

**RATIONALE:**

The policy is designed to ensure that as a school we comply with legislation, and codes for the responsible care of animals used in teaching. The inclusion of well cared for animals and pets into the curriculum has many benefits for students, but needs to be properly managed to ensure the benefits for the children are complemented by a safe, comfortable and secure environment for the students, staff and the animals involved.

AIMS:

- To manage animals and pets within the school grounds and buildings in a safe, caring and orderly manner.
- To provide the students with first hand experiences of caring for animals and pets, whilst at the same time, ensuring that the students realise and meet the obligations involved in caring for pets.

IMPLEMENTATION:

- It is well recognised that pets provide children with companionship, a sense of caring, and develop responsibilities.
- It is the responsibility of animal and pet owners to ensure that all animals and pets brought into the school grounds and buildings are appropriately restrained by an adult to ensure the safety of all members in our school community.
- The principal reserves the right to ask owners to remove their pet or animal from school property in the event the animal causes disruption to school routines or endangers student well-being.
- Any damages caused by animals or pets within the school grounds and buildings will be borne by their owners.
- Any class wishing to incorporate a living animal or pet into their room must provide a comprehensive plan to the principal for approval (which demonstrates that the class has appropriately considered essential issues such as feeding, housing, costs, cleaning, vet care, school vacation periods, etc) prior to the introduction of any animal into the room.
- Whilst students may take day to day care of classroom pets, a staff member must accept overall responsibility for each animal.
- The school will not purchase animals, and the responsible staff member must provide a viable long-term plan for any animal brought to the school as a classroom pet.
- The school will not keep animal(s) at school if appropriate level of care and welfare cannot be provided.
- The school will pay for veterinary care and any other costs associated with the safe keeping of any animal or pet kept at school.
- Classes that have pets must have a well-known emergency procedure if the animal escapes so that children do not over-react and endanger the health of the pet involved.
- Guest speakers demonstrating good pet care practices will be welcomed to the school.
- Pets that die have a profound effect on some children. The death of classroom pets will be managed in a caring manner and will be discussed openly with students in a manner consistent with their age and understanding, as a natural part of the life cycle of all living things.
- The school will take care to prevent the spread of disease with proper hygiene measures and minimal handling of animals.
- The school will seek written consent from the parents/carers and students to take animals home beyond completion of a teaching unit

EVALUATION:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in July 2013

Name of School Council President: Sonja Josipovic

Signature of School Council President.....