



# Oscar Bears' Day Care

## Animals in the Setting/Pets Policy

### Value and benefits of pets

We recognise that the provision of pets within the setting provides children with a wealth of learning opportunities regarding what animals need to live and thrive and the importance of taking care of them throughout the year.

The Nursery does not have any pets that live within the setting.

A dog called Murphy (the family pet of the manager) lives with Tawny and has a crate in the administration area (office) of the nursery, away from nursery life if he attends for the day.

### Animal Awareness

The nursery recognises the value and importance of children seeing and having access to pets and animals, to learn about the world around them along with the different needs and care routines of animals. Animals offer a great opportunity to make connections to many areas of the curriculum.

There are clear links to personal, social and emotional development in teaching the children about caring for something which is unable to care for itself, being gentle and understanding boundaries such as how best to handle the animals.

### Health and Hygiene

Staff are fully aware of the importance of health and hygiene when children are in contact with animals and pets.

Staff guide and monitor that children do not put their hands near their faces when they have been in contact with pets or pet foods until they have washed their hands.

Staff ALWAYS ensure that ALL children wash their HANDS very well after touching or handling pets or pet food in the nursery.

### Safety and Risk Assessments

Staff are also aware of safety issues and ensure that children only come into contact with safe pets and are always closely supervised. Children are taught the correct ways to greet and handle animals before meeting them.

If Murphy attends the setting, he has his own safe place to return to throughout the day and is not allowed near the kitchen or children's areas where they eat/sleep. Murphy's needs and care would be the responsibility of his owner, Tawny (the manager). Murphy's food/items would be stored away in the administration area (office).

Any children who have confirmed allergies are taken into consideration and their safety and health is of highest importance.

Children are never left unsupervised with animals.

### Visiting Pets

Occasionally pets are invited to visit the nursery to support a topic or theme e.g. Role playing Pet Shop or The Vets to enhance the children's learning with regard to the needs and behaviour of



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animals - Pet dogs, cats, rabbits, guinea pigs, tortoises etc belonging to nursery families. Along with learning visits from ZooLab or hatching chicks/ducks annually.

“We found the children really came out of their shells when we brought live animals into nursery, even those normally reluctant with their speech wanted to interact with the animals and each other.”

## Animals in the Setting/Pets Overall risk assessment

Each visit from an animal to the setting is risk assessed as and when required by all staff involved, along with the owner and/or company providing the visit.

Example: Murphy (Tawny's dog)

Murphy regularly visits the vet for check-ups and is up to date on all his vaccinations. Please see his folder for evidence. Murphy receives monthly worm and flea treatments.

Area: Interaction with pupils and staff				
Reason: To ensure the school dog interacts appropriately at all times				
Hazards	Who might be harmed and how?	What are we already doing?	Risk rating	Is anything further needed?
Biting	A child or an adult could be harmed if the dog was to bite	Murphy is regularly handled and meets with young children in his family to ensure he is used to interaction with little humans. Murphy is being trained not to bite, whilst he is young, Murphy is only introduced to the nursery children for very short periods of time, only with his owner who knows his signs of agitation and over excitedness.	Low	Ensure that children and adults do not interact with Murphy without supervision from his owner.



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Jumping up/Scratching	A child or an adult could be harmed if the dog was to become over excited and jump up	The temperament of Murphy and his training programme involves not jumping up with praise/rewards being given when successful	Medium	Ensure that children and adults do not interact with Murphy without supervision from his owner. Owner to continue sufficient training.
Running loose	If a dog was to run loose he could hurt himself/others/damage property	Murphy will be contained at all times either in a crate in the office (with a clear sign on the door), or on a lead.	Low	Monitor that the equipment used to contain the school dog is appropriate and effective
Destruction of materials	If allowed the dog may chew/destroy some materials/resources	Murphy will have his own toys to play with and normal resources will be removed.	Low	
Area: Pupils and staff interaction with the dog				
Reason: To ensure the dog is always effectively supported to interact appropriately				
Hazards	Who might be harmed and how?	What are we already doing?	Risk rating	Is anything further needed?
Incorrect/inconsistent interaction with the dog	If a child/adult interact with the dog in the incorrect or inconsistent way this will affect the dog's training and have a	Agreed guidelines must be followed at all times when interacting with Murphy. There cannot be any interaction	Medium	If there are any inconsistencies in approach with the school dog the



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	negative impact on future interaction	with Murphy without authorisation from his owner.		adult/child will have the interaction stopped.
Area: Hygiene/Health				
Reason: To ensure that pupils, staff and the dog do not have an increased risk of illness as a result of the dog visiting nursery				
Hazards	Who might be harmed and how?	What are we already doing?	Risk rating	Is anything further needed?
Worms/fleas	If the dog is not treated for worms there is a danger that germs can be transferred to humans. If the dog is not treated for fleas it can cause child/adults to be bitten/react.	Murphy will be treated monthly to ensure he is covered.	Low	Owner to monitor
Faeces	If a child/adult comes into contact with the school dog's faeces some germs could be transferred	Murphy will only be walked under supervision. No child will be asked to pick up the dog's faeces, this will always be undertaken by the adult in supervision/owner	Low	Appropriate cleaning products always available and used as and when required by the owner.
Allergies	If a child is allergic to dogs, they could become unwell.	If a child has an allergy Murphy will not be present that day or be near the child.	Medium	To continuously review between owner and manager.



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Children's access to dog's resource	If a child has access to the dog's treats/food and eats some they could become unwell	All of Murphy's resources will be locked away. No child will be allowed to enter the Murphy's area	Low	Remind children not to enter Murphy's space/office area. Keep office door closed.
Contact with food preparation areas	If the dog enters a food preparation area this could be unhygienic	Murphy will always be in a contained area or on a lead. Murphy will never enter the kitchen.	Low	
Cleaning hands after interacting with the dog	If hands are not cleaned children/adults could become unwell	All adults and children will clean their hands after interaction with Murphy.	Low	Remind children and adults to clean their hands
Written by: Tawny Lace (Nursery Manager)				
Date: January 2020				
To be reviewed with each visit.				