

Animals in the Setting Policy

Policy statement

At Natural Nurture Nursery we encourage our children to learn about the natural world, and other living creatures as part of the E.Y.F.S curriculum. This will often include contact with animals either inside the setting or, from time to time, outside the setting when we are on a visit.

We aim to ensure sensible hygiene and safety controls are in place at all times.

Procedures

Animals in and outside the setting:

- We take into account the views of our parents and children when selecting animals or creatures to have in the setting.
- Risk assessments are carried out, taking into account hygiene, safety and health risks.
- Parents are fully informed about which animals are on the premises and advised if new animals arrive.
- Religious beliefs, allergies and anxieties about animals are taken into account and discussed fully with parents.
- Parents decide if they do not want their children in contact with a particular animal and procedures are put in place on a case-by-case basis. In the case of minor allergies and anxieties, parents decide if they would like the nursery to plan gradual habituation to particular animals. With allergies, parents decide whether and how antihistamines are used.
- In the case of severe allergies, the nursery requests that these are disclosed at point of registration of interest and risk assessments are carried out together with the parents prior to admission. Advice is sought from the child's doctor or allergy clinic when the child's place is confirmed and an action plan is made in consultation with parents. Staff and all adults at the setting are made fully aware of these procedures and how to manage them sensitively.
- Suitable housing is provided for our animals and they are cleaned out regularly by an adult, not by children. Children may add the clean straw under supervision.
- The two dogs that we have on the setting are gradually introduced to the children. They remain in the farmhouse area or are with farm staff around the farm, the farm staff are trained to look after the dogs, which are very well behaved. The dogs are supervised closely when with children (for instance accompanying the group on walks) and farm staff can be radioed to collect them at any time.
- Our animals are fed and watered on a regular basis. Feeds are dry and 100% natural and organic. They are prepared in a designated building.
- Our animals are cared for when the nursery is closed, by the owner.
- Our animals are registered with the local vets. Their health is monitored by the

owner and treatment administered where necessary.

- If an animal is sick, it is quarantined away from children and a decision taken about whether the vet is called. The owner and Manager will do a risk assessment and seek advice from Environmental Health.
- If there is any risk to health and safety of the children, the nursery will be closed and children will wait in a safe space with staff until they are collected.
- The children at the nursery are taught how to handle the animals and are supervised at all times.
- Children always wash their hands thoroughly after having contact with animals or creatures and/or their food.
- Animals brought into the setting by a visitor to show our children are the responsibility of the owner.
- The owner of the animal carries out their own risk assessment of how the animal is handled and safety procedures are followed.
- All staff are shown copies of the risk assessment so they are fully aware of any safety issues.
- CCTV monitors the arrival of dogs onto the setting. Staff are notified when dogs come onto the public footpath, and when they leave.
- Staff have a procedure for calling the children into a safe space immediately, if an animal poses any safety risk at any time. The children are taught to follow this procedure and practice it regularly.

Legal framework

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

Further guidance

Health and Safety Regulation: A Short Guide (HSE 2003)

NHS pet hygiene: <http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/homehygiene/pages/pethygiene.aspx>

RSPCA: www.rspca.org.uk

This policy was adopted at a meeting of The Natural Nurture Nursery Management Committee held on the 22nd January 2016.