

# Petworth CofE Primary School

## Animals in School Policy



As a Rights Respecting School, all our policies are underpinned by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the child.

**Article 31:** rest, play, culture and arts; Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.

|                     |             |
|---------------------|-------------|
| Reviewed:           | March 2024  |
| Next Review:        | March 2026  |
| Person Responsible: | Clare Wiggs |

**Inspire, nurture and challenge with JOY at the heart in all we do.**

Studies show that encouraging children to take an interest in animals can have a positive effect on them and can be used to improve human and animal welfare. Some of the benefits have been identified as follows:

School animals have been found to:

- o motivate pupils to think and to learn, as children have a high level of natural interest, enthusiasm and enjoyment of animals
- o encourage a respect and reverence for life in pupils and thereby improve their relationships with other pupils, parents and teachers
- o foster a sense of responsibility in children
- o teach children to nurture and respect life
- o lead to the development of hobbies /careers in animal care
- o improve academic achievement

Animals in schools also have social benefits for the school community:

- o enhance the learning environment, creating a sense of security and family warmth for the children
- o encourage the involvement of parents and the wider community in school activity
- o help to promote the school as an important nurturing influence in the community

## 1. Looking after a school animal

At Petworth CofE Primary School we aim to promote good practice in animal care. Children are taught correct procedures in handling and caring for animals; they are encouraged to take a shared responsibility for the care of the animals, under supervision. Children will be taught how to interact gently with our school animals whilst under adult supervision.

At Petworth CofE Primary School we:

- o obtain well socialised young animals from a reputable source
- o abide by the Animal Welfare Act 2006, which places a duty on animal owners to ensure their animal's welfare needs are met. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has produced guidance on this act: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/farm-animals-looking-after-their-welfare>
- o ensure that each animal enjoys an optimum environment, in social groups. If appropriate. We are aware that keeping mixed gender animals can lead to breeding and result in welfare problems
- o routine preventive health measures are practised as advised by the vet –vaccination, flea prevention and worm control where appropriate.
- o animals and their quarters are always kept clean and safe.
- o a high quality, appropriate diet is provided
- o children always wash hands after handling
- o any sick animals are promptly isolated and examined by a vet
- o careful arrangements for holiday and weekend care are made

## 2. Handling Animals

If animals will be handled, the most important is the maintenance of good hygiene. When

handling animals:

- o do not consume food or drink
- o cover any open cuts or abrasions on the exposed skin of hands and arms with waterproof adhesive dressings
- o wash your hands with soap and water before and directly after handling animals
- o keep animals away from the face

Careful handling of small animals and other animals is most important; the animals should be restrained sufficiently so that, they cannot damage themselves or the handler.

Gloves will not normally be worn unless it is known that an animal for one reason or another is likely to bite or scratch. In this situation a pair of rubber gloves, which does not particularly reduce dexterity, is a sensible precaution.

Handling small animals should always be carried out over a table or trough filled with a soft material such as sand / sawdust.

## 3. Diseases, parasites and allergies

The likelihood of diseases being passed on from 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.

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 with allergies specific to animals are identified via the Confidential Admission Form. Children known to have allergic reactions to animals 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, we seek medical advice.

Salmonella bacteria may be carried by reptiles; good hygiene is again required, especially if aquatic reptiles, such as terrapins, are kept.

Good general hygiene and hand washing are essential for risk reduction.

Most animals available through reputable suppliers present no hazards that good hygiene procedures cannot address.

For there to be minimal risk to humans of diseases being transmitted from animals kept in schools, animals at Petworth CofE Primary School 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.

## 4. Animal Health

We ensure that school pets are kept in scrupulously clean conditions and steps are taken to ensure that they do not come into contact with other animals from dubious sources. If this were to happen it will no longer be possible to guarantee that the animals will remain in a disease-free condition.

During weekends and holiday times, it is preferable that the animals remain at school or at an appropriate alternative home. If animals are taken off-site then the following criteria must be satisfied.

We ensure that:

- It can be guaranteed that the animals will be looked after as well as usual.
- Training is provided for whoever is caring for the animals. We ensure that have all the necessary information, equipment, food, skills, etc.
- Steps are taken to ensure that the school's animals will not be able to come into contact with pet animals (cats, dogs, rodents or other mammals).

Should an animal fall ill whilst off site during a school holiday, or if the carer has concerns, then the first point of contact is Mrs Wiggs. Other point of contact is John Galvin (Headteacher)

When transporting animals DEFRA 'Welfare of Animals During Transport' (2006) guidance should be followed.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/193680/pb135\\_50-wato-guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/193680/pb135_50-wato-guidance.pdf)

Occasionally animals can be brought in as a special 'Show and Tell.' In this instance the Headteacher will need to approve the visit following the completion of a risk assessment by the class teacher. 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.

