

Animals in School Policy

Written by:

Headteacher

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Statement of Intent

The Animals in School policy aims to outline to students, staff, parents and carers, Governors and members of our wider school community how we work with animals for the benefit of the students at Carrington School . Research has shown that stroking or cuddling an animal triggers the release of the Oxytocin hormone which causes feelings of happiness and contentment. Anxiety levels decrease and children can become more willing to interact and communicate with people around them.

The following learning, health and wellbeing benefits can be derived from working with animals:

- Animals can have a calming effect and can reduce levels of anxiety
- Students can become more motivated to think and learn as children generally have a high level of natural interest, enthusiasm and enjoyment of animals
- Students can develop a sense of responsibility through looking after animals
- Working with animals can teach students to nurture and respect life
- Working with animals can be pursued as a potential work or learning pathway for students
- Working with a Pets as Therapy animal may help students to improve their reading skills

Aims of the policy

- To ensure that students, staff, Governors, parents and carers and members of the wider community can work safely alongside the animals at Carrington School .
- To ensure that animals at Carrington School are well looked after and cared for.
- To ensure that this policy integrates with other associated policies such as the Dogs in School policy, and the Health and Safety policy.

This policy applies to all people who interact with the animals on the school site including students, staff, parents and carers, Governors, visitors, companies who hire our facilities and contractors. The Carrington School field, named Capella Field is the place where the animals are kept in the main. Carrington School believes that interaction with animals has a beneficial effect on our students and as such the space was set up to allow this interaction. Capella Field and animals are an integral part of the education package at Carrington School and also allow the students a calm and therapeutic place to go when life in the classroom becomes overwhelming. Goat walking is hoped to become very popular and will be used as a therapy for those who appreciate the calming effect these animals have on them.

To comply with current regulations the school's smallholding is registered with Defra (Department for Environment and Rural Affairs), Animal Health, Trading Standards, and the Rural Payments Agency. The school has its own CHP (County Parish Holding) number, SBI (Single Business Identifier) and Vendor Number. These regulations apply when keeping cloven footed animals and only apply to chickens and ducks when the number kept is over 50 in number which is not the case at Carrington School



1. Legal Framework

1.1 This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Pet Animals Act 1951
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
- The Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976 ¶ The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- The Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Animal Welfare Act 2006

1.2. This policy also has due regard to school policies, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Health and Safety Policy
- First Aid Policy

2. Duty of Care

2.1 The Animal Welfare Act 2006 places a duty on schools to make provision for the welfare of any animal that they are responsible for.

2.2. Under this Act, the welfare of an animal includes the following criteria: ¶

- Its need for a suitable environment ¶ Its need for a suitable diet (food and fresh water)
- Its need to be able to exhibit normal behaviour patterns
- Its need to be housed with, or away from, any other animals
- Its need to be protected from pain, suffering and disease

2.3. The headteacher and the designated member of staff responsible for the animal, will conduct a risk assessment prior to the arrival of the animals to ensure that all risks are manageable and are controlled.

2.4. Where animals are brought in for a short period - for example, for a day - an appropriate and detailed protocol will be implemented that ensures the wellbeing of the animal, and the health and safety of others, for the duration of its visit.

2.5. This will include the provision of assurances from the owner as to the means of transporting and housing the animal, and the responsibility to bring any equipment, food or water likely to be required during the day. Advice from parents will be sought whenever necessary.

2.6. A named person will be responsible for the welfare and husbandry of the animals at all times.

2.7. Schools that keep a wide variety of animals will ensure a proper care programme is available for each creature, establishing the maintenance of minimum welfare standards.

3. Training for Students and Staff

3.1. All students and staff will undergo training on a termly basis to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities when looking after the animals, including: feeding, hygiene, handling and how to spot signs of infestation and disease.



4. Food

- 4.1. The school will establish a written care programme for each species of animal, which will be implemented by the designated, trained member of staff, and will be communicated to all other members of staff.
- 4.2. The headteacher will establish a rota for looking after the animals before, during and after the school day, as well as during holidays and weekends. This rota will be given to all members of staff and will be posted in the school office.
- 4.3. The type and quantity of food required varies not only with species, but also with age, stage of production (eg lactating females have different requirements from other adults) and breed. The dietary requirements of each type of animal must be ascertained by consulting a vet or a livestock nutrition consultant.
- 4.4. Food for the animals will be sourced from a reputable supplier to ensure it is of appropriate nourishment suitable to their age and breed.
- 4.5. A dry, vermin-proof container will be used to store the different animals' food, keeping it dry and preventing waste.
- 4.6. Food will be provided accordingly, depending on the animal, by a member of staff and/or pupils supervised by a member of staff.
- 4.7. All animals must have continuous access to a supply of clean, fresh drinking water.
- 4.8. Troughs and other containers must be suitable for the animals using them (e.g. the correct height and dimension to allow easy access) and must be easy to clean.
- 4.9. The school will ensure that there is an adequate supply of food available at all times to avoid any drought of food.

