

Pet Policy

(to be amended as appropriate, depending on the CM's pet / individual risk associated with that animal)

Policy Created: 1st April 2026

This policy is reviewed on an annual basis

I would like to make you aware that we do have a pet in our setting.

In our tiney home we have a lovely female cat called Skylar. She is a house cat and comes downstairs sometimes to spy on the children and say hello.

Children can learn a lot from having contact with animals, with research showing clear links to the development of children's personal, social and emotional development when caring and engaging with animals and the natural world.

Caring for animals can be a great way to help children to begin to break down barriers, and can support children's conversation, questioning and understanding of the natural world around us. If your child has not had much contact with animals, and may therefore be wary, or if they have any worries or concerns, please do inform me of this, so that I can be sensitive regarding their needs, and to help me effectively support your child.

The following procedures will be followed in the setting, to ensure the safety of the children and the animals:

- Children will be encouraged to treat all animals with respect, and will be shown how to hold/handle the pet, building up the child's confidence over time.
- Touching and engaging with our pet will always be optional, and all children will not be forced to touch the pet at any time, if they do not want to.
- Children will never be left alone with any of the pets, and contact will always be supervised.
- Good hygiene practice will always be encouraged, and the children will be supported to wash their hands after any contact with animals, discussing the importance of good hygiene routines.
- Children will be taught that not all animals want to be touched, and we will have discussions with the children about animal behaviour, helping to learn and understand the importance of always checking with an animal's owner before attempting to stroke or handle them.
- All pet food will be stored safely away from the children's reach.
- A high standard of hygiene will be followed, with careful thought given to the placing of the feeding and drink bowls of dogs and cats.
- Animals will not be allowed onto food preparation areas, or on tables where children eat breakfast / lunch / snack.

- Children will also be educated that we respect all living creatures, no matter how big or small. We will observe and care for nature in outdoor spaces, being careful not to hurt any wildlife or disturb their habitats.
- The garden/play areas will be checked every morning, before the children are permitted outside to play, to ensure that no animal waste presents any risk to the children.