## 5. Appendix 1: Keeping animals in school: RSPCA guidance

Pages 4-6 of the RSPCA guidance linked to above cover the welfare needs of classroom animals. The guidance says that where animals are kept in schools, “any staff responsible for classroom animals must ensure that the needs of these animals are met”. This includes ensuring that:

Accommodation is appropriate to the animal and its size

- o Suitable fresh food and water is provided
- o The animal has the freedom to exhibit normal behaviour patterns
- o The animal has suitable companionship
- o The animal is protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease
- o A named person is responsible for the welfare and husbandry of the animals at all times
- o Any contact between children or young people and animals is supervised and controlled
- o The animals are given adequate "rest" periods away from disturbance
- o The animal's lifestyle (according to its species) fits with the academic day
- o Any animals kept are prevented from indiscriminate breeding

## 6. Appendix 2: Keeping exotic animals: guidance

The RSPCA also has guidance on keeping exotic animals. It explains that before getting an exotic pet, you should consider:

- o How long the animal will live and how large it will grow
- o What it eats and how much
- o What environment the animal needs. For example, does it need a carefully controlled environment?
- o The size of the enclosure
- o Whether the animal should be kept alone or with others
- o Whether the animal is nocturnal
- o Whether there is a vet specialising in exotic animals nearby who can treat the animal if it becomes sick
- o Whether you need a licence or other legal paperwork to keep the animal

## 7. Appendix 3: Handling animals: guidance for schools

The National Union of Teachers (NUT) has advice on animals in education. It says on page 4 that before letting pupils hold a pet, the school should check that:

- o The animal is used to being handled

- o The animal is not likely to be stressed by excitable children
- o Whether there is a correct way to hold the animal, which has been taught to the pupils

It adds:

The handling of certain animals should be avoided altogether. Those which are nervous, nocturnal or prone to biting or scratching should be observed and not touched.

Children and adults should wash their hands soon after coming into contact with any animal or its equipment. The guidance explains that to reduce the risks of diseases being passed from animals to humans:

- o Cuts and abrasions on hands and arms should be covered to minimise the risk of infection
- o Cleaning routines and arrangements for the disposal of animal waste should be carried out with due regard for good hygiene standards
- o Contaminated surfaces should be properly washed and disinfected

**RISK ASSESSMENT FOR keeping chickens and ducks** Date **August 2023 onwards** Assessor **Clare Wiggs / Marie Diaper**

| Stage 1   | Stage 2   | Stage 3  | Stage 4   |   |             |   | Stage 5   | Stage 6   |                                       |
|---|---|--|---|---|-------------|---|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| Identify all the hazards that are foreseeable.  | Identify who may be harmed.   | Identify what control measures are already in place to prevent harm being realised.  | Evaluate the risk.<br>Likelihood of harm being realised and likely severity of harm |   |             |   | Put into place pragmatic measures that reduce the risk. | Evaluate the residual risk factor   |                                       |
| A hazard is something with the potential to cause harm to people, plant, machinery, property or the environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Those directly involved with the activity</li> <li>▪ Those who whilst remote from the activity are within range the outcome of the activity</li> <li>▪ Those who may be innocent bystanders</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Workplace rules</li> <li>▪ Workplace procedures</li> <li>▪ Training</li> <li>▪ Qualifications</li> <li>Supervision</li> </ul> | Likelihood  | X | Consequence | = | Risk  | Extra controls or risk control systems that:<br>Eliminate risk SFAIRP<br>Reduces risk SFAIRP<br>Isolates people from risk SFAIRP<br>Controls risk SFAIRP<br>Personal Protective Equipment<br>Discipline | Recalculate the risk factor after all |
| Infection from chicken/duck content   | Children and adults in contact with chickens/ducks  | - only four children in the pen at any time. To be supervised by an adult.<br>- All people to wash their hands after being in the chicken/duck pen                     | 1   |   | 1           |   | 2   | Hand wash dispenser installed x 1   | 1                                     |
| Escaping chickens/ducks – frightened children   | Children and adults   | Door to be closed after entering and leaving the pen   | 1   |   | 1           |   | 2   | Handles installed inside and outside pen – padlock to be installed  | 1                                     |
| Cleaning/feeding chickens/ducks   | Children and adults   | - to be completed under adult supervision  | 1   |   | 1           |   | 2   | Children/adults to wear disposable gloves and wash hands using dispenser.   |                                       |
| Eating/selling the eggs   | Children and adults   | - when eggs used for cooking teachers to get permission to use the eggs (e-coli)<br>- people to give donations for the eggs  | 1   |   | 1           |   | 2   | Eggs will be stamped with date they were laid and an explanation of where they come from will be explained to parents.  |                                       |

