

	Policy
	Policy Category: Health and Safety
	Date: 15 January 2025
	Policy Name: Caring for Animals

The purpose of this operational policy is to ensure appropriate compliance with Licencing Criteria HS16.

Position Statement

As a Centre we recognise the positive aspects and learning opportunities of interaction between animals and children. We will set an example for the children of what it means to love and care for an animal and the responsibility involved. We aim to create a safe and healthy environment for the children.

Issue Outline

It is essential that any animals kept at our centre are managed and cared for in a way that ensures the risk of an animal infecting or harming a child is significantly minimised. We acknowledge that animals may pose some health and safety risks, so have a policy in place to minimise these. The welfare of the animal will be given high priority.

Detail

General:

- The day-to-day care of animals will be governed by the Animal Welfare Act 1999 and the Five Freedoms:
 - Freedom from thirst, hunger and malnutrition
 - Freedom from discomfort and lack of shelter
 - Freedom from Injury, disease and parasite infestation
 - Freedom from distress
 - Freedom to display their normal patterns of behavior
- The Centre Manager will only allow clean, healthy and easily restrained animals on the premises
- Animals shall not be permitted in the kitchen, bathrooms or toilets; under-two play areas and sleeping rooms
- Every endeavour will be made to deter animals from sandpits and bark under surfacing
- We will ensure that animals are supplied with a good healthy living environment including at weekends and holidays.

Procedure:

1. The responsibility for the welfare of animals kept at this Centre, rests with the teachers
2. A duty roster will ensure the animals living conditions are maintained to a high standard of cleanliness.
3. Any animal faecal matter and offensive body wastes outside of the animal's cage will be cleaned up and disposed of immediately and the area disinfected.
4. It is the responsibility of teachers/staff to ensure that all children who have had contact with any animal wash their hands immediately after contact with that animal and prior to eating or drinking.
5. The animal will be removed from the premises and treated at the first sign of any illness. This is a legislative responsibility.
6. Animal food will be stored so that it is clearly distinguishable from human food.

Alignment with Other Policies

- Health and Safety Framework Policy
- Accident and Illness Policy

Relevant Background (including Legislation/Regulation/Licensing references)

Licensing Criteria 2008, Health and Safety, Hazards;

- **HS16** – Safe and hygienic handling practices are implemented with regard to any animals at the service. All animals are able to be restrained.
- Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008, Regulation 46;
 - (a) take all reasonable steps to promote the good health and safety of children enrolled in the service; and
 - (b) take all reasonable precautions to prevent accidents and the spread of infection among children enrolled in the service
- Animal Welfare Act 1999
 - The 5 Freedoms

Impacts of Policy on Staff, Parents, Children

Having a policy in place means that teachers/staff, children and animals can interact in a safe environment with reduced risk to health and safety. The responsibilities for the day to day welfare of the animals will be shared among the staff.

Alignment with the Centre Philosophy

This policy ensures a safe environment, a crucial part of creating and maintaining the well-being of children in our care.

Implications and/or Risks

Following this policy significantly reduces the risk of a child or teacher/staff member being harmed or exposed to infection from animals kept at this Centre. By abiding by welfare standards for any animals in our care we reduce the risk of prosecution for not upholding the 5 Freedoms under the Animal Welfare Act 1999.

Implementation

Clear procedures have been developed and teachers/staff are trained to follow them.

Review

Review annually or when there is a significant change in the area of the policy topic.

Authorised:	
Date:	
Review Date:	
Consultation undertaken:	Emailed Board, Teachers via staff room notice board and parents via foyer notice board and storypark.