

Policy Title: Animals in Kindergartens Policy

Classification: Teaching and Learning

Monitored by: Senior Teachers

Approved by: GM Professional Services

Effective Date: October 2021

Review Date: October 2023

Objective: To outline the ways in which animals will be cared for at kindergarten, and how children will be kept safe if they interact with any animals.

Commitment: HCK is committed to providing children with opportunities to observe, handle and care for a range of animals in safe and appropriate ways. The Association is committed to ensuring that any animals kept at kindergarten will have their welfare protected.

Related Documents

- Licensing Criteria for Early Childhood Education and Care Services (2008)
- Code of Ethical Conduct of the NZ Association of Science Educators (NZASE)
- Animal Welfare Act 1999
- SPCA Education Programme
- Animals in Kindergarten Guidelines (attached)

Policy Details:

1. Teaching teams will develop a procedure (using the Animals in Kindergarten Guidelines) that identifies how they have planned for the health and safety of the children and the animals during all interactions at kindergarten.
2. Animals bought into the kindergarten for educational purposes should be vaccinated.
3. All living creatures at kindergarten will be treated with care and respect.
4. All animals at kindergarten must be able to be restrained.
5. Where practicable, families will be informed when an animal visit is planned.
6. If teachers bring personal pets to kindergarten, it must be to enhance the existing programme.
7. Thorough planning and consultation with the teaching team and whānau must be done before any animals are acquired for the kindergarten. This includes how animals will be cared for during weekends and holidays.
8. Children will not be allowed to take animals home unless there is a clear, written undertaking from a parent/whānau that the animal will be cared for appropriately and responsibly.

Review:

This policy will be reviewed biennially in consultation with staff.

Animals in Kindergarten Guidelines



These guidelines should be used when developing a procedure to outline how the teaching team has planned for the health and safety of children and animals during any interactions.

Care of Children considerations:

- H&S practices for handling animals and hygiene routines for afterwards
- How the children will be kept safe
- How any blood, faeces, urine or other body fluids will be dealt with
- What will be done if an animal bites anyone
- How and by whom will the animals be supervised.

Care of Animals considerations:

- Animals must be housed in suitable environments that provide for their total care and wellbeing
- If the animals can be seen in the natural environment, this is more beneficial than long-term captivity
- Animals must be released again into the environment they were taken from, as soon as possible
- How the animal will respond to large groups of children
- How any animals kept at kindergarten will be cared for during weekends and holidays
- Diseased or injured animals will be treated promptly and will not be kept at kindergarten until they have recovered. If this is not feasible, they will be humanely destroyed.

Animals kept at kindergarten will be provided with their five basic needs:

- Freedom from thirst, hunger and malnutrition, including during weekends and holidays
- Freedom from discomfort and lack of shelter. They will be provided with appropriate cages or containers that are properly ventilated and hygienic, and do not allow exposure to extremes of noise, draughts and sunlight)
- Freedom from injury, disease and parasite infestation (by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment)
- Freedom from distress, through proper care and handling
- Freedom to display their normal patterns of behaviour.