

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Safety and Suitability of Premises, Environment and Equipment

Providers must keep premises and equipment clean, and be aware of, and comply with, requirements of health and safety legislation (including hygiene requirements).

8.6 Animals in the setting

Policy statement

Children learn about the natural world, its animals and other living creatures, as part of the Learning and Development Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This may include contact with animals, or other living creatures, either in the setting or on visits. We aim to ensure that this is in accordance with sensible hygiene and safety controls.

Procedures

Animals in the setting as pets

- We do not have animals permanent within the setting, however we may have animals visit the setting or part of a session.
- We take account of the views of parents and children when selecting an animal or creature to visit the setting, as well as any allergies or issues that individual children may have with animals or creatures.
- We carry out a risk assessment with a knowledgeable person accounting for any hygiene or safety risks posed by the animal or creature.
- We insist the person or persons bringing an animal or creature to the setting provides suitable housing and ensure this is clean and is kept safely.
- If animals or creatures are brought in by visitors to show the children, they are the responsibility of their owner.
- The owner carries out a risk assessment, detailing how the animal or creature is to be handled and how any safety or hygiene issues will be addressed. They will teach children the correct handling and care of the animal or creature and supervise them at all times together with members of staff.
- We ensure that children wash their hands after handling the animal or creature and do not have contact with animal soil or soiled bedding.

Visits to farms

- Before a visit to a farm, we carry out a risk assessment - this may take account of safety factors listed in the farm's own risk assessment, which should be viewed.
- We contact the venue in advance of the visit to ensure that there has been no recent outbreak of E. coli or other infections. If there has been an outbreak, we will review the visit and may decide to postpone it.
- We follow our outings procedure.
- Children wash and dry their hands thoroughly after contact with animals.

