

27. ANIMALS IN THE SETTING

Policy statement

Children learn about the natural world, its animals and other living creatures, as part of the Learning and Development Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This may include contact with animals, or other living creatures, either at ASK Kindergarten & Clubs (ASK) or on visits. We aim to ensure that this is in accordance with sensible hygiene and safety controls.

Procedures

Animals visiting ASK

- We carry out a risk assessment with a knowledgeable person accounting for any hygiene or safety risks posed by the animal or creature.
- We ensure children are taught the correct handling and care of the animal or creature and we supervise them at all times.
- We ensure that children wash their hands after handling the animal or creature and do not have contact with animal soil or soiled bedding.
- We wear disposable gloves when cleaning or handling soiled bedding.
- If animals or creatures are brought in by visitors to show the children, they are the responsibility of their owner.
- The registered provider/owner carries out a risk assessment, detailing how the animal or creature is to be handled and how any safety or hygiene issues will be addressed.

Visits to farms

- Before a visit to a farm, we carry out a risk assessment - this may take account of safety factors listed in the farm's own risk assessment, which should be viewed.
- We contact the venue in advance of the visit to ensure that there has been no recent outbreak of E.coli or other infections. If there has been an outbreak, we will review the visit and may decide to postpone it.
- We follow our outings procedure.
- Children wash and dry their hands thoroughly after contact with animals.
- Outdoor footwear worn to visit farms is cleaned of mud and debris as soon as possible on departure and should not be worn indoors.
- We advise members of staff and volunteers who are, or may be, pregnant, to avoid contact with ewes and to consult their GP before the visit.