

POLICY NO 30: PETS

Key Policy Contact Person: Manager, Our Village Family Childcare

POLICY STATEMENT:

Pets are an integral part of our lives. The relationship between pets and children can be special, comforting, and beneficial to child development.

If Educators choose to keep pets it is important that children have suitable opportunities to engage with animal as part of their education program. Educators must ensure that while children are in care, they are not at risk of injury or infection caused by an animal.

CRITICAL INFORMATION:

This policy and procedure outline the essential criteria that the Coordination unit staff and Educators need to follow when dealing with pets within a service.

- Upon registration, Educators will advise the Coordination Unit of all pets kept on the premises where family day care will take place.
- If an Educator is considering buying a new pet, Coordination Unit must be advised in advance and parents of children in care must also be advised.
- There have been serious attacks on children by dogs; for this reason, dogs must be separated from children during all hours that family day care is in operation.

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PURPOSE:

To clarify the role of pets in Our Village Family Childcare ensuring clear guidelines.

SCOPE/RESPONSIBILITIES:

This document applies to all Educators, Families, Coordination Unit Staff, Volunteers and Students of

Our Village Family Childcare Service.

STATEMENT OF DIVERSITY

Sunbury and Cobaw Community Health is committed to improving the health of our community and being accessible to all, including people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, those from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background, people with a disability, Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQ) people and other socially vulnerable groups and supporting their communities across the lifespan from birth to older age.

DEFINITIONS:

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PROCEDURES:

Pets

- When an Educator registers with Our Village they will advise the Coordination Unit of all pets kept on the premises where family day care will take place including any children/families enrolling with their Family Day Care Service.
- If an Educator chooses to but a new pet, the Coordination Unit and families must be advised in advance.
- Children may engage with animals as part of their education program.
- The Educator must strictly supervise the interactions between pets and the children in education and care.
- Prior to a child engaging with an animal parent permission must always be sought.
- It is the responsibility of the Educator to determine the appropriateness of the type of other pets introduced to children i.e., rabbit, cat, mouse.
- All pets must have an appropriate area where they can be kept separate from the children while other activities and routines are taking place.
- Children must never be left alone with a pet.
- The area should also be adequate for the pet’s wellbeing i.e., a dog in a confined area for extended periods can become stressed and aggressive.
- Pets and pet areas must be kept clean.
- Animal feeding bowls and bedding should be inaccessible to children.
- Animal excrement must be picked up promptly in areas where children may be playing.
- Sandpits must be covered when not in use to avoid soiling by pets.
- All vaccinations, worming treatments and pet care must be adhered to according to veterinary advice.
- Children must not have contact with a sick animal.

Dogs

There have been serious attacks on children by dogs; for this reason, dogs must be separated from children during all hours that family day care is in operation. Any barrier that separates children from dogs:

- Must be high enough that the dog cannot reach the top or scale the barrier.
- Must not allow finger penetration through the barrier or at the sides and bottom.

REFERENCES:

- [Education and Care Services National Regulations, \(current version July 1, 2023\)](#)
- [Kidsafe Victoria](#)
- [ACECQA Information Sheet - Keeping Pets & Animals in Education & Care Services](#)

RELATED POLICIES & PROCEDURES/ WORK INSTRUCTIONS:

- Dealing with Infectious Diseases – 24
- Active Supervision – 52
- SCCCH Client Empowerment Policy and Procedure
- Environmental Sustainability - 50
- Code of Conduct – 40
- SCCCH Code of Conduct
- Home and Vehicle Safety Check
- Home and Vehicle Safety Check Work Instruction

VERSION CONTROL AND LEGISLATION:

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