Animal policy

Dibden Park School

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Our vision

Dibden Park School supports every child and young person to feel safe, be heard, discover their worth, develop their strengths and create a limitless future.



Respect | Engage | Belong | Independence | Ambition

Learn Now, Succeed Together, Grow Forever

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1. Policy for animals in school

Studies show that encouraging children to take an interest in animals can have a positive effect on them and can be used to improve human and animal welfare. Some of the benefits have been identified as follows:

School pets have been found to:

- Motivate pupils to think and to learn, as children have a high level of natural interest, enthusiasm and enjoyment of animals
- Encourage a respect and reverence for life in pupils and thereby improve their relationships with other students, parents and teachers
- Foster a sense of responsibility in children
- Teach children to nurture and respect life
- Lead to the development of hobbies/ careers in animal care
- Improve academic achievement

Animals in schools also have social benefits for the school community:

- Enhance the learning environment, creating a sense of security and family warmth for the students
- Encourage the environment of parents/carers and the wider community in school activity

- Help to promote the school as an important nurturing influence in the community

2. Looking after a school animal

At Dibden Park school, we aim to promote good practice in animal care. Students are taught correct procedures in handling and caring for animals; they are encouraged to take a shared responsibility for the care of the animals, under direct supervision. Students will be taught how to interact gently with our schools' animals whilst under adult supervision.

3. Pets and animal contact

Pets and other animals in school can enhance the learning environment. However, contact with animals can pose a risk of infection including gastro-intestinal infection, fungal infections and parasites. Some people, such as pregnant women and those with a weakened immune system, are at greater risk of developing a severe infection. However, sensible measures can be taken to reduce the risk of infection to the students and staff. Staff should also be aware of any allergies.

Headteacher should ensure that a knowledgeable person is responsible for the animals. There should be a written risk assessment in school.

Animals should always be supervised when in contact with students and those handling advised washing their hands immediately afterwards. Animals should have recommended treatments and immunisations, be regularly groomed (including claws trimmed) and checked for signs of infection. Bedding should be cleaned regularly.

Anyone handling dirty bedding must wear disposable gloves. It should not be placed near food preparation areas, storage or eating areas. Wash hands immediately after removing gloves but pregnant staff members should not carry out this task because of the increased risk of serious infections.

Feeding areas should be kept clean and their food stored away from human food. Food not consumed by the end of the day should be removed or covered to prevent attracting pests.

4. Animal welfare and review

Duty of care

At Dibden Park School we have a 'Duty of Care' in accordance with The Animal Welfare Act 2006 and 2027 updates, to ensure that proper provision is made for the welfare needs of any invertebrate animal for which we are responsible. This applies not only during term time but also during weekends and holidays.

We:

- Prepare a risk assessment
- Obtain well socialized young animals from a reputable source
- Ensure each animal enjoys a suitable, optimum environment, in social groups if appropriate
- Make certain each animal can exhibit normal behaviour patterns.
- Make sure each animal is protected from pain, suffering, injuries and disease. Routine preventive health measures are practised as advised by vet – vaccinations, neutering and health checks
- Groom animals to encourage healthy coats
- Always keep animals and their homes clean and safe
- Provide a high quality, appropriate diet
- Ensure sick animals are promptly isolated and examined by a vet
- Have careful arrangements for weekend and holiday care are made with a member of staff.

Review

The effectiveness of the above policy and our practise will be evaluated every two years. This will be done every two years by the Senior leadership team in consultation with the whole school community.