Animals in the Environment

1. Policy Statement

Educators are “encouraged to foster children's capacity to understand and respect the natural environment and the interdependence between people, plants, animals and the land.” (NGS element 3.2) Responsible ownership of pets, animals or birds that may reside at the Education and Care Service or visit the premises is vital. Role models of appropriate behaviours with animals and guidance in caring for the needs of animals is beneficial for children. This policy also considers the management of unwanted visitors such as pests and vermin.

2. Legislative Requirements

The Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and the Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: 103 Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair, 168 Education and care service must have policies and procedures

(1) The approved provider of an education and care service must ensure that the education and care service premises and all equipment and furniture used in providing the education and care service are safe, clean and in good repair.

Link to National Quality Standard 2010

2.1.4 Steps are taken to control the spread of infectious diseases and to manage injuries and illness, in accordance with recognised guidelines.

2.3.2 Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury.

3.2 The environment is inclusive, promotes competence, independent exploration and learning through play.

3. Who is affected by this policy?

a) Child
b) Families
c) Staff
d) Management

4. Implementation

The Nominated Supervisor will:

A. The UWS policy Animals on Campus is followed to gain approval for animals to kept within the centre.

B. A safe, clean and humane environment for all animals and birds that visit or reside at the service;

C. Pest control measures are regularly undertaken, and;

D. There are procedures in place for removing unwanted animals, pests and vermin from the premises

E. All pets and their enclosures are kept clean and hygienic.

F. They have clean bedding and water. Food is available for the pet, but kept out of reach of children at all times.

G. Children must be supervised at all times when interacting with pets or animals. Educators will manage any health or safety risk for the children that may be caused by animals, such as asthma and allergies.

H. Pets will not have access to children’s bedding, toys, food preparation areas, eating surfaces or utensils.

I. Animals and birds visiting the education and care service as part of the educational program are the responsibility of the owner(s). The educators will ensure that the environment remains safe and hygienic at all times during the visit. Educators will complete risk assessment paperwork in relation to the visit.

The Licensee/Director/Supervisor will ensure that this policy is maintained and implemented at all times.

5. Sources

- Kidsafe NSW Inc – www.kidsafensw.org.au
- Guide to the National Quality Standard (3) ACECQA (2011)
- Kidsafe NSW Inc – www.kidsafensw.org.au
- Staying Healthy in Child Care – Preventing Infectious Diseases in Child Care - 4th Ed. 2006
- Community Child Care Co-operative (NSW).

6. Review

The policy will be reviewed annually. Review will be conducted by management, employees, parents and any interested parties.