



# Animals in the Environment

Review Date 24/10/2027

## Introduction

At Evans Head Woodburn Preschool, we embrace a world-environment-centred theory that recognises children as part of a living, interconnected world. In this view, animals are not just classroom additions—they are third teachers, offering rich opportunities for learning, empathy, and connection. By caring for animals, children develop a sense of responsibility, compassion, and respect for all living beings. These relationships foster an understanding of interdependence and nurture ecological awareness from an early age.

Animals in the preschool setting invite children to observe, wonder, and engage with the rhythms of life. Whether feeding, grooming, or simply spending time with them, children learn that their actions have real consequences in the lives of others. This relational learning supports the development of ethical and sustainable practices, laying the foundation for lifelong environmental stewardship.

## Goals – What are we going to do?

The Evans Head and Woodburn Preschools 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.

## Strategies - How will it be done?

### 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 and adequate food is available for the pet.
- 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. Children will wash their hands after interacting with animals.
- Homegrown eggs will be washed before being used for cooking.
- 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 visiting animals.

### **Animal Care Planning for Holiday Periods**

During the planning and programming meeting held before stand-down time or school holidays, educators will develop a roster and care plan to ensure the animals are fed and looked after throughout the break.

### **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 preschool grounds. 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.
- 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**. *Poisons Information Centre NSW* - **13 11 26**
- 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 preschools annually (generally December/January). Educators will monitor any occurrences in the service to determine the success of control measures and if additional treatments are required.
- If pests and vermin are seen, educators will advise the Nominated Supervisor. The Nominated Supervisor 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.

## Statutory Legislation & Considerations

The Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and the Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017

### Sources

Kidsafe NSW Inc. –  
[www.kidsafensw.org.au](http://www.kidsafensw.org.au)

NSW Department of Health -  
[www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/general/pettingzoo\\_fs.html](http://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](http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/docswr/assets/main/documents/childcare_model_policies.pdf)

Kidsafe NSW Inc. –  
[www.kidsafensw.org.au](http://www.kidsafensw.org.au)

Staying Healthy in Child Care – Preventing Infectious Diseases in Child Care - 5th Ed. 2013.

ACECQA- Belonging Being Becoming V.2.0 (2022)  
[www.aceqa.gov.au](http://www.aceqa.gov.au)

### Links to other policies

- Interactions with Children
- Incident, injury, trauma and
- Illness
- Emergencies and Evacuation
- Cleaning and Maintaining the
- Environment
- Supervision

## Evaluation

The presence of animals in the preschool will be managed by educators to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children, families, educators and animals. Educators will consider the risks versus the benefits of including animals in the educational program.

### On behalf of the Management Committee:

Name: ..... Ashliegh Mitchell .....

Signature: .....

Date: ..... 01/12/2025 .....

REVIEW DATE: ..... 24<sup>th</sup> October 2027 .....

### POLICY REVISION

Reviewed	Adopted by	Review date
16/09/2019	Belinda Fayle (President)	16/09/2021
15/06/2021	Aaron Kennedy (Treasurer)	15/06/2023
24/10/2023	Narissa Cuskelly	24/10/2025
01/12/2025	Ashliegh Mitchell	01/12/2027