



ANIMAL MANAGEMENT POLICY

Northern House School Academy Trust believe that opportunities to work with animals provide unique opportunities for learning. We recognize our responsibility to provide a safe environment and positive learning experiences for all pupils and a high standard of care and welfare to all animals involved. This policy sets out how this will be achieved. It has been written with reference to the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and our existing school policies.

Our aims in bringing animals into the school environment:

1. To help pupils develop increased respect, empathy and a sense of responsibility for living things.
2. To encourage pupils to consider the experiences and needs of other living things, as well as other pupils, school staff, and their families.
3. To promote an interest in the natural environment and support hands-on learning across all areas of the curriculum.
4. To help pupils develop a calm, confident, and sensitive manner when interacting with animals.
5. To demonstrate best practice in the care of pets and other animals.
6. To encourage pupils to consider careers working with animals.

School pets and livestock:

To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all pupils and animals we will take the following measures before acquiring any school pets or livestock:

- Any member of staff wishing to introduce a class animal or animals must seek permission from the head teacher and agree to take on responsibility for the care and welfare of the animal for the duration of its life. This includes the responsibility to care for the animal themselves, or find a suitable alternative home, if the classroom situation or the health/ temperament of the animal changes and it is no longer appropriate for it to live at school.
- We will ensure there is a robust plan in place for weekend and holiday care of the animal.
- Wild caught and nocturnal animals will not be considered as suitable for school pets.
- We will fully research the needs, habits and temperament of the relevant species to ensure it will make an appropriate addition to the school and that we can fully meet its welfare needs in the school environment.
- We will produce a comprehensive written risk assessment for all activities associated with keeping and caring for the animal/s. This document will identify one or more named members of staff who have agreed to take on responsibility for the care of the animal. This risk assessment process will take into account the safety of any pupils with allergies, a compromised immune system, or behavioural issues. In the case of outdoor animals we will take steps to ensure that they will not impact negatively on local residents or existing uses of the school grounds.
- We will confirm that a local vet will be able to treat the animal/s if needed.
- We will keep parents informed of the plans to introduce the animal/s and ensure they know how to withdraw their child from activities related to the animal if they wish.
- We will assign a budget for the care of the animal/s to ensure ongoing funding is available to provide a suitable level of care.
- We will produce a written plan for how the animal will support the curriculum.
- We will research where the animal is to be acquired to ensure it has come from a reputable source. If appropriate it will live at home with the member of staff responsible for its care, or access to it will be restricted, for a period of quarantine and/or socialisation.

The animal or animals will only be introduced to the school once they have assessed as safe and appropriate for the classroom environment, and those involved are confident that their needs can be met. Once the animal is resident in the school we will take the following measures:

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- We will provide housing of a suitable size with all necessary features and enrichments. The housing will be chosen with the safety of pupils in mind and checked for any unanticipated risks. If second hand housing is used then it will be thoroughly cleaned and sterilised.
- We will keep the housing and surrounding area clean and in good condition at all times.
- We will provide a suitable single-sex social group for the animal/s if appropriate.
- We will provide the correct quantity of suitable feed. All feed will be stored correctly.
- We will carry out preventative health care measures as appropriate.
- We will ensure that any sick or injured animals are isolated, treated, and seen by a vet if necessary.
- We will monitor the behaviour and health of the animal on an ongoing basis.
- Pupils will only handle animals under close supervision from a member of staff.
- We will implement strict hand-washing procedures for all pupils coming into contact with the animal or associated equipment.
- Any cleaning chemicals or animal medications will be stored in accordance with best practice.

Visiting animals:

Visits from domestic, exotic and farm animals can enrich learning. We will take the following measures to ensure any such visits are safe and humane:

- No animals will be brought onto the school premises without prior planning and permission from senior management staff.
- We will produce a written risk assessment for all animal visits, taking into account the safety of any pupils with allergies, a compromised immune system, or behavioural issues.
- We will carefully check the credentials of any potential providers, requesting risk assessments, suitable public liability insurance, welfare policies and references as appropriate.
- We will require animal visit providers/ owners/ handlers to provide details of proposed contact between pupils and animals and assurance that all animals are vaccinated as needed.
- Any animals on site will be safely and humanely restrained or contained when not being held by their owner/ handler.

Policies and procedures:

- This policy, and any risk assessments and other documentation related to animals in school, will be reviewed and updated annually or in the event of a change to school circumstances or relevant legislation.

Location of nearest vet

Practice:

Address:

Phone Number:

Emergency Number:

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Policy on Dogs on School Grounds

Aims

To ensure the safety and well-being of pupils, staff and visitors to the school and to minimise the risk of accident or injury to people or animals within the school grounds.

The context of the policy:

The Academy Trust recognise that dogs are an important part of life for some of our families and, as such, are often included in day-to-day activities such as walking children to and from school. In our teaching we promote the relationship between people and their pets and accept and encourage the idea of pets as 'family members'. We do see pet ownership as a valuable educational experience for children.

The value of pet 'therapy' is widely accepted as a powerful aid to stimulation and communication. Studies have shown that the presence of companion animals can improve the well-being of children and lower the rate of anxiety, simply by making the environment happier, more enjoyable and less forbidding.

The school also acknowledges the views of families who have chosen not to have dogs or other pets. They also recognise that bringing dogs onto the premises might pose a health and safety risk to our pupils and others on site and could be unsettling for many as they arrive and leave school. There are added risks of dogs fouling, dogs biting or showing aggressive unpredictable behaviour.

The School recognises that even well-behaved dogs can behave unpredictably when placed in an unfamiliar, busy, noisy and crowded school environment and that this can lead to unexpected behaviour in even the best-behaved pet. Children can also behave unpredictably when in the presence of dogs especially where they are not used to being with them.

It is in considering this context that this Policy and Code of Conduct has been drafted.

Code of Conduct

The School requires all staff, parents and any visitors intending to bring their dogs to school to adhere to this Code of Conduct which states:

- All visiting dogs must be on a lead that keeps the dog reasonably close to the adult who is control of them;
- No dogs accompanying children to and from school are allowed inside any school buildings : only dogs resident on the School site or assistance dogs are allowed inside school buildings;
- Unsupervised resident or assistance dogs must be secured in an appropriate crate when on the school site;
- Visiting dogs must not be left unsupervised on the school premises and must not be left in the sole care of anyone under the age of 18. No dog can be tied up and left unattended on or near the school site at any time - dogs should be kept away from entry ways so that children have a choice whether they want to come in direct contact with dogs;

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Rules, Policies and Procedures of our MAT

MAT Documents: Animal Management

Northern
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- If any parent or pupil object to the animal's presence then arrangements must be made to ensure that this animal is kept away from them. If necessary, the animal may need exclusion from specific areas;
- The adult bringing the dog on site is responsible for cleaning up and removing from site any soiling by their dog on the school grounds and failure to do so will mean the dog will no longer be allowed in the school grounds (N.B. dog waste must not be put into the school bins);
- All dogs coming onto School grounds must be properly vaccinated and treated for fleas and other parasites, regularly groomed and checked for signs of infection or other illness;
- Claws should be kept trimmed to reduce the risk of scratches;
- Pets that are ill should be diagnosed and treated by a vet and should not be allowed in the school premises until their health is restored. All pets should have their coats cleaned regularly.
- When bringing dogs on to the site, dog owners do so with an absolute understanding that their dog has no issues around children, has never displayed any aggression towards children or others and that the owner believes the dog is fully trustworthy in a school environment;
- It is understood that bringing dogs to school is a privilege not a right and is done at the absolute discretion of the Headteacher.

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