

Animal Health & Safety

Links to Every Child Matters: Staying Safe

Links to Early Years Foundation Stage: Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements: Safety and Suitability of premises, environment and equipment: Risk Assessment 3:63

At Small World Nursery we recognise that pets can help meet the emotional needs of children and adults. Caring for pets also gives children the opportunity to learn how to be gentle and responsible for others. 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.

Nursery pets*

At Small World Nursey, we have fish in our toddler room and a wormery in our pre-school room.

Having animals/pets in the nursery provides children with additional stimuli and the ability to share in caring for and observing small animals. Children should be encouraged to note that animals need feeding regularly and to be kept clean.

- We take account of the views of parents and children when selecting an animal or creature to keep as a pet in the setting, as well as any allergies or issues that individual children may have any animals or creatures.
- We will carry out a risk assessment with a knowledgeable person accounting for any hygiene or safety risks posed by the animal or creature.
- We will provide suitable housing for the animal or creature and ensure this is cleaned out regularly and is kept safely.
- Our staff is knowledgeable of the pet's welfare and dietary needs and ensure that the correct food is offered, at the right times.
- We will make arrangements for weekend and holiday care for the animal or creature.
- We teach children the correct handling and care of the animal or creature and supervise them at all times.
- We will ensure that children wash their hands after handling the animal or creature and do not have contact with animal soil or soiled bedding.
- We will wear disposable gloves when cleaning housing or handling soiled bedding.

Pets from home

- If a child brings a pet from home to visit the nursery as a planned activity, parents of all children who will be in contact or in the same area as the pet are informed. We obtain written permission from parents to ensure no child has an allergy or phobia. We complete a full, documented risk assessment prior to the pet visiting and analyse any risks before this type of activity is authorised.
- Pets will not be allowed near food, dishes, worktops or food preparation areas. Children will wash their hands with soap and water after handling animals and will be encouraged not to place their hands in their mouths during the activity. The staff will explain the importance of this to the children
- Children will be encouraged to leave their comforters and dummies away from the animals to ensure cross-contamination is limited.

Visits to farms

- The nursery will contact the farm prior to our visit in order to get relevant risk assessments completed before an outing to the farm can be arranged. We check that the farm is well-managed, that the grounds and public areas are as clean as possible and that suitable first aid arrangements are made. Animals should be prohibited from any outdoor picnic areas
- We check that the farm has suitable washing facilities, appropriately signposted, with running water, soap and disposable towels or hot air hand dryers. Any portable water taps should be appropriately designed in a suitable area
- We will ensure that there is an adequate number of adults to supervise the children, taking into account the age and stage of development of the children
- We will explain to the children that they will not be allowed to eat or drink anything, including crisps and sweets, or place their hands in their mouths, while touring the farm because of the risk of infection and explain why
- We will ensure suitable precautions are in place where appropriate e.g. in restricted areas such as near slurry pits or where animals are isolated.

During the visit

- If children are in contact with, or feeding animals, we will warn them not to place their faces against the animals or put their hands in their own mouths afterwards, and explain why
- We will encourage children to leave comforters (e.g. soft toys and blankets) and dummies either at nursery, in the transport used or in a bag carried by a member of staff to ensure cross-contamination is limited
- After contact with animals and particularly before eating and drinking, we will ensure all children, staff and volunteers wash and dry their hands thoroughly. If young children are in the group, hand washing will be supervised. We will always explain why the children need to do this
- Meals, breaks or snacks will be taken well away from the areas where animals are kept and children will be warned not to eat anything which has fallen on the ground. Any crops produced on the farm will be thoroughly washed in portable water before consumption
- We will ensure children do not consume unpasteurised produce, e.g. milk or cheese
- Manure or slurry presents a particular risk of infection and children will be warned against touching it. If they do touch it, we will ensure that they thoroughly wash and dry their hands immediately
- We will ensure all children, staff and volunteers wash their hands thoroughly before departure
- We will ensure footwear and clothing is as free as possible from faecal materials.

Legal framework

- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999)

Further guidance

- Health and Safety Regulation...A Short Guide (HSE 2003)

This policy was adopted by	Small World Nursery
On	6 th August 2019
Date to be reviewed	August 2020
Signed on behalf of the provider	
Name and role of signatory	Melanie Whitley (Nursery Manager)