



Animal Care Policy

Schedule for Development, Monitoring and Review	
Approved by governors on:	October 2019
Implementation monitored by:	Hilroy Thomas
Review arrangements:	Annually All policies will be reviewed if there are any significant developments or changes to legislation
Reviewed:	October 2020 October 2021
The next review of this policy:	October 2022

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ANIMAL CARE POLICY

The Leicester Partnership School [LPS] recognises that the presence of animals in our school can provide a valuable learning experience. However animals cannot be allowed to endanger student/staff safety or disrupt learning. Equally the LPS has a 'duty of care' to ensure that the welfare needs of animals (Animal Welfare Act 2006) are met whilst at the LPS. This is also extended to fieldwork and outdoor learning experiences (see RSPCA Education Partners in Learning guidance).

During holiday periods animals will be visited sufficiently regularly to ensure that well-being and safety is not compromised and in addition the LPS recognises that a visiting animal offers the potential for a very positive learning experience for children to learn about taking care and showing responsibility for animals as well as developing an understanding of the importance of the humane treatment of living creatures. Equally observing animals in their natural habitat provides practical experiences for students that enhances the curriculum and supports learning.

Before bringing an animal onto the LPS premises staff must seek prior authorisation from a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Arrangements for animal visits should be made at least **48 hours in advance** to ensure that parents are appropriately notified. A letter must be sent to parents explaining about the animal visit and asking families to advise the school of any allergies, or fears that students may have.

All animals that are kept on site will have an **owner in charge (OIC)**, however all staff have a duty of care for both students and animals. **All animals visits will have an LPS risk assessment**, signed by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

If animals are brought into the LPS by external animal handlers a risk assessment should be sought from the external animal handler by a visit co-ordinator responsible for organising the activities, or a risk assessment provided by the visit co-ordinator. The school is particularly keen to support the introduction of service animals such as PAT dogs, hearing dogs or seeing dogs and this reflects the school's ethos of celebrating diversity and promoting inclusion.

The OIC or handler of any animal, including a service animal, is responsible for the animal at all times and must take responsibility in the event of any harm accidentally or otherwise that befalls a student or member of staff. All staff must read the risk assessment/care plan prior to the introduction of an animal in the classroom, handling, cleaning or welfare aspects.

The OIC must ensure that the animals are in good health and have had all the necessary immunizations or vaccinations. Where possible, evidence should be provided. Any animal brought to school must remain under control of the responsible adult at all times. Transportation of animals to and from school will be the responsibility of the OIC.

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No wild or protected animals will be purposely brought into the building or on LPS grounds by anyone other than an authorised or licensed animal handler. There will be no physical contact between the animal and students unless it is an integral part of the learning experience. Should an injured wild animal be found on the premises contact will be made with the RSPCA or veterinary clinic for advice. If students are likely to encounter wild animals whilst on an educational visit (e.g. by the sea, dogs in parks) then this will be covered in any off-site visit risk assessments and students informed about appropriate behaviour around wild and domestic animals (LA Guidance No 60 available via EVOLVE and the National Outdoor Education Advisors Guidance).

Students and staff with medical concerns and hygiene:

Health issues must be considered when assessing the appropriateness of animals in the classroom. Prior to the consideration of the introduction of an animal to the classroom, the OIC should review the medical notes of the children in their class and all LPS staff to ensure there is no conflict. Any conflict should be discussed and strategies agreed prior to any animal being introduced and taken into account in the risk assessment.

Should any student or adult be scratched, bitten by an animal at school or have an allergic reaction first aid must be administered immediately and in the case of a child, parents will be contacted. A copy of the incident will be made and sent to the School Health and Safety Officer and the policy for animals in school / off-site visit policy will need to be reviewed accordingly. Any first aid given will be recorded.

The care and humane treatment of animals:

Animals within the school will be handled, treated, and cared for in a humane manner. Enclosures must be appropriate to the animal and it is the responsibility of the OIC to ensure that the animal has sufficient food, water and a comfortable environment to reduce the stress for the animal. Habitats must be maintained and cleaned by staff and any waste ethically disposed of including composting etc. Any cleaning products should be stored in a suitable location which is not accessible by students.

If animals are not kept in scrupulously clean conditions, or come into contact with other animals from dubious sources, it will no longer be possible to guarantee that the animals will remain in a disease-free condition. In this situation, the OIC will have to remove the animal from the School premises.

The OIC should ensure that any animals are registered with a veterinary practice with details being stated on the care plan. Should an animal become ill or be injured due to a student or member of staff the responsibility for the care of the animal is with the OIC, or animal handler if brought in

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by a non-member of staff. If an animal is injured or falls ill a full report on the incident will be produced and provided to a member of the Senior Leadership Team. If this occurs the School may seek advice from the RSPCA (e.g. if a student or member of staff is in breach of the Animal Welfare Act). No animal will be kept in the School for breeding purposes. No animal, including invertebrates, will be dissected. An animal which has been humanely killed, however, may be used for dissection and other related purposes in schools.

Feeding

Suitable hoppers or containers within the animal housing will be used to prevent unnecessary wastage through soiling of food and to ensure that food is not buried as an animal burrows. All animals will have adequate water available in an appropriate container. Any foodstuffs should be stored in a suitable location which is not accessible by students. The frequency and quantity of feeding will clearly be displayed on each animals care plan.

School grounds

The School believes that it has a duty to support the development of natural habitats that support wildlife by focusing on biodiversity across the natural environment. This also includes the negative impact of aspects such as litter on the natural environment.

Costs

The cost (transport, food etc) for animals brought into School for a single day is the responsibility of the OIC or animal handler. If this is a planned curriculum activity then this should form part of a curriculum bid and is booked through a reputable company which promotes animal welfare. The LPS will pay for these activities.

Key responsibilities:

The owner in charge (OIC) or animal visit leader will:

- Clearly identify how the animals will support student learning
- Ensure direct responsibility for any animals in School including liaison across the School and with homes about the designated animals in School
- Conduct and update all risk assessments, welfare plans and staff liaison to comply with the animals in school policy alongside the Animal Welfare Act and RSPCA guidance
- Ensure that students, staff and animals are kept safe in line with their “duty of care” and that guidance is being followed

Staff and students

- Ensure that any off-site risk assessments and / or learning experiences onsite involving animals is conducted in line with the Animal Welfare Act and RSPCA guidance

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- Follow the guidance as stipulated in the risk assessment and care plan including making dynamic risk assessments to ensure the safety of staff, students and animals
- Ensure the welfare of animals both within and outside the School

Senior leaders will:

- Provide quality assurance systems are in place to monitor the policy
- Investigate any incidents relating to mistreatment of animals and/or the safety of students

Governing body will:

- Review the policy regularly and/or following any serious incident related to students, staff and students

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