

PETS

POLICY

Rationale:

The inclusion of well cared for animals and pets into the curriculum has many benefits for students, but needs to be properly managed to ensure the benefits for the children are complemented by a safe, comfortable and secure environment for the animals involved.

Aims:

- To provide the students with first hand experiences of caring for animals and pets, whilst at the same time, ensuring that the students realise and meet the obligations involved in caring for pets.

Implementation:

- Our school actively encourages the integration of appropriate animals and pets into our classrooms.
- It is well recognised that pets provide children with companionship, a sense of caring, and develop responsibilities.
- Classroom animals and pets allow children to study the lives of animals through first hand experience.
- Any class wishing to incorporate a living animal or pet into their room must provide a comprehensive plan to the principal for approval (which demonstrates that the class has appropriately considered essential issues such as feeding, housing, costs, cleaning, vet care, school vacation periods, etc) prior to the introduction of any animal into the room.
- Whilst students may take day to day care of classroom pets, a staff member must accept overall responsibility for each animal.
- The health and wellbeing of the animal must always remain the highest priority, and must not be compromised.
- The school will not purchase animals, and the responsible staff member must provide a viable long-term plan for any animal brought to the school as a classroom pet.
- The school will pay for veterinary care and any other costs associated with the safe keeping of any animal or pet kept at school.
- Classes that have pets must have a well-known emergency procedure if the animal escapes so that children do not over-react and endanger the health of the pet involved.
- Guest speakers demonstrating good pet care practices will be welcomed to the school.
- Pets that die have a profound effect on some children. Therefore, the death of classroom pets will be managed in a caring manner. The death of a classroom pet will be discussed openly with students in a manner consistent with their age and understanding, as a natural part of the life cycle of all living things.
- Classroom pets can be observed, handled and properly cared for, but are not to be used for scientific purposes or in any way that could cause the animal harm, distress or discomfort.

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council on....

February 2015

