



## Keeping pets at preschool – preschool procedure table

National Quality Standard Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations	Associated department policy, procedure or guideline	Reference document(s) and/or advice from a recognised authority
<p><b>NQS: 3.2.3</b></p> <p><b>Law Section: 167</b></p>	<p>Leading and operating department preschool guidelines</p> <p><a href="#">Animal Welfare – Schools policy</a> <a href="#">Animals in schools</a></p>	<p>Kidsafe – <a href="#">Kids and animals</a> ACECQA information sheet – <a href="#">Keeping pets and animals in education and care services</a> <a href="#">[PDF 910 KB]</a></p>

### Responsibilities

<p><b>School principal</b></p>	<p>The principal as nominated supervisor, educational leader and responsible person holds primary responsibility for the preschool.</p> <p>The principal is responsible for ensuring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the preschool is compliant with legislative standards related to this procedure at all times</li> <li>• all staff involved in the preschool are familiar with and implement this procedure</li> <li>• all procedures are current and reviewed as part of a continuous cycle of self-assessment.</li> </ul> <p>These tasks may be delegated to other members of the preschool team, but the responsibility sits with the principal.</p>
<p><b>Preschool supervisor</b></p>	<p>The preschool supervisor supports the principal in their role and is responsible for leading the review of this procedure through a process of self-assessment and critical reflection. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• analysing complaints, incidents or issues and the implications for updates to this procedure</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reflecting on how this procedure is informed by stakeholder feedback and relevant expert authorities</li> <li>• planning and discussing ways to engage with families and communities, including how changes are communicated</li> <li>• developing strategies to induct all staff when procedures are updated to ensure practice is embedded.</li> </ul>
<b>Preschool teacher(s) and educator(s)</b>	<p>Preschool teachers and educators are responsible for working with the preschool leadership team to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all staff in the preschool and daily practices comply with this procedure</li> <li>• this procedure is stored in a way that it is accessible to all staff, families, visitors and volunteers</li> <li>• they are actively involved in the review of this procedure, as required, or at least annually</li> <li>• details of this procedure’s review are documented.</li> </ul>

## Procedure

Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having a pet at our preschool gives children the opportunity to observe, interact, and learn about animals. It is considered a valuable part of our children’s education and care experience through enriching children’s learning about nature, ecology, and fostering empathy towards living beings. The experience also helps them develop responsibility, care for the environment, and understand interdependent relationships between humans, animals, and nature.</li> <li>• This procedure has been developed in consultation with families, children, trusted authorities, and the work health and safety committee to ensure it aligns with both educational goals and safety standards.</li> </ul>
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<p>Supporting children's learning</p>	<p>Supporting children's learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing children with access to animals in our preschool can help them learn about life cycles, caring relationships, opportunities for communication, scientific concepts, sustainability, connection to the natural world, care routines, and responsibility. These experiences are valued by preschool staff, families, and the community as they foster children's understanding of nurturing living beings and encourage curiosity about the environment.</li>   <li>• The outcomes of the EYLF can emphasise the role animals play in supporting children's learning. They include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity: Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy, and respect.</li>   <li>— Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world: Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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<p>Choosing and keeping the right pet for our preschool</p>	<p>The preschool educators and school leadership made the decision to keep chickens at our preschool. Families and children were consulted through surveys individual conversations to ensure broad input. Feedback was gathered to confirm that all educators and families were supportive of the decision to keep chickens at preschool.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We made decisions based on the following considerations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— The preschool will cover the cost for the care and upkeep of the chickens, including feeding, health care, and cleaning.</li> <li>— If the chickens are ill, a protocol for veterinary care will be put in place, with an assigned staff member responsible for arranging and overseeing medical appointments.</li> <li>— The chickens will be cared for on weekends and during school holidays by a designated staff member who volunteers to take on this responsibility.</li> <li>— The physical space available at the preschool is adequate for the needs of the chickens. This was determined through a review of the available space and an assessment of the chickens' habitat requirements. The chickens will be housed in a secure, well-ventilated coop with adequate space for roaming, a nesting area, and a run for outdoor access.</li> <li>— Time will be available throughout the day to care for the chickens. This includes: feeding the chickens, providing fresh water, and cleaning their coop. Educators may be asked to give up some personal time for this, and this has been agreed on with Amy Clark, Leanne Davie and Astoria Chapman.</li> <li>— We have established if there are any children or educators at preschool who are allergic to, or have phobias of, animals through a questionnaire distributed to families and staff. This is managed through ongoing communication and accommodation of any specific needs or concerns raised by individuals regarding their interactions with the chickens.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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<p>Assessing and managing risk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While there are many benefits to keeping pets/animals at our preschool, there are also a range of issues we considered for the safety and wellbeing of both the children and the animals. These include ensuring proper hygiene practices to prevent the spread of diseases, providing appropriate living conditions for the animals, and maintaining careful supervision to ensure both children and animals interact safely.</li> <li>• The preschool educators and leadership have developed risk and benefits assessments to ensure the safety of children and the pet/animal.</li> </ul> <p>These include our approach to: — Disease: Implementing regular health checks for the animals, following vaccination protocols, and maintaining a clean environment to minimize the risk of zoonotic diseases.</p> <p>— Effective hand washing and cleaning: Teaching children and staff proper hand hygiene practices before and after interacting with the animals, and ensuring that all areas, including animal enclosures, are cleaned and sanitized regularly.</p> <p>— Appropriate supervision: Providing constant supervision during interactions between children and animals to ensure safety, monitoring the animals' behaviour, and ensuring that children understand and follow safety guidelines.</p>

## Record of procedure's review

<p><b>Date of review</b></p>	<p>11/09/2024</p>
<p><b>Who was involved</b></p>	<p>Preschool Staff and Families</p>
<p><b>Key changes made and reason why</b></p>	<p>Localised procedure developed as there was no previous one in place.</p>

<p><b>Record of communication of significant changes to relevant stakeholders</b></p>	<p>Principal:</p> <p>Staff:</p> <p>Parents: Via story park and communication board.</p> <p>Please note, parents must be notified at least 14 days prior to a change that may have a significant impact on their service's provision of education and care or a</p>
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