

CARE AND WELFARE OF ANIMALS PROCEDURES

The school recognises that under the Animal Protection Act 1987 it is required to have a code of ethical conduct relating to the welfare and treatment of any animals under its care.

Purpose

1. To encourage, through example, the proper care of living things within the school situation.
2. To provide experiences for students to observe, handle and care for a range of animals in a humane way.
3. To ensure that the care and welfare of animals must have the highest priority in any activity involving the keeping of an animal or its study on a field trip.
4. To educate students through example and discussion on the importance of animal care, welfare and the responsibilities involved.

Guidelines

- “Animal” is defined as any living creature with a backbone, including land-based and aquatic mammals, birds, fish and reptiles.
- It is generally accepted that other living creatures such as spiders, snails, worms and insects must also be treated with care and kindness.
- If the appropriate care cannot be provided, the animal is not to be kept in school.
- Creatures kept in classrooms for observation must be housed and fed properly, and returned to their natural habitat on completion of the study.
- Creatures captured on field trips must be returned to their habitat prior to leaving the area unless their proper care in the school is guaranteed. Only the number of creatures needed for observation at school should be brought back from fieldtrips.
- Responsibility for the welfare of animals rests with the teacher/staff member involved, but ultimately with the Principal and Board of Trustees.
- Permission needs to be sought from the principal to house an animal over a period of time. A clear educational purpose needs to be established before permission will be granted.

The following freedoms apply

- Animals must have appropriate diet, including access to water. Provision must be made for care at weekends and over holidays.
- Animals must have cages/containers of an appropriate size, which are ventilated and hygienic. Animals must not be subjected to extremes of noise, draught or sunlight.
- Animals must be free from injury or disease. Diseased or injured animals must be treated and must not be kept at school.
- Animals must be handled/kept in such a way that they are not subjected to stress or fear.
- Animals must be able to express normal behaviour.

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