



Care and Handling of Animals

Smartkidz believes that the nurturing, respect, and care of animals help children to learn valuable life skills throughout their future lives and fits in well with the club's ethos. Having a relationship with a pet can help children to develop a caring attitude and skills such as nurturing, responsibility, empathy, improved communication and gives children, who may not have the opportunity to care for animals at home, the chance to do so.

Children would have the responsibility of caring for the pets within our club and will be supported by staff in doing so.

While there are many benefits to keeping pets in childcare centres, a small range of risks including:

- Animal faeces that may cause illness if ingested.
- Potential allergies to animals.
- Bites or scratches.
- Parasites that may be transferred by pets i.e., Ringworm.

It is within our best interest to make sure that we are conscious of the wellbeing of children and animals. It is important that staff, working within Smartkidz Play and Learn, educate the children in caring for animals. An in-depth risk assessment has been put in place to lower any risks that may be caused by these animals.

Type of pets

Smartkidz Play and Learn will only allow the following pets with their settings: Hamsters, Gerbil, Guinea pigs, Rabbits or Fish.

Handling of pets

Pet handling will only happen within the pet handling area. There will be no more than 3 children at one time within the area and will always be supervised by an adult.

Staff will be aware that younger children may not realise that they may be hurting or frightening the animals and staff will support all children handling the pets.

Veterinary and health checks.

The club will be responsible for paying for any veterinary bills and will get a yearly health check of all pets cared for by Smartkidz Play and Learn.

Cages, containers, and hutches.

All animal enclosures will be secured, and club will aim to create a safe living area for the animals. All enclosures will be secured and make sure that any hazards created by the pet enclosures will be monitored.

Equipment

All equipment for the animals will be stored away securely.

This policy was adopted by: Smartkidz Play and Learn	Date: 1/11/2017 Date reviewed: 20/11/2018 Date reviewed: 16/08/2019. Date reviewed:14/08/2020
To be reviewed: 14/08/2021	Signed: 