

# Animal and Pet Policy

Having a relationship with a pet can help children develop a caring attitude and skills such as nurturing, responsibility, empathy and improved communication. Having a pet in an early childhood environment enables children who are not otherwise exposed to animals to learn these skills. The pet will become part of the daily educational program and lead to activities and learning about other animals.

Pets help children from a young age to learn to care for other living things. They can teach a sense of responsibility, caring and tolerance. They can offer many opportunities for developing observational skills and basic natural science experiences. If the educators wish to have a pet in the centre, they must make all the decisions in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor and families.

Educators are encouraged to foster children's ability to understand and respect the natural environment and the interdependence between people, plants, animals and the land. Responsible ownership of pets, animals or birds that may reside at the Education and Care Service or visit the premises is vital. Role models of appropriate behaviours with animals and guidance in caring for the needs of animals are beneficial for children.

## Centre Pets

Our centre aims to provide a safe and hygienic environment that minimises the risk of a child being harmed by an animal.

- Management, Educators, children and families should consider the rationale for having a pet and long-term implications of such a decision prior to getting the pet.
- All pets and their enclosures are to be kept clean and hygienic with appropriate bedding and water.
- Food will be made available for all pets and animals, but kept out of reach of children at all times.
- Any animal or pet kept at the centre will be regularly fed, cleaned, vaccinated, and regularly checked for fleas and wormed. Any animal in a cage will have its cage cleaned daily.
- Animals including pets will not be allowed in the sand pit or any other play area. In event that this happens, educators will refer to the Sand Pit Policy.
- Animals including pets will never be taken into the food preparation area nor will they be allowed near the eating or sleeping area.
- Anyone who has handled the animal or pet will immediately wash their hands after they have finished handling the animal or pet.
- Children's animal or pets will only be allowed in the centre when the Nominated Supervisor has granted permission. If an animal is brought to the Centre when families are collecting children it must be left at the gate far enough way so children cannot touch the animal through the fence.
- We will include in the program how to properly care for animals and how to treat them appropriately.
- Pets will not have access to children's bedding, toys, food preparation areas, eating surfaces and utensils
- Children must be closely supervised when accessing any animal or pet at the centre.

## Animal Visit

There are situations that may spontaneously occur, involving animals. For example, there may be a situation where an animal or bird has made its way into the centre. Educators may use this as a spontaneous learning experience for the children. At all times they will ensure the safety and wellbeing of the children.

A professional should monitor the animal's movements to ensure a speedy and efficient capture, but priority is to be given to educator, child and family safety. At no time is the potentially dangerous animal, insect or bird to be approached or touched by educators, children or families

## Pests & Vermin

- Pest control will occur at the Education and Care Service on an annual basis as a minimum.
- Educators will monitor any occurrences in the Centre to determine the success of control measures.
- If pests and vermin are seen, Educators will advise the Nominated Supervisor.



- The Approved Provider is responsible for arranging additional pest control visits.
- Where appropriate, Educators will discuss with the children safety issues relating to dangerous products, plants, vermin and objects.
- Educators will thoroughly clean all areas that animals or pests have accessed in the Education and Care Service with disinfectant.
- If the remains of an animal or animal faeces have been found, the remains will be disposed of according to the local Council guidelines and the area where the remains were found will be thoroughly disinfected.
- Educators are responsible for assessing any situation in the Education and Care Service where animals are involved to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of children, families and animals.

**Source:** Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, National Quality Standard, Staying Healthy in Child Care – Preventing Infectious Diseases in Child Care – 5<sup>th</sup> Edition. Department of Health, Health and Safety In Children’s Services Model Policies and Practices

**Date Implemented:** 16/04/2012

**Review Completed:** 16/01/2017

**Schedule for Review:** 16/01/2018

<b>National Quality Standard – NQS</b>	
<b>Quality Area 2: Children’s Health and Safety</b>	
<b>2.3.1</b>	Children are adequately supervised at all times
<b>2.3.2</b>	Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect Children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury
<b>Quality Area 3: Physical Environment</b>	
<b>3.1.1</b>	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, furniture, equipment, facilities and resources are suitable for their purpose.
<b>3.3</b>	The service takes an active role in caring for its environment and contributes to a sustainable future.
<b>3.3.2</b>	Children are supported to become environmentally responsible and show respect for the environment.
<b>Education and Care Service National Regulations</b>	
<b>168</b>	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
<b>Early Years Learning Framework</b>	
<b>Learning Outcome 2 - Children are connected with and contribute to their world</b>	
<b>2.4</b>	Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment

