

Pets and Other Animals Procedure

I believe that children can learn a lot from having contact with animals, however the guidelines below will be followed to ensure that children interact with all animals safely.

Children will also learn what animals eat, about animal habitats and how to keep living things safe and healthy.

In my setting, I have a pet dog called Bailey & 2 pet cats called Oreo & Minnie. My pets will not have contact with the children.

How will children be kept safe around pets in the setting?

- Children will be encouraged to treat animals with respect, learn how to behave around them and how to handle them carefully.
- Although my pets are friendly, I will always closely supervise children around them, with the aim of avoiding any biting/scratching. Please be aware that this risk cannot be completely removed.
- Children will wash their hands after any contact with animals and learn about the reasoning behind this.
- Pet food will be stored out of reach of children.
- Hygiene will be a priority. Pet bowls and other pet equipment will either be out of reach of children or children will be taught not to touch this equipment (while also being supervised carefully).
- My setting, including outdoor areas, will be risk assessed both before opening hours and continually during sessions to ensure high levels of hygiene. Any animal waste or hazardous items will be removed immediately to ensure that children do not have any contact with them.
- If your child has an allergy to any pets or other animals, please notify me straight away, as it may not be possible for them to attend the setting without coming into contact with the animal and/or its hair/fur, etc.

How will children be kept safe if we meet other animals when away from the setting?

- Children will be taught to respect all living creatures, no matter how big or small. We will observe and care for nature in outdoor spaces, being careful not to hurt any creatures or disturb their habitats.
- We will always wash our hands after handling or having contact with any animal.
- Children will be taught not to feed any animals without first checking with an adult if it is allowed/safe.

How will children be kept safe around dogs we meet away from the setting?

- Children will be taught that not all animals are friendly. They will learn to always check with an animal's owner before attempting to stroke or handle them. Is without first checking with an adult if it is allowed/safe

'It is important to remember that a happy dog does not necessarily mean a safe dog.'

[PDSA website](#)

- If an unfamiliar dog approaches, the children will be taught to:
 - ⇒ stay calm and quiet;
 - ⇒ stand still - not to run away or turn their backs;
 - ⇒ make a loose fist, kept close to their bodies;
 - ⇒ when the dog's owner is close enough, ask for permission if they wish to stroke it.
- If a child is nervous around dogs and a dog were to approach the children, I would ask the owner to recall it. We would follow the steps above and avoid making eye contact with the dog.
- If a dog were to become aggressive, I would protect the children as best I could and call for help. I might also drop something to distract the dog and try to command the dog to stop.
- If your child has a fear of any animal or has had a traumatic experience in the past, please let me know in advance, so we can support them.