5 Housing and Environment

- 5.1 All buildings/shelters will be adequately ventilated, whilst ensuring animals are protected from draughts.
- 5.2. Each animal house will be designed, sited and constructed to provide a suitable environment, including any special requirement for exercise or social contact for the species to be housed, and will incorporate facilities sufficient for the activities carried out within it.
- 5.3. Specific recommendations for space allowances for each species must be sought from relevant organisations
- 5.4. All animals must have access to a comfortable, solid-based lying area, with plenty of suitable bedding material. It must be replaced/replenished regularly to ensure that it remains dry (see section 6).



- 5.5. Any fencing used must be strong enough to contain the species in question, must be frequently inspected and properly maintained, and must not have the potential to cause injury to the animals.
- 5.6. Species that are incompatible, for example, predator and prey, or animals requiring different environmental conditions will not be housed in the same room or, in some cases, within a distance where scent or sound can be detected.
- 5.7. Where school-based animals are taken home by pupils, a suitable homeschool agreement will be devised to encourage the observation of the same principles at home as those governing their husbandry in schools - both from the perspective of pupil safety and animal welfare.

6 Cleaning & Maintenance

- 6.1. This is clearly important, both for the health of the animals and for those people looking after them. Hands will be washed before and, of course, after cleaning cages, tanks, etc. Rubber or plastic gloves will be worn whenever possible.
- 6.2. The school will establish a written cleaning rota to ensure each animal is cleaned and cared for to a specified standard.
- 6.3. When carrying out cleaning duties, the designated member of staff will wear personal protective equipment, such as plastic gloves, at all times.
- 6.4. After removing soiled litter material, cages must be scrubbed with hot water and liquid detergent.
- 6.5. Solid litter will ideally be incinerated; more conveniently, it could be sealed in strong plastic bags and placed with other waste in dustbins.
- 6.6. The school will purchase appropriate cleaning materials such as a shovel, bucket, stiff brush and detergent cleaner.
- 6.7. The detergent cleaner, as well as any other chemicals purchased, will be checked in accordance with the school's COSHH Policy to ensure that they are not hazardous to the animals or to the members of staff using them.
- 6.8. All bedding will be removed and replaced, and all droppings will be scraped into the bucket provided. Both the bedding and droppings will be disposed of appropriately by the member of staff carrying out the cleaning duties.
- 6.9. Detergent cleaner will be used to clean each animal house.
- 6.10. Contaminated surfaces will be properly washed and disinfected.
- 6.11. The water and food feeders will be cleaned on a weekly basis to avoid any buildup of green algae which can be harmful to animals.



- 6.12. When cleaning each animal house, the member of staff will ensure that it is weather- and predator-proof, and will check for any repairs that are needed.
- 6.13. Any works required will be reported to the Farm Hand or Operations Officer, who will make appropriate repairs or will report to the headteacher if new equipment is needed.
- 6.14. Cleaning routines and arrangements for the disposal of animal waste will be carried out with due regard for good hygiene standards. Pregnant staff and anyone with suppressed immunity will exercise particular caution and avoid all contact with animal waste products.

7 Animal Handling

- 7.1. Pupils will naturally wish to handle animals, but the following considerations must be checked in advance of any such activities:
- The animal is used to being handled.
 - The animal is not likely to be stressed by excitable children.
 - Where there is a correct way to hold any animal, this is taught to children from the outset.
- 7.2. If animals will be handled, the most important issue is the maintenance of good hygiene. When handling animals:
- Do not consume food or drink.
 - Cover any open cuts or abrasions on the exposed skin of hands and arms with waterproof adhesive dressings.
 - Wash your hands with soap and water before and directly after handling animals.
 - Keep animals away from your face.
- 7.3. Children must be taught by staff the correct way to hold each animal.
- 7.4. Careful handling of small mammals and other animals is most important; the animals will be sufficiently restrained, so that they cannot damage themselves or the handler.
- 7.5. Mammals will be handled daily if possible (unless breeding or nursing, when they will be disturbed as little as possible). In this way they will normally become quite tame and accustomed to being handled.
- 7.6. Gloves will not be worn unless it is known that an animal for one reason or another is likely to bite or scratch. In this situation: a pair of rubber gloves which does not particularly reduce dexterity, is a sensible precaution.
- 7.7. Handling small animals will always be carried out over a table or trough filled with a soft material such as sand/sawdust.
- 7.8. The handling of certain animals will be avoided altogether. Those which are nervous, nocturnal or prone to biting or scratching, will only be observed and not touched.
- 7.9. Other creatures, such as invertebrates, can be too fragile to be handled any more than absolutely necessary. Sometimes any handling of a pet should be limited to a designated member of staff, who will have the necessary expertise to do it properly.



