

Nunawading Christian College

ELC & OSHC

Animal & Pet Policy



Document Control

Revision Number	Implementation Date	Review Date	Prepared By	Approved By
1	October 2022	October 2023	Shari Nyatanga	Leanne Peter



Rationale

Having a relationship with a pet and/or animal can help children develop a caring disposition 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 learn these skills. The pet will become part of the daily educational program and lead to activities and learning about other animals. The safety of children, however, is always our first priority. Our Service will ensure that no

National Quality Standard (NQS)

Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety		
2.1	Health	Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted.
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected.
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard

Quality Area 3: Physical Environment		
3.1.2	Upkeep	Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained.
3.2.3	Environmentally responsible	The service cares for the environment and supports children to become environmentally responsible.

Education and Care Services National Regulations

Children (Education and Care Services) National Law NSW	
168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed

Related Policies

Educational Program Policy
Environmentally Responsible Policy

Purpose

Having a pet at our Service can be a valuable part of children's education enriching their learning about nature, ecology and relationships. Our Service aims to provide a safe, hygienic and humane environment for all animals and pets that visit or reside at the Service, educating children in the proper care of animals.

Scope

This policy applies to management, the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, students, staff, families, visitors (including contractors) and children of the Service.

Implementation

The National Quality Standard encourages educators to understand and appreciate the natural environment and the interdependence between people, plants, animals and the land. Pets help children from a young age 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 provide basic natural science experiences.

Encouraging direct contact and developing bonds with animals can help children to develop empathy. Providing children with access to animals within our Service will help them learn about life cycles and relationships and improve communication skills. We feel role modelling of appropriate behaviours with animals and guidance in caring for the needs of animals are beneficial for children.

Assessing and Managing Risks

Whilst there are many benefits to providing children with access to animals and keeping pets at the Service, there are issues that Approved Providers and educators need to consider for the safety and wellbeing of both the children and the animals concerned prior to choosing a pet or having an animal visit the Service.

A comprehensive risk assessment should therefore be conducted when deciding the type of animal and the way the children engage with it.

Potential risks may include:

- Diseases- from birds (Parrot fever -psittacosis) and other animals
- Injury due to biting, kicking or pushing a child over (e.g. farm animals)
- Scratching (e.g. chickens, rabbits, guinea pigs)
- Pests and vermin (snakes, rats, mice)
- Allergies (e.g. bees, wasps, ants)

Effective Hand Washing and Cleaning

Children and adults should employ effective hand washing after touching or feeding animals, or cleaning their bedding, tanks, cages or enclosures. However, it is important to engage children with these tasks as they learn responsibility through 'hands on' learning experiences.

Appropriate Supervision and Clothing

Children should also be appropriately supervised when they have contact with animals to avoid potential injury or harm to the child or the animal.

Ensure children wear appropriate clothing and footwear when handling animals and pets. Be aware of children who may have allergies to insects such as bees, wasps and ants that may be more apparent when animals are kept in the service.

Service Pets

- Management and educators should prepare children for the animal visit, gaining perception into how the children may react to the pet
- 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 Service will be regularly fed, cleaned, vaccinated, and wormed (as appropriate), and checked for fleas and diseases



- 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 and adhere to the Sand Pit Policy
- Animals including pets will never be taken into the food preparation area nor will they have access to the eating or sleeping areas, toys, bedding, eating surfaces and/or utensils
- Anyone who has handled the animal or pet will immediately wash their hands
- Children's animal or pets will only be allowed in the Service when the Nominated Supervisor has granted permission
- The program will include how to properly care for animals and how to treat them appropriately.

Visits From Children's Pets

Occasionally a child may have a new pet such as a puppy or kitten that they wish to bring to the Service to show their peers and educators. Whilst this provides a wonderful learning experience for children, families must be advised to seek permission from the Nominated Supervisor prior to bringing in the pet. A risk assessment should then be completed before giving permission to the family. Families should also be advised that pets visiting the Service that are not confined (for example, in a fishbowl or bird/mouse cage) must not be left at the Service, but be taken with the family member at the conclusion of their visit.

Source

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- Kidsafe NSW Inc. <https://kidsafe.com.au/>
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- Western Australian Education and Care Services National Regulations

Review



Date Reviewed	Modifications	Review Due
October 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policy established according to Childcare Centre Desktop template.	October 2023
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•	
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