

Animals in the Setting Policy

Overarching Principles : Early Learning Goals : Prime Areas : Specific Areas : World:

Children make observations of animals and plants and explain why some things occur and talk about changes.

Policy Statement

Children learn about the natural world, its animals and other living creatures, as part of the Learning and Development Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Parkfield Montessori Pre-school recognises the value of having pets in the setting as this enables the children to have the experience and opportunity to nurture and care for the animal. It enables them to learn about life cycles and encourages them to understand the needs of other living creatures. We aim to ensure that this is in accordance with sensible hygiene and safety controls.

Animals in the setting as pets

We consider the views of parents and children when selecting an animal or creature to keep as a pet in the setting, as well as any allergies or issues that individual children may have to specific animals or creatures. Pets will only be bought from a registered breeder or pet shop.

We carry out a risk assessment with a knowledgeable person accounting for any hygiene or safety risks posed by the animal or creature.

We provide suitable housing for the animal or creature and ensure this is cleaned out regularly and is kept safely.

Fish tanks are to be kept on a deep shelf, so they can be observed by the children and staff safely.

Our staff are knowledgeable of the pet's welfare and dietary needs and ensure that the correct food is offered, at the right times.

All staff will promote a positive attitude to the pet. A staff member who is nervous or anxious about the pet should not take care of it as this will be obvious to the children.

We make arrangements for weekend and holiday care for the animal or creature.

We register with the local vet.



We make sure all vaccinations and other regular health measures, such as deworming, are up-to-date and recorded.

We always teach the children the correct handling and care of the animal or creature and supervise them. Children are not encouraged to kiss the pet.

We ensure the children wash their hands before and after handling the animal or creature and do not have contact with animal soil or bedding.

Children can clean the cages/habitats but are not allowed to touch the urine or faeces of the pet.

We wear disposable gloves when cleaning housing or handling soiled bedding.

If the animal or creature is sick it will be removed from the setting until it is better or has been seen by the vet to avoid infecting the children if it is contagious.

When a pet dies we will be open and honest with the children remembering to be sensitive about their feelings and allow them to ask questions. Books might be able to help with this time.

We will keep relevant reference books for the children to look at and help staff care for the pet.

If animals or creatures are brought in by visitors to show the children, they are the responsibility of the owner.

The owner carries out a risk assessment, detailing how the animal or creature is to be handled and how any safety or hygiene issues will be addressed.

Visits to Farms

Before a visit to a farm, we carry out a risk assessment – this may take account of safety factors listed in the farm's own risk assessment, which should be viewed.

We contact the venue in advance of the visit to ensure there has been no recent outbreak of E. coli or other infections. If there has been an outbreak, we will review the visit and may decide to postpone it.

We follow our Outings Policy.

Children wash and dry their hands thoroughly after contact with animals.

Outdoor footwear worn to visit farms is cleaned of mud and debris as soon as possible on departure and should not be worn indoors.

We advise staff and volunteers who are, or may be, pregnant to avoid contact with ewes and to consult their GP before the visit.



This policy is reviewed annually, or as deemed necessary.

Policy adopted.....(date)

Signed.....