



NORTHSIDE Primary School

Pet Policy

Last review: March 2020

Ratified: April 2020

Review: March 2022

Rationale

At Northside we believe that keeping animals is an effective way of enhancing the educational opportunity of our pupils.

Whilst keeping animals at our school is particularly beneficial to our pupils, we understand that we have a legal duty of care towards any animals we are responsible for, and that this must be a priority at all times. This policy has been created in order to outline the key responsibilities and procedures for pupils and staff when looking after our animals.

This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following and links to other school policies

- The Pet Animals Act 1951.
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
- The Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976.
- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.
- The Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986.
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- The Animal Welfare Act 2006.
- Health and Safety Policy.
- First Aid Policy.

Key Principles

Our principles for bringing animals into the school environment are:

- Encourage pupils to consider the experiences and needs of other living things, including other pupils, school staff, and their families.
- Help pupils develop a calm, confident, and sensitive manner when interacting with animals.

Northside Values

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| RESPECT | to respects the needs of our school pets |
| PRIDE | to have confidence in our abilities to care for other living things |
| INCLUSION | to have develop empathy and responsibility for other living things |
| CHALLENGE | to demonstrate best practice in the care of our school pet. |
| CREATIVITY | to promote an interest in the natural environment and support hands-on learning across all areas of the curriculum. |
| RESILIENCE | to encourage pupils to consider careers working with animals |

UN Rights of the Child:

Article 31: Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.

In Practice

Duty of Care

The Animal Welfare Act 2006 places a duty on schools to make provision for the welfare of any animal that they are responsible for.

Under this Act, the welfare of an animal includes the following criteria:

- Its need for a suitable environment
- Its need for a suitable diet (food and fresh water)
- Its need to be able to exhibit normal behaviour patterns
- Its need to be housed with, or away from, any other animals
- Its need to be protected from pain, suffering and disease

The headteacher and the designated member of staff responsible for the animals, Sian Parry, will conduct a risk assessment prior to the arrival of the animals to ensure that all risks are manageable and are controlled.

Where animals are brought in for a short period – for example, for a day – an appropriate and detailed protocol will be implemented that ensures the wellbeing of the animal, and the health and safety of others, for the duration of its visit. This will include the provision of assurances from the owner as to the means of transporting and housing the animal, and the responsibility to bring any equipment, food or water likely to be required during the day.

Sian Parry will be responsible for the welfare and husbandry of the animals at all times. A care programme will be in place for each creature, establishing the maintenance of minimum welfare standards.

Training for Pupils and Staff

All pupils and staff will undergo training on a regular basis to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities when looking after the animals, including: feeding, hygiene, handling and how to spot signs of infestation and disease.

Food

The headteacher/caretaker will establish a rota for looking after the animals before, during and after the school day, as well as during holidays and weekends.

A vet will be consulted to establish the type and quantity of food required for each animal. This will be sourced from a reputable supplier to ensure it is of appropriate nourishment suitable to their age and breed.

- A dry, vermin-proof container will be used to store the different animals' food, keeping it dry and preventing waste.
- Food will be provided accordingly, depending on the animal, by a member of staff and/or pupils supervised by a member of staff.
- All animals must have continuous access to a supply of clean, fresh drinking water.
- Troughs and other containers must be suitable for the animals using them (e.g. the correct height and dimension to allow easy access) and must be easy to clean.
- The school will ensure that there is an adequate supply of food available at all times to avoid any drought of food.

Housing and Environment

All buildings/shelters will be adequately ventilated, whilst ensuring animals are protected from draughts. All animals must have access to a comfortable, solid-based lying area, with plenty of suitable bedding material. It must be replaced/replenished regularly to ensure that it remains dry. Any fencing used must be strong enough to contain the species in question, must be frequently inspected and properly maintained, and must not have the potential to cause injury to the animals.

Where school-based animals are taken home by pupils, a suitable home-school agreement will be devised to encourage the observation of the same principles at home as those governing their husbandry in schools – both from the perspective of pupil safety and animal welfare.

Cleaning and Maintenance

- A cleaning rota will be created to ensure each animal is cleaned and cared for to a specified standard.
- Hands will be washed before and, of course, after cleaning cages, tanks, etc. Rubber or plastic gloves will be worn whenever possible.
- After removing soiled litter material, cages must be scrubbed with hot water and liquid detergent. The detergent cleaner, as well as any other chemicals purchased, will be checked in accordance with the school's Health and Safety Policy to ensure that they are not hazardous to the animals or to the members of staff using them.
- All bedding will be removed and replaced, and all droppings will be scraped into the bucket provided. Both the bedding and droppings will be disposed of appropriately by the member of staff carrying out the cleaning duties.
- The water and food feeders will be cleaned on a weekly basis to avoid any build-up of green algae which can be harmful to animals.
- Pregnant staff and anyone with suppressed immunity will exercise particular caution and avoid all contact with animal waste products.

Animal Handling

When handling animals, the welfare of the animal must be taken into account and good hygiene procedures should be in place:

- Do not consume food or drink.
- Cover any open cuts or abrasions on the exposed skin of hands and arms with waterproof adhesive dressings.
- Wash your hands with soap and water before and directly after handling animals.
- Keep animals away from your face.
- Children must be taught by staff the correct way to hold each animal.
- Mammals will be handled daily if possible. In this way they will become quite tame and accustomed to being handled.
- Animals will be given adequate rest periods away from disturbances.

Infestation and Disease

All members of staff are responsible for identifying ill health of the animals and reporting any concerns to the caretaker, who will then contact the vet and inform the headteacher.

A veterinary health plan will be in place to arrange the following:

- Regular check-ups
- Any additional check-ups as required
- Treatment for prevention of external and internal parasites, including vaccinations
- Response to, and provision for, seriously ill or deceased animals
- Any other procedures necessary for the maintenance of the animals' health
- In any case of infestation or disease, appropriate treatment will be sought immediately and the animal(s) will be moved into a separate enclosure away from the others until they are back to full health.
- If the animals are found to have any disease which is contagious to humans, the headteacher will inform parents/carers immediately and the animal(s) will be removed from the premises for appropriate treatment

Injuries sustained to pupils and staff

Any injuries sustained to pupils or staff during the looking after of the animals will be reported to the headteacher immediately, and will be dealt with in accordance with the school's First Aid Policy. All incidents will be reported using the Animal Incident Log.

Animal Incident Log

Date and time of incident:	Reported by:	Recorded by:	Description of incident:	Was property damaged? (Y/N)	Were pupils or staff placed in danger or harmed? (Y/N)	Recommended actions: