



# Animals at the Service

(Lease permitting)

## Policy Statement

*Animals can provide positive experiences and interactions with the children. Children can learn and develop self-help and life skills as well as empathy towards living things in their environment. It is important to maintain a safe and hygienic environment for children, educators and animals.*

*Educators are encouraged to foster children's capacity to understand and respect the natural environment and the interdependence between people, plants, animals and the land (NQS Element 3.2).*

## Implementation

- Any animal kept on or about the premises must:
  - Not constitute a health or safety risk to children and/or staff;
  - Not be a source of infection, or in any way may be detrimental to the wellbeing of the children or staff;
  - Be made inaccessible to children unless under the direct supervision of educators;
  - Be maintained in a clean and healthy condition, have up-to-date vaccination records where appropriate, and be flea and worm free.
- Prior to a child's enrolment, families will be informed of any animals kept at the service.
- Animal food and water containers must be inaccessible to children.
- Interactions between children and animals must be closely supervised and monitored by educators to ensure safety, hygiene and appropriate behaviour at all times.
- Animals will be cared for in an appropriate and humane manner.
- Animals must be able to seek refuge away from children when they desire.
- Animals will not have access to children's bedding, toys, food preparation areas, eating surfaces or utensils. Children will be discouraged from putting their face close to animals or playing with animals whilst eating.
- Checklists will be maintained for the feeding of animals and cleaning of their enclosures
- Animal cages or enclosures will not be cleaned in sinks or other areas used to prepare food and drinks.
- Gloves will be worn when handling animal faeces, emptying litter trays and cleaning cages.
- Animals at the service will be an integral part of the educational program.
- Animal enclosures are to have a sign and/or list nearby which states the animals species, name of food and required feeding frequency and quantity.
- Veterinary attention and advice will be sought for any animal that appears unwell.
- Deceased animals will be disposed of appropriately and immediately.

## Animals Visiting the Service

- A Risk Assessment will be completed prior to any planned visit of animals.
- Staff will endeavour to inform families prior to animals visiting the service to become aware of previous animal encounters children may have experienced.



- Staff will check enrolment forms, and discuss with families, any animals allergies prior to them visiting the service.
- Any health or safety risk to the children that may be caused by the animals such as asthma or allergies, will be managed.
- Staff will ensure any animal visiting the service up to date vaccinations, worming and flea treatment status, where appropriate.

## Policy Links

### Policies:

- Health, Hygiene and Infection Control
- Programs and Documentation
- Supervision
- Water Safety
- Workplace Health and Safety

NQS: 3.2 and 7.2

Regulations: 113

### Sources:

- ACT Government Lease 2019
- National Quality Framework
- Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services (5<sup>th</sup> edition) 2013
- Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979
- Companion Animals Act 1998

## Policy Document Status

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Committee Representative Signature:



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