7.10. Animals will be given adequate rest periods away from disturbances

8. Breeding

8.1. Animals will not be bred at the school, in keeping with RSPCA opposition to such practice. This includes the use of egg incubators, butterfly and snail breeding kits, worms, ants and frogspawn.

9. Infestation and Disease

9.1. All members of staff are responsible for identifying ill health of the animals and reporting any concerns to the designated staff member, who will then contact the attending vet and inform the headteacher.

9.2. A veterinary health plan will be developed in conjunction with the attending vet in order to arrange the following:

- Monthly visits and check-ups
- Any additional check-ups as required
- Treatment for prevention of external and internal parasites, including vaccinations
- Response to, and provision for, seriously ill or deceased animals



- Any other procedures necessary for the maintenance of the animals' health
- 9.3. The likelihood of diseases being passed on to humans from pet animals is low. In all cases, good hygiene practices will be observed to reduce the risks even further.
 - 9.4. The designated member of staff, in conjunction with the attending vet, is responsible for the general health of animals, including keeping up with vaccinations and ensuring the appropriate animals have been treated for worms and fleas.
 - 9.5. Children with known allergies to specific animals must, of course, have restricted access to those that may trigger a response. In most cases, an allergic reaction will subside once the animal and the affected person are kept apart; in extreme cases, medical advice will be sought.
 - 9.6. Salmonella bacteria may be carried by reptiles; good hygiene is again required, especially if aquatic reptiles, such as terrapins, are kept. Good general hygiene and hand washing are essential for risk reduction.
 - 9.7. Children under five will not have contact with such reptiles or the environment in which the reptiles live or exercise.
 - 9.8. In any case of infestation or disease, appropriate treatment will be sought immediately and the animal(s) will be moved into a separate enclosure away from the others until they are back to full health.
 - 9.9. If the animals are found to have any disease which is contagious to humans, the headteacher will inform parents/carers immediately and the animal(s) will be removed from the premises for appropriate treatment.

10. Injuries Sustained to Pupils and Staff

- 10.1. Any injuries sustained to pupils or staff during the looking after of the animals will be reported to the headteacher immediately, and will be dealt with in accordance with the school's First Aid Policy.
- 10.2. All incidents will be reported using the Animal Incident Log

11. Bringing Pets and Other Animals into School

- 11.1. In addition to the general guidance given above, it is important that suitable arrangements are made in advance for the well-being of animals for the short time they are to be on the premises.



- 11.2. When a variety of animals will be together, consider the possibility of unwanted interactions. Animals must be housed properly and separately whilst on the premises and any containers used to transport them must be appropriate and retain the animal securely.

12. Injured Animals Brought in by Pupils

- 12.1. It is not uncommon for pupils to take pity on an injured bird or mammal, and to bring it into school in the belief that it will be possible to successfully treat it and restore it to perfect health. Pupils will be instructed that attempts to retrieve 'abandoned' animals in this way may damage the animals concerned and spread infection, and that they should instead report the injury so that others can act appropriately.
- 12.2. Where a pupil brings an injured animal into school, the following procedure will be implemented:
- Appropriate precautions, such as quarantining the animal, will be taken to minimise the risk of transmission of disease or parasites.
 - Scrupulous standards of hygiene will be maintained.
 - In all cases of doubt, expert advice will be sought from either a vet, the RSPCA or the People's Dispensary for Sick Animals (PDSA).

13. Unsuitable Animals

- 13.1. Animals that present unacceptable risks must not be brought into the school.
- 13.2. Wild birds and mammals taken, even if legally, from the 'wild' will not be brought into the school directly as they may be harbouring diseases or parasites transmissible to humans.

