



Keeping Animals in School Policy

Mission Grove Primary School

This Policy has been written for and adopted by the Governing Body of Mission Grove Primary School.

VISION STATEMENT

For the children at Mission Grove to become well rounded individuals who have drive, passion and the confidence to do their best. Who leave with the skills to succeed and flourish in life. Staff have high expectations of themselves and others and are reflective practitioners. Mission Grove provides security, opportunities and enjoyment for all.

Approved by Governing Body

Date: October 2017

KEEPING ANIMALS IN SCHOOL POLICY

Local Code of Practice
2
***Animals in Primary and
Nursery Schools***

Health and Safety
Tel: 020 8496 3408
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1. INTRODUCTION

It is recognised that there is considerable educational value to be gained in having certain animals in primary and nursery schools. For example, the animals may provide: -

1. An opportunity for pupils to observe and handle living things.
2. A source of interesting material which can arouse and encourage an attitude of curiosity and enquiry.
3. A means of developing sensitivity and consideration for the needs of living things, and an awareness of the problems of conservation.
4. A source of inspiration for writing, painting and other activities in arts and crafts.

Many primary and nursery schools at present derive some of these excellent benefits from animals kept in the school, but it should be appreciated that there are certain potential hazards associated with the presence of the animals. This Code of Practice has therefore been produced to ensure that safe procedures are practised at all times.

Before any animal is introduced into the school, the approval of the Headteacher must be obtained.

2. RECOMMENDED ANIMALS

The decision to adopt a particular species of animal must be taken having due regard to the possible hazards involved, compared with the relevance and educational value of keeping the species. Advice relating to this problem is given in this LCOP, but if a Headteacher requires further information, he or she should contact the School Adviser.

Animals which **may** be kept include:

- (a) **Small Mammals** obtained from reputable suppliers, e.g.
- Gerbils
 - Guinea Pigs (The Peruvian variety is less suitable because of its long hair)
 - Hamsters (Syrian or Golden type)
 - Mice
 - Rats

Note: rabbits are excluded from the recommended mammals because adequate space for exercising is not available. Exercising outdoors might bring the rabbit into contact with wild mammals or their faeces, which could cause infection.

- (b) **Fish and Amphibians** (e.g. frogs and newts)
Those from the wild should be returned to their natural habitat after observation.

The keeping of aquaria should not be discouraged, but due care should be exercised in the setting up of the electrical installation involved.

- (c) **Earthworms and Slaters** (Woodlice) and the majority of smaller invertebrates. These should be returned to their natural habitat after observation.

3. ANIMALS WHICH MUST NOT BE KEPT IN SCHOOL

Wild non-domesticated mammals and birds

Terrapins and Tortoises (These may be carriers of diseases such as leprosy).

Poisonous reptiles (Note: a positive identification must be made of the non-venomous character of any reptiles which it is proposed to keep).

Living Parasitic Organisms

Diseased animals should **not** be brought into the school. If **injured** animals are brought to the school by pupils, the Headteacher should be informed and the local RSPCA contacted.

4. NUMBER OF ANIMALS

The number of animals in the school should be the minimum required to fulfil the educational objectives of keeping them. Mammals should be caged singly or in non-breeding pairs.

5. CAGES

(a) Cleaning

All cages, water bottles and shelving must be thoroughly cleaned under staff supervision on a regular basis with a suitable disinfectant solution, used and stored in strict accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. "ASAB", supplied by Griffin & George Ltd. or "B.A.S.", supplied by Philip Harris Ltd. are recommended for this purpose.

Cages should be made of a material which can be sterilised satisfactorily e.g. plastic.

(b) Location

Cages must be positioned in such a way that pupils, especially very young pupils, cannot be accidentally scratched or bitten.

Cages should be located in a reasonably well ventilated room but should not be exposed to extremes of temperature or humidity.

6. BEDDING

(a) Floor Covering or Litter

This is scattered over the floor of a cage to absorb urine and the water from faeces, in order to limit decomposition.

Dry peat makes an excellent floor covering for cages. It is impervious to attack by mites, beetles etc. Its high acid content delays decomposition of faecal matter and release of ammonia. Cages have to be cleaned less frequently.

