

## Policy Statement

This policy acts to ensure that:

- The opportunity for children to engage with animals offers enjoyment and stimulation
- Educators will role model appropriate behaviours with animals, and guidance in caring for the needs of animals to children
- The service supports children to understand and appreciate the natural environment and the interdependence between people, plants, animals and the land

## Goals

- Provide a clean, safe and humane environment for all animals and birds that visit or reside at the service, home or venue
- Ensure that the safety, health and wellbeing of children is being maintained when engaging with animals.
- Ensure pest control measures are regularly taken
- Ensure there are procedures in place for removing unwanted animals, pests and vermin from the premises

## Strategies

### Invited Visitors

Prior to a visit by animals, the service will:

- Consult families
- Complete a Risk Assessment
- Ensure children are supervised at all times when interacting with animals
- Ensure Educators manage any health and safety risk for the children that may be caused by the animals such as asthma or allergies
- Animals and birds visiting the service as part of the educational program are the responsibility of the owner
- Educators will ensure that the environment remains safe and hygienic at all times during animals visiting the service
- Educate children about “safe behaviour” with animals
- Designate a specific area for the animals
- Ensure animals are kept in enclosures or under appropriate restraints
- Children will be supported to wash their hands after handling any pets or animals

**Policy Created**  
February 2016

**Policy Last Updated**  
May 2024

**Policy Review Date**  
April 2026

## **Animals and Birds Other than Invited Visitors**

- There are situations that may spontaneously occur, involving animals. For example an animal or bird may make its way into the service. Educators may use this as a spontaneous learning experience, and ensure that at all times the safety and wellbeing of the children is met
- If an animal or bird is potentially dangerous, such as a snake or spider Educators will contact the appropriate authority for assistance – this information for each service is located in their Regulation 97.2 Risk Assessment
- The animals' movements should be monitored to ensure a speedy and efficient capture by a professional, but the priority is the safety of Educators, children and families

## **Pests & Vermin**

- Pest control is the responsibility of the school or landlord, and any occurrences within the service will be reported
- If any pest or vermin are seen Educators will notify the Nominated Supervisor
- Where appropriate, Educators will discuss with children safety issues in relation to dangerous products, plants, vermin and objects
- Educators will thoroughly clean any areas that animals or pests have accessed in the service with hot soapy water
- Educators are responsible for assessing any situation in the service where animals are involved to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of children, families and animals

## **Family Day Care**

- Pets are a valued part of many families, and access to pets in an Educator's home can provide the children in care with many positive learning experiences. Whilst an effective inclusion into the child's experiences and learning environment, they are also a risk to children
- Farm animals and pets are to be kept separate from children, unless involved in a specific activity that is directly supervised by the Educator
- A Risk Assessment will be completed where children are involved in interactions with pets or farm animals at the Educators home or venue
- Families will be informed of any pets or animals residing at the Family Day Care home or venue upon interview or Induction

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Approved Provider /Nominated Supervisor**

- Support Coordinators and Educators with training and resources on health and safety practices for animals
- Assess Family Day Care residences and approved Family Day Care venues for any risks posed by any animals
- Monitor compliance to regulations through visits
- Be aware of any federal, state or territory legislative requirements, including public health, animal welfare and health and safety

### **Family Day Care Educators**

- Develop a Risk Management Plan for their own pets or animals covering how they are kept separate from the children throughout the day, how health and hygiene levels are maintained, and update this as required in their Operational Diary
- Share information related to any pets or animals that live at the home or venue with families
- Ensure daily cleaning occurs before children arrive in care if Educators' pets are kept indoors
- Any bedding, toys, food and water containers and litter trays are to be inaccessible to children
- All play areas are to be kept free of animal droppings, bones and holes dug by animals
- Always supervise children when they are near animals and pets
- Teach children how to behave towards animals, and to maintain appropriate hygiene practices
- Secure animals away from the areas used by children, unless involved in a specific activity that is directly supervised
- Choose breeds/types of animals that are suited to the family's lifestyle and the Family Day Care home or venue and are properly trained
- Ensure all pets or animals are appropriately vaccinated, veterinary care is sought when necessary and animals are registered according to local council regulations
- Consult CCEL prior to planning any experiences with animals or pets to ensure that risk assessments and legal obligations are considered

## **Educators**

- 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, ensuring a slow and gentle introduction
- Ensure that only small groups of children are engaging with the animals at any given time
- Ensure children and Educators wash their hands immediately after handling animals
- Ensure direct supervision is always in place, and no child can access the animals without an Educator
- Instruct children on how to handle and protect the animals, encouraging the use of quiet voices

## **Families**

- Inform the service if their child has any allergies to animals
- Inform the service if their child has any fears around specific animals

## **Continual Monitoring and Improvement**

Continual improvement and monitoring will occur in the following ways:

- Incidental and planned consultation with families
- Approved Provider and Coordinators accessing current relevant information
- Approved Provider, Coordinators and Educators accessing current and relevant training
- Internal evaluation of incidences and the improvement of systems

### **LINKS TO:**

- **Education & Care Services National Law**  
Section 167
- **Education & Care Services National Regulations**  
103, 168
- **National Quality Standards**  
1.2, 2.2.2, 3.2
- **Child Safe Standards**  
1, 3, 8, 9, 10

## SOURCES

- [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)
- [Education and care Services National Law](#)
- [Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)
- [Guide to the National Quality Standard](#)
- [Implementing the Child Safe Standards: A Guide for Early Education and Outside School Hours Care Services](#), NSW Department of Education
- [A Guide to the Child Safe Standards](#), NSW Office of the Children's Guardian
- [ACECQA – FDC Approved Provider compliance responsibilities](#)
- [Be You](#)
- [My Time Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia](#)
- [The Early Years Learning Framework](#)
- [ECA Code of Ethics](#)
- [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)
- [Kidsafe NSW Inc – \[www.kidsafensw.org\]\(http://www.kidsafensw.org\)](#)
- [NSW Department of Health – \[www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/factsheets/Pages/petting-zoos-and-personal-hygiene.aspx\]\(http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/factsheets/Pages/petting-zoos-and-personal-hygiene.aspx\)](#)
- [Staying Healthy in Childcare 5<sup>th</sup> Edition](#)
- [ACECQA – Keeping Pets and Animals in Education and Care Services Factsheet](#)

## LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES:

- [Child Protection](#)
- [Child-Safe Environment](#)
- [Incident, Injury, Trauma & Illness](#)
- [Interactions with Children](#)
- [Emergency & Evacuation](#)
- [Supervision](#)