

Animals in School Policy

Birkwood Primary School recognises that the presence of animals in school can provide a valuable learning experience but animals cannot be allowed to endanger children's safety or disrupt learning. Keeping an animal in school should provide a learning experience for children. In addition, Birkwood Primary School recognises that instruction related to the care of animals teaches children a sense of responsibility and promotes the humane treatment of living creatures. It is the policy of the school to ask parents to give written notification as to whether their child does or does not have an animal allergy. It is the policy of our school to notify parents of children in a classroom when an animal is being introduced.

Procedures

Animals brought to school for short term/day visits:

During school hours, no animal will be brought to school without prior authorisation. Children must obtain permission from their teacher; the teacher will obtain authorisation from the Headteacher. Arrangements for animal visits should be made 24 hours in advance.

Proof (from a veterinarian) of compliance with immunizations for any disease that can be transmitted to humans shall be filed with the office in advance. All mammals will be properly vaccinated. Rabies vaccination is required for any mammal.

Any animal brought to school must remain under the control of the responsible adult at all times. The animal will be contained on a leash or in suitable carrier. This applies to days when school is in session, prior to the start of school and for an hour after school. Transportation to and from school will be the responsibility of the parent or other adult.

No wild animals or protected animals will be purposely brought to the building or on school grounds by anyone other than an authorised or licensed animal handler. There will be no physical contact between the animal and children unless it is an integral part of the objectives for the programme with prior approval received from the Headteacher.

Animals considered as resident class pets

Permission of the Headteacher is required prior to establishing resident animals in the classroom. Classroom pets that are of an unknown origin/history are not permitted in school. Teachers assume primary responsibility for the humane and proper treatment of any animal in their classroom.

When the school is not in session for more than three days, the teacher must make arrangements for any animal's care and safety.

Should any child or adult be bitten by an animal at school, a health care provider and the health officer shall be immediately notified. In addition, parents will be called. A copy of the incident report (signed by the Headteacher) will be sent to the involved family.

Humane treatment of animals

Animals within the school will be handled, treated and housed in a humane manner. Enclosures will be appropriate to the species. Animals will be kept in an environment appropriate to the species. Habitats will be maintained and cleaned regularly by staff not children.