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Animals in the Setting

Children learn about the natural world, its animals and other living creatures as part of the learning and development requirements of the EYFS. This may include contact with animals or other living creatures, either in the setting or on visits. We aim to ensure that this is in accordance with sensible hygiene and safety controls.

Procedures

Animals in the setting as pets

- We take account of the views of parents and children when selecting an animal or creatures to keep as a pet in the setting.
- 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.
- We ensure the correct food is offered at the correct time.
- We decide on weekend and holiday care for the animal or creature.
- We register with the local vet and take out appropriate pet care health insurance.
- We make sure all vaccinations and other regular health measures, such as de-worming, are up to date and recorded.
- Children are taught correct handling and care of the animal or creature will be supervised.
- Children wash their hands after handling the animal or creature and do not have contact with animal soil or soiled bedding.
- Staff wear disposable gloves when cleaning housing or handling soiled bedding.

Animals bought in by visitors

- 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 addresses.
- If any parent has to bring their pet to drop off or pick up an agreement has to have taken place before hand and all parents given the opportunity to agree or disagree to allowing the parent to do this. The agreement will be signed by the parent and reviewed regularly.

Visits to farms

- Before a visit to a farm, a risk assessment is carried out; this may take account of safety factors listed in the farm's own risk assessment which should be viewed.
- The outings procedure is followed.
- Children wash their hands after contact with animals.
- Outdoor footwear worn to visit farms is cleaned of mud and debris and should not be worn indoors.
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This policy was updated in May 2023 and will be reviewed in May 2024