Note: If sawdust is used for litter, it must be from softwood, as hardwood contains harmful substances.

(b) Nesting Material

Used by the animal for constructing a nest or shelter, and enables it to adjust the micro-environment within the cage. Clean shredded paper is recommended.

7. FEEDING

Suitable bulk foods should be supplemented by appropriate quantities of fresh greens.

GUINEA PIGS are highly susceptible to Vitamin C deficiency. A daily intake of Vitamin C is required.

Long term storage of food should be avoided to reduce the risk of infestation. Food and bedding should be kept in sealed vermin-proof containers.

8. HEALTH AND HYGIENE

(a) Personal Hygiene

Hands must be thoroughly washed immediately before and after handling any animals, after cleaning cages, and before handling animal food.

(b) Handling

Animals should be handled with due care. However, if a bite or scratch is inflicted but there is no broken skin, a suitable antiseptic should be applied. Headteachers should ensure that their establishment contains suitable medicaments for this purpose. If the skin is broken, medical attention **must** be sought and the accident recorded in accordance with the Accident Reporting Local Code of Practice.

(c) Spread of Disease

Small mammals may suffer from diseases including those transmissible to and from man (zoonoses). Adherence to the recommended list of mammals and maintenance procedures should avoid the transmission of disease.

(d) Quarantine

Sick animals should be quarantined. If serious disease is suspected, the Headteacher must be informed and veterinary advice must be sought.

(e) Disposal

Faecal material, soiled litter and the remains of dead animals must be disposed of in such a way that they do not become a health hazard. Such items should be placed in plastic bags, sealed and incinerated.

(f) Allergic reactions

Allergic reactions may occur in a small percentage of pupils as a result of contact with animals, especially animal fur. This may produce symptoms such as coughing, sneezing, difficulty in breathing, watering of the eyes and reddening of the skin. Pupils who show any of these symptoms should not handle the animals.

9. GENERAL CARE OF THE ANIMALS

The animals must always be treated humanely and with sensitivity to their needs at all times.

Proper provision must be made for the care of all animals during weekends and holiday periods. Ideally, animals should remain in their habitual environment, but it is recognised that in certain circumstances, e.g. long weekends, holidays, this may not be possible. In these circumstances, where the animals are taken out of school, the teacher must ensure that the person undertaking the care of the animals understands fully the

conditions in which they should be kept, and the care that they should receive. This can be aided by each cage having a label giving details of: -

- feeding requirements
- cleaning requirements
- veterinary phone number

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

"Recommended practice for schools relating to the use of living organisms and material of living origin" --
Schools Council, English University Press

"Animals in Schools -- A practical approach to their educational value and welfare" -- R.S.P.C.A., Horsham,
Sussex

"The educational use of living organisms -- A source book" -- Schools Council, English University Press

L.B.W.F EDUCATION DEPARTMENT HEALTH & SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT

Establishment: _____

Date Assessment Undertaken: _____

Review Date: _____

Signed(name of assessor): _____

Work Activity or environment	Hazard	Who might be Harmed?	Written Control Measures	Level of Remaining Risk
<p><i>NOTES :</i> <i>List the work activity or area being assessed</i></p>	<p><i>Look only for hazards which you could reasonably expect to result in significant harm under the conditions in your workplace</i></p>	<p><i>There is no need to list individuals by name - just think about groups of people doing similar work or who may be affected.</i></p>	<p><i>Refer to relevant LEA manuals, procedures, codes of practice, information, training, guidance notes, safe systems of work etc in place to reduce risk as far as is reasonably practicable ; include any local control measures for your individual site/activity. Also note where information may be found.</i></p>	<p><i>Is the likelihood of harm: Low/Medium/High</i></p>
<p>Care of Animals</p>	<p>Potential for transmissible diseases (zoonoses) Cuts, scratches, bites etc. leading to infection</p>	<p>Anyone who handles animals. Persons, who clean, feed the animals. Also, when disposing of animals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that children conform to good hygiene at all times • Ensure that open cuts/bruises with platers and gloves <p>Refer to the guidance above.</p>	<p>Low</p>