

Policy Statement

Although animals are not a necessary part of the program, we believe that they can be a valuable source of learning and enjoyment for the children. Any animal that enters the centre must be safe and present no real danger to the children in any way. Staff will ensure that everyone at the centre treats any animal with respect and in a humane way at all times. Supervision will be maintained to ensure the safety of the children and the animal.

Considerations

- ✓ The Education and Care Services National Law 2010
- ✓ The Education and Care Services National Regulation 2011
- ✓ The Education and Care Services National Quality Standards 2011
- ✓ My Time Our Place Framework
- ✓ RSPCA – Animal Rights
- ✓ ACI Hygiene and Cleaning Policy, ACI First Aid Policy – Management of Incident, Injury, Illness, and Trauma

Procedures

- The decision to keep a pet or have an animal visit the centre will be made by the coordinator based on an observed need or value to the children.
- A risk benefit analysis will need to take place to weigh up the benefits versus the risk of having the animals at the service. This needs to take into account any children at the service who may have a fear, phobias or allergies to particular animals and if these children will be in care on the day that the animals will be at the service.
- Any animal or bird will only be considered with the clear understanding of them being safe and suitable with children, and an assurance that the animal will be properly cared for.
- No animal, bird or livestock will be allowed in the centre or grounds which is likely to be a source of infection or which may in any way be detrimental to the wellbeing of the children.
- Any livestock or reptile shows that come to the centre must be presented by an authorised or professional handler.
- Families will be notified, in advance of the day/s, when the service will have animals at the service, that we have undertaken a risk benefit analysis and where they can access this document.
- Checks will be made regarding individual children and staff allergies before considering an animal in the centre.
- All animals, which are kept in the centre, shall be maintained in a clean and healthy condition.
- All hygiene procedures will be followed regarding cleaning and disposal of waste.
- All animals will be kept away from any food or food preparation areas.
- Everyone at the centre will treat all animals with respect and in a humane way at all times.
- The Shift Supervisor will be responsible for designating the duty of ensuring that the animal is appropriately fed and watered.
- A record book will be used to document when the animal was last fed, and any other information such as medical checks or incidents will be documented.
- Children should be part of this routine, however it is the responsibility of staff to ensure children have fed, watered and cared for the pet and documented what they have done.
- Appropriate arrangements shall be made to ensure the animal is appropriately cared for over weekend and holiday breaks.
- Children will be educated on an ongoing basis on how to properly care for and handle animals.
- Children will be reminded about hygiene practices required after handling any animal and staff will ensure that this is maintained, this will be in line with ACI Hygiene and Cleaning Policy.
- In the event that an individual is injured as a result of handling and interacting with animals and pets that are part of the service program, Staff are to follow the guidelines outlined in ACI First Aid Policy – Management of Incident, Injury, Illness and Trauma, to ensure appropriate care is given to the injured party.
- Pets will have access to medical treatment, if the need arises.
- Families are not to bring in family pets to the service, (eg walk the family dog to the service to collect child) unless it has been arraigned prior to the day with the service coordinator that this is to occur. The safety of the children in our care

Animal and Pet Policy

must be maintained, both animals and children can be unpredictable in new and stressful situations and we cannot put place safe guards in place if we are unaware the animal will be at the service.

- Families must not bring vicious or unhealthy animals to the centre.
- Families who bring an animal onto the service premises, without prior consent, will be asked to remove the animal immediately and children are to be moved away from the area until this has taken place.

- We recognise that native wildlife may be in our environment when we go out to play.
- Children are to be educated, to respect the space of animals that we may share in play environment eg: birds, lizards etc, through intentional and spontaneous discussions with the children.
- Daily checks of the play environment should be done, for any snakes and spiders that they may be in the play area.
- Children should, when safe to do so, assist staff with the checks, so that they are aware of what to look for and how to keep themselves safe. Eg: big spider web in the playground is a good indicator that there is a spider in that area, so we should not play there etc.
- In the event that we do have these dangerous animals on the premises, and if safe to do so, staff are to remove the spider from the environment. If it is a snake or a suspected poisonous spider on the premises staff are to ensure no child is to enter this area until the animal has been removed. Staff must immediately inform the shift supervisor, who then needs to inform school principal of the animals and/or call Sydney animal control. Under no circumstance are staff to attempt to remove these dangerous animals from the environment.

Checklist for Staff

- Ensure the safety of both children and animal.
- Conduct a risk benefit analysis for the proposed activities.
- Ensure the animal is being appropriately cared for.
- Children are to be taught to interact with animals in a safe manner, respecting animals, through spontaneous and intentional teaching opportunities.
- Daily checks of the environment to ensure that there are no dangerous animals (snakes and spiders) in the environment.
- Any animal that is brought to the service without the prior knowledge of the coordinators/shift supervisor is to be removed immediately, and children kept away from animal.
- If dangerous animal in the environment, staff are not to put themselves at risk. Do not attempt to remove the animal, inform shift supervisor, who will contact appropriate personal.

_____ end of policy _____

Policy is only endorsed if initialled by 2 members of the management committee

Endorsed by the Management Committee on the 04th April 2016

Management Committee Policy is to be reviewed by the 04th April 2019