

Pets and Visiting Animals – Procedure PO180-9

1. STATEMENT

Ōtātara Children's Centre recognises its legal obligations to animals (as defined under the Animal Welfare Act) 1999 and its moral responsibilities with regard to invertebrate creatures kept at the Centre.

2. GOALS

- To encourage, through example, the humane and respectful care of living things.
- To provide opportunities for children to observe and humanely handle and care for a range of animals, insects etc.
- To ensure that in any activity involving an animal, the welfare of the animal is given high priority.
- To foster children's curiosity and learning about the importance of caring for animals and the responsibilities this involves.
- To help children to develop confidence in being near animals.
- To protect children from harm.

3. GUIDELINES

1. The day to day care of all animals at Ōtātara Children's Centre will be governed by the Animal Welfare Act 1999.
2. All living creatures at the Centre will be treated with care and respect.
3. Responsibility for the welfare of each type of animal in the Centre will be assigned to a particular teacher, and ultimately, with the supervisor.
4. Animals kept at Ōtātara will be provided with their 5 basic needs (sometimes expressed as the 5 freedoms);
 - Freedom from thirst, hunger and malnutrition (including during weekends and holidays).
 - Freedom from discomfort and lack of shelter (through the provision of appropriate cages and containers that are properly ventilated and hygienic and do not allow exposure to extremes of noise, draught or sunlight).
 - Freedom from injury, disease and parasite infestation (by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment). Diseased or injured animals will be treated promptly and kept away from the Centre until they have recovered. If this is not possible they will be humanely destroyed.
 - Freedom from distress and improper handling.
 - Freedom to display normal patterns of behavior
5. If appropriate care and facilities cannot be provided, animals will not be kept at Ōtātara.

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6. Animals kept at Ōtātara will be kept in accordance with the conditions, relevant to a particular species, outlined in section 3 of *Caring for animals, MoE, 1999*. Species not covered in this document will be kept in accordance with expert advice.
7. All effort will be made to protect children from harm from animals. Visiting animals will remain on a leash, in an appropriate cage or enclosure, held by an adult or if a child is holding the animal and adult will remain in very close supervision as appropriate to the individual animal.
8. Good hygiene practices will be practiced i.e. thorough hand washing after handling animals.

Document information – Office use only	
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