

BERMAGUI PRESCHOOL



4.27 Animals and Pets in the Environment

Written By

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Aim

Educators are “encouraged to foster children’s capacity to understand and respect the natural environment and the interdependence between people, plants, animals and the land.” (NQS element 3.2)

Responsible ownership of pets, animals or birds that may reside at the Education and Care Service or visit the premises is vital. Role models of appropriate behaviours with animals and guidance in caring for the needs of animals is beneficial for children. This policy also considers the management of unwanted visitors such as pests and vermin.

Strategies

Introduction

Educators are “encouraged to foster children’s capacity to understand and respect the natural environment and the interdependence between people, plants, animals and the land.” (NQS element 3.2)

Responsible ownership of pets, animals or birds that may reside at the Education and Care Service or visit the premises is vital. Role models of appropriate behaviours with animals and guidance in caring for the needs of animals is beneficial for children. This policy also considers the management of unwanted visitors such as pests and vermin.

The Education and Care Service will:

- Provide a safe, clean and humane environment for all animals and birds that visit or reside at the service;
- Ensure pest control measures are regularly undertaken, and;
- Ensure there are procedures in place for removing unwanted animals, pests and vermin from the premises.

Centre Pets and Invited Visitors

- Educators will ensure that all pets and their enclosures are kept clean and hygienic. Educators must ensure they have clean bedding and water. Food is available for the pet, but kept out of reach of children at all times.
- Children must be supervised at all times when interacting with pets or animals. Educators will manage any health or safety risk for the children that may be caused by animals, such as asthma and allergies.
- Pets will not have access to children’s bedding, toys, food preparation areas, eating surfaces or utensils.
- Animals and birds visiting the education and care service as part of the educational program are the responsibility of the owner(s). The educators will ensure that the environment remains safe and hygienic at all times during the visit. Educators will complete risk assessment paperwork in relation to the visit.

Animals and Birds Other than Pets or Invited Visitors

- There are situations that may spontaneously occur, involving animals. For example, there may be a situation where an animal or bird has made its way into the education and care service. Educators may use this as a spontaneous learning experience for the children. At all times they will ensure the safety and wellbeing of the children and staff.
- If an animal or bird is potentially dangerous; such as a snake or spider, educators will contact an appropriate authority for assistance. In NSW this authority is the National Parks and Wildlife Service - 1300 361 967 (8.30am – 5.00pm) or NSW Wildlife Information, Rescue and Education Service Inc. on 13 000 WIRES - 13 00 094 737.
- The animal's movements should be monitored to ensure a speedy and efficient capture by a professional, but priority is to be given to educator, child and family safety. At no time is the potentially dangerous animal, insect or bird to be approached or touched by educators, children or families.

Pests and Vermin

- Pest control will occur at the education and care service on an annual basis or as required. Educators will monitor any occurrences in the service to determine the success of control measures.
- If pests and vermin are seen, educators will advise the nominated supervisor. The approved provider is responsible for arranging additional pest control visits.
- Where appropriate, educators discuss with children safety issues relating to dangerous products, plants, vermin and objects.

Educators will thoroughly clean all areas that animals or pests have accessed in the education and care service with hot, soapy water. If the remains of an animal or animal faeces have been found, the remains will be disposed of according to the local Council guidelines and the area where the remains were found will be thoroughly disinfected with hot, soapy water.

Educators will be responsible for assessing any situation in the education and care service where animals are involved to ensure the health, safety and well-being of children, families and animals.

Evaluation

The presence of animals in the education and care service will be managed by educators to ensure that the safety and wellbeing of children, families, educators and animals is maintained at all times. Educators will consider the risks versus the benefits of including animals in the educational program.

Relevant Legislation

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
National Quality Standard

Resources & References

The Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and the Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011
 Kidsafe NSW Inc – www.kidsafensw.org.au
 NSW Department of Health -
www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/general/pettingzoo_fs.html
 Guide to the National Quality Standard (3) ACECQA (2011)
 Health and Safety in Children's Services Model Policies and Practices – 2nd Ed. revised (2003)
www.community.nsw.gov.au/docswr/_assets/main/documents/childcare_model_policies.pdf
 Kidsafe NSW Inc – www.kidsafensw.org.au
 Staying Healthy in Child Care – Preventing Infectious Diseases in Child Care - 4th Ed. 2006
 Links to Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: 103, 168
 Links to National Quality Standards/Elements: 2.1.2; 2.2, 2.2.1, 3.2

Relevant Documentation

Child Protection
 Curriculum Planning & Documentation
 Interactions with Children
 Incidents, injury, trauma and Illness
 Emergencies and Evacuation
 Interactions with Children
 Cleaning and Maintaining the Environment
 Supervision

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