Animal Health and Safety Policy

At Rosebuds Nursery ltd we recognise the value animals and pets can bring to the emotional needs of children and adults. Caring for animals and pets also gives children the opportunity to learn how to be gentle and responsible for others and supports their learning and development.

**Animals on-site**

Due to the rural setting of Rosebuds Nursery Ltd., there are certain animals within the grounds which the children may have access to which have been included within the nursery Risk Assessments. Such animals include:

* Geese (free-roaming)
* Horses (contained on-site)

Children are discouraged from feeding, petting or taunting the free-roaming Geese and are never left unsupervised in their presence. Staff check the premises regularly for faeces and support children to wash their hands after accessing the outdoor environment. Footwear are sanitised where possible if contaminated with faeces. Should a Goose feel threatened, it may become territorial. Staff will support children to calmly move away from the Geese and avoid causing distress to the animals e.g., raising voices, confronting the animal or running away.

Staff may wish to incorporate Risk Assessed walks within the vicinity of the nursery to enhance the children's learning and development. Parental permission for walks within the grounds is sought upon registration. Children may visit the on-site horses and are never left unsupervised in their presence. Children are supported to wash their hands after coming in to contact with animals and fencing etc.

Our safety procedures are:

* Permission slips are obtained from parents to seek written permission for their child to be involved in caring for the animal at nursery
* A full documented risk assessment is completed, including considerations for children with any allergies
* All pets are homed in an appropriate and secure area of the setting, with areas that are quiet and space away from the children, when needed
* Only staff have responsibility for cleaning out the animals (where applicable). Protective equipment is used, such as gloves and aprons
* We ensure all pets have had all of their relevant vaccinations, are registered with the vet and are child-friendly
* Pets are not allowed near food, dishes, worktops or food preparation areas. Children will wash their hands with soap and water after handling animals and will be encouraged not to place their hands in their mouths while pets are being handled. Staff explain the importance of this to the children
* Children are encouraged to leave their comforters and dummies away from the animals to ensure cross-contamination is limited.

**Pets from home**

* If a child brings a pet from home to visit the nursery as a planned activity, parents of all children who will be in contact or in the same area as the pet are informed. We obtain written permission from parents to ensure no child has an allergy or phobia. We complete a full, documented risk assessment prior to the pet visiting and analyse any risks before this type of activity is authorised
* Pets are not allowed near food, dishes, worktops or food preparation areas. Children will wash their hands with soap and water after handling animals and will be encouraged not to place their hands in their mouths during the activity. The staff will explain the importance of this to the children
* Children will be encouraged to leave their comforters and dummies away from the animals to ensure cross-contamination is limited.

Visits to animal settings

* A site visit is made by a senior member of staff before an outing to a farm can be arranged. We check that the farm is well-managed, that the grounds and public areas are as clean as possible and that suitable first aid arrangements are in place. Animals should be prohibited from any outdoor picnic areas
* We check that the farm has suitable hand washing facilities, appropriately signposted, with running water, soap and disposable towels or hot air hand dryers. Any portable water taps should be appropriately designed in a suitable area
* We ensure that there is an adequate number of adults to supervise the children, taking into account the needs of the children
* We explain to the children that they will not be allowed to eat or drink anything, including crisps and sweets, or place their hands in their mouths, while touring the farm because of the risk of infection and explain why
* We ensure suitable precautions are in place where appropriate, e.g. in restricted areas such as near slurry pits or where animals are isolated.

During the visit

* If children are in contact with, or feeding animals, we will warn them not to place their faces against the animals or put their hands in their own mouths afterwards, and explain why
* We will encourage children to leave comforters (e.g. soft toys and blankets) and dummies either at nursery, in the transport used or in a bag carried by a member of staff to ensure cross-contamination is limited
* After contact with animals and particularly before eating and drinking, we will ensure all children, staff and volunteers wash and dry their hands thoroughly. If young children are in the group, hand washing will be supervised. We will always explain why the children need to do this
* Meals, breaks or snacks will be taken well away from the areas where animals are kept and children will be warned not to eat anything which has fallen on the ground. Any crops produced on the farm will be thoroughly washed in potable water before consumption
* We will ensure children do not consume unpasteurised produce, e.g. milk or cheese
* Manure or slurry presents a particular risk of infection and children will be warned against touching it. If they do touch it, we will ensure that they thoroughly wash and dry their hands immediately
* We will ensure all children, staff and volunteers wash their hands thoroughly before departure
* We will ensure footwear and clothing is as free as possible from faecal materials.

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| **This policy was adopted on** | **Signed on behalf of the nursery** | **Date for review** |
| *14.06.2024* | Jess Broughton | *[Insert date]* |