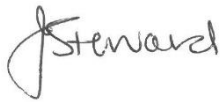





SMALL ANIMALS IN SCHOOL POLICY

Formally adopted by the Governing Body of Sheringham Community Primary & Nursery School	
On	19 th October 2023
Chair of Governors	
Head Teacher	
Last updated	19 th October 2023
Review	19 th October 2026

Be all that you can be...



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Reason for having small animals in School

To encourage children to take an interest in animals which can have a positive effect on them and can be used to improve human and animal welfare.

School animals may:

- Motivate children to think and to learn, as they have a high level of natural interest, enthusiasm and enjoyment of animals.
- Encourage a respect and reverence for life in children and thereby improve their relationships with their peers, parents and teachers.
- Foster a sense of responsibility in children.
- Support children to nurture and respect life.
- Improve academic achievement the benefits of school animals are far reaching and can be broken down into the following development aspects
- Cognitive development – companionship with an animal stimulates memory, problem-solving, game playing and can improve reading skills
- Emotional development – a school animal improves self-esteem, acceptance from others and lifts mood, often provoking laughter and fun. Animals can also teach compassion and gives relief from anxiety.
- Physical development – interaction with an animal reduces blood pressure, provides tactile stimulation, assists with pain management, gives motivation to move, walk and stimulates the senses.
- Environmental benefits – an animal in a school contributes towards the creation of a home-style environment, with all of the above benefits continuing long after the school day is over
- Social benefits – a school animal provides a positive mutual topic for discussion, encourages responsibility, wellbeing, developing social skills and focused interaction with others. Animals in school also have social benefits for the school community.
- Enhance the learning environment, creating a sense of security and family warmth for the pupils.
- Encourage the involvement of parents and the wider community in school activities help to promote the school as an important nurturing influence in the community. Children naturally identify with animals; we use the children's interactions with animals to teach them how to respect each other and how to show empathy.
- Teaching children to respect and protect even the smallest animal is vital to ensure that we support the development of adults who will continue to show a respect for protecting our environment, animals and plants for generations to come.

A child's attitude toward animals can predict future behaviour; we will teach kindness and empathy towards animals which will foster a positive attitude and in turn will reduce the likelihood of anti-social behaviour

Looking after a School animal at Sheringham Community Primary School and Nursery, we aim to promote good practice in animal care. Children are taught correct procedures in handling and caring for animals under the direct supervision of adults; they are encouraged to take a shared responsibility for the care of the animals, under direct supervision. Children are taught how to interact gently with our school pets. Pets and other animals in school can enhance the learning environment. Sensible measures are taken to reduce the risk of infection to the children and to staff

- We have a named person responsible for the welfare of all animals in school. This named person will oversee relevant guidance relating to each animal and amend practice in response to changing guidance.
- Risk assessments and care sheets will be provided for each different animal by the lead animal in school named person.
- The lead animals in school person will oversee all animal care and safety throughout the school, but day to day maintenance and feeding will be overseen by the designated staff.
- Animals remain the responsibility of their owner.
- We obtain well socialised young animals.
- We register all our animals with a local veterinary practice and seek advice and treatment when appropriate.
- We ensure that each animal enjoys an optimum environment.
- We practice routine preventive health measures as advised by vets for example vaccination, flea prevention and worm control where appropriate.
- We keep pets and their quarter's clean and safe at all times.
- We make careful arrangements for holiday and weekend care are made.
- We provide a high quality, appropriate diet.
- We isolate and treat any sick animals promptly.

Health and Safety

Children's parents or carers sign a consent form for the school animals during induction before any contact is allowed. This will allow parents to indicate whether they give consent for their child to be in contact with school animals. Any allergies are also highlighted during children's induction, which should alert us to allergies to other animals. The likelihood of diseases being passed on from animals is low. However, allergic reactions to mammals, birds and animals cannot be discounted. These might result from handling the animals or being in close proximity and be detected by the development of skin rashes, irritation to the eyes and nose or breathing difficulties. Staff will watch for the development of allergic reactions in pupils who come into contact with the animals. Children known to have allergic reactions to specific animals will have restricted access to those that may trigger a response. When animals are handled, good hygiene will be practiced.

When Handling animals

- Children will not consume food or drink
- Children will wash their hands with soap and water before and directly after handling animals at the end of each session.

Lead animal in school named person: Alison Sheridan

Nursery: Shona MacDonald