

Cottesbrooke Infant & Nursery School
Policy for Animals in School

Pets in School

At Cottesbrooke Infant & Nursery School we aim to provide a nurturing and supportive environment in order for children to thrive. One way of supporting them in this is to have pets in school to make this a welcoming and calm environment. The pets are looked after in the Nurture Room.

Rationale for having pets in school

Research has shown that pets can:

- Increase empathy and responsibility in children
- Teach children how to nurture, care and have respect for all life
- Improve academic achievement by helping children to concentrate and feel calm in school.

Aims

- To provide a safe and secure environment where pupils can develop their Communication, Social and Emotional Literacy skills.
- Strengthen pupils' emotional well-being enabling them to access learning more readily.
- Help pupils re-establish good relationships with their peers and adults and see school as a place to feel included.
- Develop pupils' sense of self, belonging and trust.
- To see an improvement in behaviour, attainment and attendance of pupils.

Impact on the pupils

- Decrease isolation and depression
- Help to feel calm
- Development and improvement of social skills
- Lower anxiety and decrease agitation
- Reduce loneliness
- Help pupils access and leave the school calmly

Looking after the pets

The Nurture Group staff will oversee relevant guidance relating to each animal and amend practice in response to changing guidance. They will oversee animal care and safety throughout the school and also day to

day maintenance and feeding. The health of the animals will be monitored.

This is clearly important, both for the health of the animals and for those people looking after them. Hands should be washed *before* and, of course, after cleaning cages, tanks etc. rubber or plastic gloves should preferably be worn.

The Animal Man

At Cottesbrooke Infant & Nursery School we offer the children a broad and balanced curriculum. We try to make this as interesting as possible and from time to time we have outside visitors into school to talk to the children and enhance the curriculum. Sometimes these visitors bring wild animals in to school to show the children. When this is the case, the following guidelines will be followed:

- The Head Teacher will always be informed of any such visits and only reputable people who have been recommended or who are approved by the local authority will be allowed into school.
- Parents will be notified in advance of any such visits.
- The animals will be kept in secure cages and left in a safe place, away from the children – probably the hall storeroom- until they are required.
- The animals will only be brought out of their cages under strict supervision.
- The children will only be allowed to touch the animals if it is safe to do so, if they have been instructed how to do so correctly and if they wish to. **No child will be forced to look at or touch an animal that they don't want to.**
- Staff will ensure that all children wash their hands thoroughly after touching an animal.
- In the unlikely event of a child being scratched, bitten or harmed in any way by an animal, medical advice will be sort. Initially the trained first aider will examine the injury, clean it and decide whether further treatment is needed. The parents will be notified immediately if the injury is serious, or at the end of the day.

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 the face

Careful handling of small animals and other animals is most important; the animals should be restrained sufficiently so that they cannot damage themselves or the handler.

This policy has been approved by the Governors of Cottesbrooke Infant & Nursery School on 12th March 2018.