



Keeping pets at preschool

National Quality Standard Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations	Associated department policy, procedure or guideline	Reference document(s) and/or advice from a recognised authority
<p>NQS: 3.2.3</p> <p>Law Section: 167</p>	<p>Leading and operating department preschool guidelines</p> <p>Animal Welfare – Schools policy</p> <p>Animals in schools</p>	<p>Kidsafe – Kids and animals</p> <p>ACECQA information sheet – Keeping pets and animals in education and care services [PDF 910 KB]</p>

Responsibilities

<p>School principal</p>	<p>The principal as nominated supervisor, educational leader and responsible person holds primary responsibility for the preschool.</p> <p>The principal is responsible for ensuring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the preschool is compliant with legislative standards related to this procedure at all times all staff involved in the preschool are familiar with and implement this procedure all procedures are current and reviewed as part of a continuous cycle of self- assessment. <p>These tasks may be delegated to other members of the preschool team, but the responsibility sits with the principal.</p>
<p>Preschool supervisor</p>	<p>The preschool supervisor supports the principal in their role and is responsible for leading the review of this procedure through a process of self-assessment and critical reflection. This could include:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analysing complaints, incidents or issues and the implications for updates to this procedure • reflecting on how this procedure is informed by stakeholder feedback and relevant expert authorities • planning and discussing ways to engage with families and communities, including how changes are communicated • developing strategies to induct all staff when procedures are updated to ensure practice is embedded.
Preschool teacher(s) and educator(s)	<p>Preschool teachers and educators are responsible for working with the preschool leadership team to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all staff in the preschool and daily practices comply with this procedure • this procedure is stored in a way that it is accessible to all staff, families, visitors and volunteers • they are actively involved in the review of this procedure, as required, or at least annually • details of this procedure's review are documented.

Procedure

Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a pet at our preschool gives children the opportunity to observe, interact and learn about animals. It is considered a valuable part of our children's education and care experience and enriches children's learning about nature, ecology and relationships. • This procedure has been developed in consultation with families, children, educators, work health and safety committee
Supporting children's learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing children with access to animals in our preschool can help them learn about life cycles, caring relationships, opportunities for communication, scientific concepts sustainability and connection to the natural world, care routines and responsibility. • The outcomes of the EYLF can emphasise the role animals play in supporting children's learning. They include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity: Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect. — Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world: Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment

<p>Choosing and keeping the right pet for our preschool</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The preschool educators and school leadership made the decision to keep fish and spiny leaf insects at our preschool. Families and children were consulted during the meet and greet about having pets at preschool for the children to care for. • We made decisions based on the following considerations: (include answers to the following where relevant and add your any of your own) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — The school will pay for the care and upkeep of the animal, including feeding, health care and cleaning. — If the animal is ill, the pet will be observed and removed from preschool when necessary — The animal will be cared for on weekends and during school holidays a nominated preschool educator — The physical space available at the preschool is adequate for the needs of the animal. This was determined through consultation with the local pet shop. The animal/s will be housed in a fish tank (fish) and purpose built insect enclosure (spiny leaf insects). — Time will be available throughout the day to care for the animal ie: to feed them and clean enclosures. — We have established if there are any children or educators at preschool who are allergic to, or have phobias of, animals through consultation with families at the meet and greet at the start of the year. • Changes have been made to preschool local procedures to accommodate the keeping of our pet/animal. These include hand washing, supervision, interactions with children).
<p>Assessing and managing risk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While there are many benefits to keeping pets/animals at our preschool, there are also a range of issues we considered for the safety and wellbeing of both the children and the animals. • The preschool educators and leadership have developed risk and benefits assessments to ensure the safety of children and the pet/animal. These include our approach to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Disease — Effective hand washing and cleaning — Appropriate supervision.

Record of procedure's review

Date of review	14/12/23
Who was involved	Preschool Staff, families, children
Key changes made and reason why	Changed to new DoE template
Record of communication of significant changes to relevant stakeholders	Principal: Helen Te Rata Staff: all preschool staff read, reflected, and signed off. Procedure also posted on Sentral for K-6 staff to engage with. Emailed to P&C representatives. Parents: notified via Seesaw. Please note, parents must be notified at least 14 days prior to a change that may have a significant impact on their service's provision of education and care or a family's ability to use the service.