|              |                          |   |
|--------------|--------------------------|---|
| Signed ..... | Printed Name John Galvin | Date 29 <sup>th</sup> August 2023<br>Review Date 23 <sup>rd</sup> July 2024 |
|--------------|--------------------------|---|



| Likelihood |               | Consequence |  |
|------------|---------------|-------------|--|
| 1          | Very unlikely | 1           | Minor injury scratches bruises, no noticeable damage to property or insignificant affect on the environment.   |
| 2          | Unlikely      | 2           | Moderate injury shock, superficial damage to property or minor damage to the environment.  |
| 3          | Likely        | 3           | Serious – Person injured causing loss of work or time away from school or damage to property which needs repairing or easily repairable damage to the environment. |
| 4          | Very likely   | 4           | Significant – person taken to hospital or major damage to property or environment.   |

| Overall Score | Risk Factor |
|---------------|-------------|
| 1 - 2         | Low         |
| 3 - 6         | Moderate    |
| 8 - 12        | High        |
| 16            | Very High   |

Risk factor matrix

|             |   | Likelihood |      |      |           |
|-------------|---|------------|------|------|-----------|
|             |   | 1          | 2    | 3    | 4         |
| Consequence | 1 | Low        | Low  | Mod  | Mod       |
|             | 2 | Low        | Mod  | Mod  | High      |
|             | 3 | Mod        | Mod  | High | High      |
|             | 4 | Mod        | High | High | Very High |

## **RISK ASESMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT**

| <b>RISK ASSESSMENT FOR ON-SITE ACTIVITY</b>  |  |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|
| <b>ACTIVITY: Goats and sheep in our school</b>   |  |   |   |
| <b>LOCATION : Petworth CofE Primary School</b>   |  |   |   |
| <b>DATE: 29.8.2023</b>   |  |   |   |
| Name Clare Wiggs   |  | Organisation .....Petworth CofE Primary School  |   |
| Assessment undertaken (Date: 29 <sup>th</sup> August 2023) Signed John Galvin.....Date 29 <sup>th</sup> August 2024 Assessment Review Date: -...23.7.2023..... |  |   |   |
| <b>LIST HAZARDS HERE</b>   | <b>List of groups of people who are especially at risk from the significant hazards you have identified:</b> | <b>How will you control this risk? (You can append or refer to relevant documentation that explains your safety arrangements, e.g. letter to parents, booklet prepared for students, letter from residential centre, extract in safety manual etc.</b>  | <b>Post event review (use this column to comment if you have a concern or an incident occurred)</b> |
| Handling animals; children or animals are hurt while interacting.  | Animals, children and adults   | (RSPCA Guidance)<br><br>*Animals must be used to being handled.<br><br>*Animals does not display signs of stress.<br><br>*Animals are held correctly (taught skill)   |   |
| Disease, parasites, allergies (Animal becomes ill. Child who has contact becomes ill.)   | Animals, children and adults   | *Goats and sheep will be registered with vets.<br><br>*CW will be taught how to worm/trim hooves (L.G)<br><br>*Children will clean hands after touching goats/sheep.<br><br>*Staff will observe for signs of allergic reaction in children.<br><br>*Source of pet is reputable.<br>*Signed up to DEFRA alerts |   |
| Animal health; animal becomes unwell.  | Animals  | Consult L.G/local vets for advice.  |   |

|   |                              |  |  |
|---|------------------------------|--|--|
| Cleanliness; children have contact with faecal matter etc. which can cause illness/spread of disease in school. | Children                     | (N.U.T)<br>*Children wash hands before and after handling goats/sheep.<br>*Children do not touch faces during goat/sheep handling sessions<br>*Animal waste is cleaned and disposed of according to policy.<br>*Cuts etc. should be covered.               |  |
| COVID-19; spread of Covid to pupils or animals  | Children and animals         | *Children enter the goat/sheep enclosure in small groups.<br>*Children adhere to cleanliness guidance as normal.<br>*There is no evidence to suggest goats/sheep are at risk of Covid, however should the risk level be raised, contact will be minimised. |  |
| Goat or sheep dies  | Animals, children and adults | *Contact Andrew Loughan who will dispose of goat/sheep.<br>*Children to be taught that this is what can happen to pets/livestock<br>*Contact appropriate authorities if applicable   |  |
| Safety; damage to enclosure, theft of animals, unsafe handling over weekends/holidays by members of the public. | Goats / sheep                | *Premises Manager on site.<br>*Adult/children family to let goats out and shut up am and pm.<br>*External gates to remain locked.<br>*Goat shed to be locked at night.<br>*CCTV signs/decoy cameras if necessary   |  |

