



A Co-operative Academy

Rickle Park Primary School Animal and Pet Policy

Approved and adopted by:	
Signed by:	
Date:	January 2018
Date of Review:	Spring 2021

Reviews and Amendments		
Date	Committee	Amendments

Animal and Pet Policy

1. Key Values

We have the same chances.

We have the same choices.

We know that everyone has something special to contribute.

We persevere and work hard, not because we are told to but because we want to improve.

We look after ourselves, each other and our world by taking responsibility for our actions.

We let everybody talk and have their say.

2. Aims

2.1 As a school we aim to create a happy, safe environment that nurtures and supports all members of our school community which:

- ensures that everyone has the opportunity to excel irrespective of their background;
- sets every child high expectations, and provide appropriate support, so that they reach their full potential;
- prepares children for the next stage of their education and beyond;
- leads to everyone experiencing success, whilst also feeling secure enough to risk failure;
- motivates, inspires and expects all children to strive to improve on their personal best;
- develops passionate and determined life-long learners who understand how to progress, achieve goals and reflect;
- develops working co-operatively;
- develops confident children who are able to articulate their views and reflect on the views of others.
- provides a curriculum that embeds good working habits and develops independence;
and
- provides a balanced curriculum which develops a breadth of knowledge and relevant skills the future.

Handling Animals

Rationale:

Having pets in school can be a very educational experience. As well as curriculum links, children can learn about anatomical differences as well as develop key empathy skills and an understanding of responsibility. Interaction with animals at a young age is essential.

Before any animal is allowed in school, either temporarily for a visit or as a classroom pet, permission school must be obtained and discussed with the Head teacher. A reason for the animal being on the premises will be required.

1. Careful handling of small mammals and other animals is most important, animals should be restrained sufficiently so that, they cannot damage themselves or the handler in what is potentially, an unfamiliar environment.
2. Where animals will be handled by pupils then it should be checked that the :
 - animal is used to being handled and has been gradually introduced into school;
 - animal is not likely to be stressed by excitable children;
 - correct way to hold any animal is taught to children from the outset

- (e.g. fingers poked towards the mouths of normally non-aggressive animals may be interpreted as an offering of food and obligingly bitten)
- handling of small animals should be carried out over a table or preferably some form of soft surface to minimise the risk of injury caused by falling or being dropped.
3. In order to minimise the risk of infection, basic good hygiene should be followed when handling animals:
- 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 hands with soap and water before and directly after handling animals (very young pupils should be supervised to ensure this is done properly);
 - keep animals away from the face;
 - any contaminated surfaces should be properly washed and disinfected.
 - The animals habitat should be regularly cleaned by the year group team and waste disposed of correctly.

Diseases, parasites and allergies

The likelihood of diseases being passed on from pet animals is low. However allergic reactions to mammals, birds and a few other animals cannot be discounted. These might result from handling the animals or just from being near them and be detected by the development of skin rashes, irritation to the eyes and nose or breathing difficulties. Consent from parents before handling any animal in school will be sought so that allergies are known. All animals in school must be regularly vaccinated and wormed/flea drops applied to avoid potential contamination.

Hand washing soon after handling animals will help.

Teachers should watch for the development of allergic reactions in pupils who come into contact with the animals. Children known to have allergic reactions to specific animals must, of course, have restricted access to those that may trigger a response. In most cases, an allergic reaction will subside once the animal and the affected person are kept apart; in extreme cases, seek medical advice.

In order for there to be minimal risk to humans of diseases being transmitted from animals kept in schools, it is important that animals are obtained from accredited or high-quality sources. Unless these are known to have originated from a reliable source, it will not be possible to be confident that they are disease-free. Vaccinations should also be kept up to date.

Animal Health

4. Suitable arrangements must be in place for the wellbeing of animals even when only on site for a short time.
5. The Animal Welfare Act contains legal obligations to ensure animals needs are met. These include the need to :
 - a suitable environment;
 - a suitable diet (food and fresh water);
 - exhibit normal behaviour patterns;
 - be housed with, or apart from, other animals;
 - be protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease.

6. These responsibilities continue as long as the animal remains at school. Thus suitable arrangements must be made for their normal feeding, watering and cleaning during school holiday periods. If the animal is to go home with a family for the holiday period, this policy **MUST** be shared with the family and signed before the animal is handed over.
7. If animals have to be taken out of school during holiday periods then they should only be sent home with pupils if all of the following considerations can be satisfied.
 - It can be guaranteed that the animals will be looked after as well as usual.
 - Whoever is caring for the animals must have all the necessary information, equipment, food, skills, etc.
 - Parents must have been informed and given their consent (see above)
 - Steps will be taken to ensure that small mammals cannot come into contact with pet animals (cats, dogs, rodents or other mammals) or wild rodents (mice, rats, etc.) while off the school premises.
8. Animals must be housed properly, in clean conditions with appropriate containers used to transport them which retain the animal(s) securely.
9. Hands should be washed *before* and, of course, after cleaning cages, tanks etc. rubber or plastic gloves should preferably be worn, the cleaning should be done by staff only.
10. Any disposal of waste and equipment should be carried out immediately and in an appropriate manner.
11. All feeding equipment such as bowls, bottles etc will be cleaned and stored separately from human utensils in a suitable place out of children's reach to ensure their safety.
12. Any appropriate inoculations and treatments necessary, including veterinary health checks, must be given to the animal before any child comes into contact with them.

Occasionally pets can be brought into the school and the class teacher will need to approve the visit and complete a risk assessment before it takes place. Any necessary precautions will need to be put in place by the class teacher and or owner of the pet to ensure the safety of the children and staff.