

--TITLE:

**PET MANAGEMENT**

<b>Regulation/s/ Standards</b>	National Regulations 2011 Clause 116 (2) e. NQS: 2.1.2, 2.2, 2.2.1 EYLF: Learning outcome 1.4, 2,3.2.3,
<b>Related documentation</b>	
<b>Policy/policies</b>	Assessment, approval, reassessment of Educators premises
<b>Other procedures</b>	Excursions Policy
<b>References:</b>	Work Health and Safety (Educators) Infection control Supervision  Keeping Pets and Animals in Education and Care Services ACECQA
<b>Date effective</b>	May 2023
<b>Date for review</b>	May 2025
<b>Purpose</b>	To ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of children, parents, staff, animals and pets.
<b>Responsibility</b>	Educators, Educator Assistants, Relief Care Educators and staff

Key information:

- Armidale Family Day Care acknowledge that animals and pets can be a valued part of both Educators and families' homes, and that children's access to animals/ pets in the care environment can provide children with many positive learning experiences.
- It is important to recognise that all animals and pets, can pose significant risks to children.
- Animals and pets may lack familiarity with children and the bustle of a family day care environment may frighten, upset, or over stimulate them. *Pets in these circumstances may be prone to unpredictable behaviour posing a potential risk to children.*
- Children may not have prior knowledge of "safe behaviour" with pets and they may be too young to regulate their behaviour around pets.
- Educators are to complete animal/pet risk assessment for each of the pets that reside in the FDC environment. Risk assessments are to be reviewed and updated annually.
- Pet risk assessments are to be presented to families prior to children using care, Educators are to obtain parent signatures on risk assessment and discuss how the animals are integrated in the Family Day Care environment.
- All animals and pets must be apart of the daily safety checklist, checking for hazards and risks posed by animals
- No animal may travel in a motor vehicle with children unless the animal is restrained by a fixed barrier, a harness / lead or cage.

## **Pet Housing and Maintenance**

- The Educator must ensure that every animal and pet residing in the home/yard has a completely separate area, away from the children in care to be used when needed. These enclosures are to be made inaccessible to children at all times.
- Educators are to consult the Coordination unit on advice and what protective measures to implement according to the animal and potential risks they present. The Coordination unit will work with Educators providing tailored advice on suitable protective measures to implement.
- Educators are to physically check animal/ pet enclosures as a part of the daily safety check, to ensure protective measures put in place are consistently maintained.
- Aviary's and bird cages are to be made completely finger proof or out of children's reach to prevent fingers being bitten.
- All animals and birds must be kept in a clean, healthy condition (e.g. vaccinated regularly wormed, checked for parasites such as fleas, lice etc.).
- Animal bedding, food bowls, water bowls, litter trays and pet toys must be kept out of children's play areas and cleaned regularly.
- If pets have been indoors, furniture and floors are to be vacuumed and cleaned before children arrive at care.
- Educators are to be mindful of animal odour in the home and always maintain a clean and hygienic environment.
- Play areas are to be kept clear of pet droppings, dog bones and food scraps at all times.
- Vaccination of animals occurs regularly
- Consideration regarding other standards and legislation relating to children's access to animals includes licensing requirements for reptiles or limits of chickens

## **Direct Contact with animal Procedure**

- Educators must always be closely supervising when children are interacting with animals.
- Educators should use the opportunity of any supervised contact with a pet or farm animal to demonstrate gentle handling and appropriate behaviour.
- Educators are to monitor animals behaviours and remove them from the care environment if acting nervous, angry, excited or over stimulated.
- Children who have a fear of animals should be treated with special care. A gentle, slow introduction for the child and the pet is needed and the needs of the child must be considered first.
- Educators must ensure that animals kept at their premises do not constitute a health or safety risk to the children in care (e.g. by causing an allergic reaction or infection).
- Children and Educators are to wash their hands thoroughly after touching pets.

## **Animal / Pet Risk assessment**

Educators are to complete a thorough animal/pet risk assessment for each of the animals residing in their homes on AFDCs form. Educators are to use as much information as possible.

AFDC requires pet risk assessments to be updated annually upon re-registration or before introducing the animal to children in care. Educators are to present the risk assessment/s to families and the Coordination unit for approval and signature prior to introducing any animal or pet to their children.

## **Emergencies and First Aid**

In the event an animal/ pet attacks or bites a child, Educators are to always err on the side of caution and call an ambulance and the Coordination unit ASAP. As first aiders Educators do not have the medical expertise to assess an injury caused by an animal.