14. Monitoring and Review

- 14.1. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the designated member of staff, in conjunction with the headteacher, who will communicate any changes to all members of staff.



Animal Incident Log – Appendix 1

Date & Time of incident	Reported by:	Recorded by:	Description of Incident	Was property damaged? (Y or N)	Were students or staff place in danger or harmed ? (Y/N)	Recommended Actions



Date & Time of incident	Reported by:	Recorded by:	Description of Incident	Was property damaged? (Y or N)	Were students or staff place in danger or harmed ? (Y/N)	Recommended Actions

Date & Time of incident	Reported by:	Recorded by:	Description of Incident	Was property damaged? (Y or N)	Were students or staff place in danger or harmed? (Y/N)	Recommended Actions

Risk Assessment – Appendix 2

RISK ASSESSMENT		Animal Handling Risk Assessment					
Carrington School		Assessment by: Kerry Oakley (Headteacher)					
Review Date: July 2025							
Hazard / Risk	Who is at risk	Likelihood	Severity	Risk Rating	Mitigations	Additional Control Measures	Completed
Zoonotic Diseases	Staff, Students, Parents & Carers, visitors	1	6	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not to touch your face or put anything in your mouth whilst handling the animals. • Wash hands as soon as possible before and after handling the animals. Hand gel may be used for immediate contamination. • Eating and drinking is not permitted around Capella. • Hand-washing signage is in place to remind everyone to wash their hands. • Fresh cuts and grazes are covered before handling the animals. • Anyone with a compromised immune system or allergies towards any of the animals are not permitted to handle the animals. • The animal pens will be cleared and disinfected regularly. • Any animal waste in the pens are to be cleared up and disinfected after use. • Any animals showing symptoms of disease are not to be used during handling sessions. 		

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are to have carpets on their laps or a change of clothing when handling the animals to prevent bringing animal hair back into the school on their clothing. 		
<p>Injury from animals whilst handling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pecks Scratches Wingflap Bites 	Staff, Students, parents & Carers, Visitors	2	1	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anyone, including students, handling the animals are trained and/or assisted by competent staff in the correct handling and restraint procedure. Do not hold the animals near your face when handling. Do not run whilst handling the animals. Do not handle the rabbits unless absolutely necessary. Keep noise level to a minimum when handling the animals. Check claws are trimmed as necessary. Any animals that are consistently aggressive towards the children will be re-homed or managed separately by trained staff Any injuries from the animals are washed and immediately attended to by a first aid trained member of staff. 		
<p>Minor injuries from being in the animal areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scratches Bruises Cuts Splinters 	Staff, Students, parents & Carers, Visitors	2	2	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The animal areas to be checked on a regular schedule for maintenance issues. Wear gloves if handling any sharp or splintered wood. Report any maintenance issues immediately via Parago to Premises team and or to senior staff. Keep areas around Capella Field clear of unnecessary debris, clutter, and equipment. 		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trips & Falls 					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the animal shed clear of any unnecessary debris, clutter, and equipment. Entry into the shed is for staff only • Suitable footwear must be worn on Capella. • Running is not permitted at any time when on Capella. 		
Allergic Reactions & respiratory problems. Inhalation of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dust • Feathers • Fur • Bedding Materials 	Staff, Students, parents & Carers, Visitors,	1	4	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anyone with known allergies or respiratory issues are not permitted to handle the animals. • Students are reminded in their hygiene and safety briefing to let a member of staff know if they feel unwell at any point during or after handling the animals. • The towels / aprons used for animal handling are to be washed regularly to prevent the build up of fur and dirt. 		
Animal Escapes	Staff, Students, parents & Carers, Visitors, Animals	2	1	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The chickens are not to be taken out of their pen as this is their safe space, they can only be handled if they are on the field. • Animals must be held securely when transporting to and from their runs. • IF moving animals across the school they should be moved ideally by using a pet carrier, or by a halter / lead- • Only staff members are permitted to transport animals to and from areas of the school and may enlist the help of trained students as appropriate and safe to do so. • Students are not to be left unattended whilst handling the animals, unless trained and listed on chart in animal shed. 	Contact number provided for people to call if there is a problem.	

					<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A named staff member must always be aware and on the school site if trained students are working on Capella Farm.• The gate to Capella Field must be closed at all times• Any animals showing symptoms of stress must be immediately returned to their runs / pens• Animals must be handled following the correct procedure. I.e., placed on children's laps.• If an animal escapes during the weekend to alert the lettings team who will contact the Farm Hand / Manager for advice and support.		
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