

Management of Animals Policy

Published	March 2016
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Sources	<p>Education and Care Services National Regulations, October 2017</p> <p>Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations, October 2017</p> <p>Guide to the National Quality Standard, February 2018</p> <p>Work Health and Safety Act (NSW) 2011</p> <p>Work Health and Safety Regulations (NSW) 2011</p> <p>The Royal Children's Hospital Child Safety Handbook, Edition 5 – A Guide to Injury Prevention for Parents of 6-12 Year Olds, The Royal Children's Hospital Safety Centre Melbourne, 2009</p>

Aim:

To ensure the safety of children, families, Educators and animals by implementing the Education and Care Services National Regulations and National Quality Standards in regard to animals in Out of School Hours Care.

Explanation:

Whilst animals are not a necessary part of the program, they can be a great source of enjoyment and stimulation for children. The opportunity for children to engage with animals offers children experiences that will enrich their understanding and appreciation of the natural environment and promote the development of their skills in caring for others. While pets and other animals can prove an effective inclusion into the children's experiences whilst in care, they may also be a risk to children, therefore any animals that enter the service must be housed appropriately to minimise the risk of danger to the children. Strict supervision will be maintained to ensure the health and safety of the children and educators. Staff will ensure that everyone in the service treats all animals humanely and with respect.

Regardless of careful selection and training, animals are still unpredictable and supervision of children around animals is crucial.

It is important to recognise that animals, in particular dogs, can pose significant risks to young children. Children may not have prior knowledge about "safe behaviour" with animals and they may be too young to regulate their behaviour around animals.

Responsibilities:

In relation to the Approved Provider & Co-ordination Unit Staff:

- Be aware of their obligations under the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 and the National Quality Standard 2011 in relation to the management of animals
- Provide training and/or resources to Educators and families on health and safety practices for animals
- Inform parents of the service requirements and Child Care Regulations for managing animals in Out of School Hours Care as required

In relation to Educators:

- Abide by their obligations under the current Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (Regulation 116) and the National Quality Standard 2011 (Elements 2.1.3, 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 3.1.2)

in relation to the management of animals

- Develop a Risk Management Plan for any animals entering the service in accordance with the Service's Animal Risk Management Approach Form
- Inform families of their procedures relating to animals and children in care
- Children who have a fear of animals should be treated with special care. A gentle, slow introduction for the child and the animal is needed and the needs of the child must be considered first
- Ensure children and Educators wash their hands immediately after handling animals
- Consult CKC prior to planning any experiences with animals to ensure that risk assessments and legal obligations are considered
- Ensure all animals kept at the premises are clean and healthy
- Every animal is to be made inaccessible to a child in care unless the child is under direct Supervision
- Display animals in enclosed cages or under appropriate restraints
- Designate a specific area for contact with animals
- Not allow food in animal contact areas; do not allow animals in areas where food and drink are prepared or consumed
- Clean and disinfect all areas where animals have been present
- Not clean animal cages or enclosures in sinks or other areas used to prepare food and drinks

In relation to Families:

- Inform Educators if their child has any allergies relating to animals before commencing care

Continual Monitoring and Improvement:

Continual improvement and monitoring will occur in the following ways:

- Incidental and planned consultation with families
- Approved Provider & Co-ordination Unit Staff accessing current relevant information
- Approved Provider, Co-ordination Unit Staff and Educators accessing current and relevant training
- Internal evaluation of incidences and the improvement of systems

Policy Review

Date Revised	Comments