including Millie, three in each room. Carla is the youngest (she's only six) and she's in with



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Chloe and Tam, these two friends who came all the way from Manchester! In the other room there are three almost-teenagers sharing together – Kate and Karen the twins are smiley and nice, but Jade looks a bit moody. She wears lots of make-up and has blonde hair that she keeps flicking round as if she's in a shampoo ad.



Anyway, back to MY PONY!

When Lydia led this gorgeous pony out of the stable I crossed my fingers really tight, hoping he was for me. Then I heard Sally say, "Megan, you asked for a challenge, so we'll try you on Mischief."





I could hardly believe it! He was the gorgeous palomino I'd seen in the field! I wanted to jump up and down and scream, "Yes! Yes! Yes!" but I didn't in case it spooked the ponies.

Kate got this handsome black gelding called Rupert.



Gabrielle got the cute cobby piebald, who's called Prince.

Moody Jade got a glossy chestnut called Shine, who flicks her tail round in the same way Jade does with her hair – so they suit each other well! I don't remember who the others got because I was too excited about Mischief!



We tacked up (Lydia helped me with getting the bit in) and waited to mount up on the block, ready for our first lesson. Once I was on I felt quite high up on Mischief, but as he's a light



build I could wrap my legs round his sides nicely. I even tightened my own girth, and I felt really cool and grown up just sorting it out myself – until Mischief started wandering off while I still had my leg forward. Lydia had to come back over and hold him still, so then I didn't feel very cool after all!

At first, when we got in the ménage we just had to walk round on the track and think about sitting up straight and keeping our hands relaxed and our heels down. There were no complete beginners and everyone could trot at least, so that was okay.

Then it all went not okay, 'cos Mischief started doing Naughty Things. Like:



Naughty Thing 1

We did trotting to the back of the ride one by one and I think Mischief got bored of walking round and round waiting for his turn because



he kept going really close to the person in front, which was Gabby, and nearly sticking his nose up Prince's tail. Sally told me to use half halts to keep him in check, but that didn't really work because he just kept stopping completely!

Naughty Thing 2



When it was our turn and I asked for trot, Mischief just leaped backwards and started skittering about. Everyone was looking at me and I felt really panicky, but then Sally strode towards us and so Mischief started behaving after all. Well, until...

Naughty Thing 3

When we did some practice of going over trotting poles, Mischief got a bit excited and barged up the side of Shine. I pulled on the reins and leaned back but I still crashed legs with Moody Jade. I'm sure it didn't hurt but she



made a big fuss, crying, "Argh!" really loudly and saying that I'd got no control. I pretended not to hear, but I just KNOW everyone else was listening. After that I tried really hard to keep out of trouble but...

Naughty Thing 4



We were going round cones and Mischief went absolutely miles round them, like way over to the edge of the ménage. Sally called out, "Time to take charge and get tough, Megan!" which was awful because it was like being told off in front of everyone and I was already trying my hardest – but Mischief was just ignoring me!

But the worst thing was when Sally asked some of us to ride our ponies into the middle (including me!) while the others had a canter round the track. I was really upset because I've done loads of cantering on Fella back at home,



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even if it was only short bursts after lots of encouraging him.

I'm worried that Sally thinks I'm not a very good rider. I really want to win something in the gymkhana and have another try at jumping.



But for that to happen I'll have to get tough with Mischief like she said. But HELP! How do I do that? I'm not the sort of person who usually gets tough about anything. Usually I tell Dad and he gets tough for me, like when Julian Mason put a snowball down my back at school and Dad rang up Mr Thomas the head. But Dad isn't here to help me now! I'll just have to turn into Megan the Brave and show Mischief who's

BOSS!

Oh, time to go again!