

Health and Safety – Animals in the setting

At Aston University Nursery & preschool we appreciate the benefits for children of having 'real life' experiences with animals, so whilst we do not have a nursery pet, there may be times when we arrange hands on experiences to support the children's development.

Pets

- If a child or staff member brings a pet from home to visit the nursery as a planned activity, parents of all children who will be in contact or in the same area as the pet must be informed. Written permission must be obtained from parents to ensure no child has an allergy or phobia.
- A full documented risk assessment needs to be completed prior to the visit and risks analysed before this type of activity is authorised. You should ensure the pet has had all relevant vaccinations, is registered with a vet and is child-friendly
- Pets will not be allowed near food, dishes, worktops or food preparation areas. Children should wash their hands with soap and water after handling animals, and should be encouraged to not place their hands in their mouths during the activity. The staff will explain the importance of this to the children to enable them to make healthy choices moving forwards
- Children will be encouraged to leave their comforters and dummies away from the animals to ensure cross-contamination is limited

Projects

- From time to time the nursery will participate in schemes such as Living eggs or a butterfly farm etc. When doing so we ensure that we use a reputable company and follow the risk assessment they provide, alongside our own.
- The children will be monitored closely at all times when they are with the animals to ensure that they are following all necessary procedures.

Checklist for visits to farms

- A site visit must be made by a senior member of staff before an outing to a farm can be arranged. They will check that the farm is well managed, that the grounds and public areas are as clean as possible, and that suitable First Aid arrangements are in place. A copy of the farm's Risk Assessment for children's visits must be obtained in advance of the visit.
- Check that the farm has suitable washing facilities, appropriately signposted, with running water, soap and disposable towels or hot air hand dryers. Any portable water taps should be appropriately designed in a suitable area
- Ensure that there is an adequate number of adults to supervise the children, taking into account the age and stage of development of the children

- Explain to the children that they cannot be allowed to eat or drink anything, including crisps and sweets, or place their hands in their mouths, while touring the farm because of the risk of infection, and the children should be given the reasons for this
- Ensure suitable precautions are in place where appropriate e.g. in restricted areas such as near slurry pits or where animals are isolated.

During the visit

- All accompanying adults will be provided with a copy of the Risk Assessment.
- If children are in contact with, or feeding animals, warn them not to place their faces against the animals or put their hands in their own mouths afterwards, and explain why.
- Encourage children to leave comforters (e.g. soft toys and blankets) and dummies either at nursery, in the transport used or in a bag carried by a member of staff to ensure cross-contamination is limited
- After contact with animals and particularly before eating and drinking, ensure all children, staff and volunteers wash and dry their hands thoroughly. If young children are in the group, hand washing will need to be supervised. Always explain why the children need to do this
- Meals, breaks or snacks should be taken well away from the areas where animals are kept and children should be warned not to eat anything which has fallen on the ground. Any crops produced on the farm should be thoroughly washed in portable water before consumption
- Ensure children do not consume unpasteurised produce, e.g. milk or cheese, or taste animal foodstuffs, such as silage and concentrates
- Manure or slurry presents a particular risk of infection and children should be warned against touching it. If they do touch it, ensure that they thoroughly wash and dry their hands immediately
- Ensure all children, staff and volunteers wash their hands thoroughly before departure
- Ensure footwear and clothing is as free as possible from faecal materials.

Internal use only

This policy was adopted on	June 2022
Signed on behalf of the nursery	
Date disseminated to staff	
Date for review	June 2022