



LANGUAGE AND LIFE SKILLS FOR CHILDREN

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PETS ON PREMISES POLICY

This policy links to:

The Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE 2017) Statutory Framework – Setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five.

Other Centre policies: Child Protection

1. VALUE AND BENEFITS OF PETS

- 1.1 We recognise that the provision of pets within the setting provides children with a wealth of learning opportunities regarding what animals need to live and thrive and the importance of taking care of them throughout the year. In the past we have had guinea pigs, hamsters, hedgehog, rats, dogs, cats, parrots and tortoises visit us.

2. HEALTH AND HYGIENE

- 2.1 Staff are fully aware of the importance of health and hygiene when children are in contact with animals.
- 2.2 Staff guide and monitor that children do not put their hands near their faces when they have been in contact with pets or pet foods before they wash their hands.
- 2.3 Staff ALWAYS ensure that ALL children wash their HANDS very well after touching or handling visiting pets or any pet food in the centre, and recognise that this is PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT when cleaning out a fish tank.

3. SAFETY

- 3.1. Staff are also aware of safety issues and ensure that children only come into contact with safe pets, children are instructed on how to behave and safely handle the pet and are closely supervised by staff at all times.

4. RISK ASSESSMENTS

- 4.1. Risk Assessments are carried out when pets visit the centre to ensure that all necessary precautions are taken to prevent accident, injury or the spread of infection, including hand washing, using sterilising gel and the avoidance of children putting hands and fingers in their mouths.

5. ANIMAL AWARENESS

The centre recognises of the value and importance of children seeing and having access to pets and animals we provide access to.

6. CARE OF PETS

- 6.1 We do not have any pets on the premises at the present time. However, whenever we have fish/hedgehog, children are encouraged to join in the feeding of the fish/hedgehog, and always wash their hands following contact with the food.
- 6.2. Similarly, centre staff take responsibility for keeping the fish tanks or pet cages clean and in full working order.

7. VISITING PETS

- 7.1 Occasionally pets are invited to visit the centre to support a topic or theme e.g. Animals and to enhance the children's learning with regard to the needs and behaviour of animals.
- 7.2 These animals may be pet dogs, cats, tortoises, guinea pigs/hamsters/rats, parrots,



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- hedgehogs belonging to families.
- 7.3 Other animals could occasionally be brought to the premises by an educational wildlife company for the children to look at, touch and hold when full hygiene precautions are undertaken.

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