01 Health and safety procedures

**01.18 Animals and pets**

* Staff will be aware of any allergies or issues individual children may have with any animals/creatures.
* A risk assessment is conducted and considers any hygiene and safety risks posed by the animal or creature.
* Suitable housing for the animal is provided and is regularly cleaned and maintained.
* The correct food is offered at the right times and staff are knowledgeable of the pet’s welfare and dietary needs.
* Arrangements are made for weekend and holiday care for the animal/creature.
* There is appropriate pet health care insurance or other contingencies agreed and put in place to pay for veterinary care and the animal is registered with a local vet.
* All vaccinations and health measures such as de-worming are up to date.
* Children are taught correct handling of the pet and are always supervised.
* Children wash their hands after handling the pet and do not have contact with animal faeces, or soiled bedding.
* Members of staff wear single use vinyl/latex free gloves when cleaning/handling soiled bedding.
* Snakes and some other reptiles are not suitable pets for the setting due to infection risks.
* The manager will check with the owners/directors/trustees before introducing a new pet into the setting.

**Animals bought in by visitors**

* The owner of the animal/creature maintains responsibility for it in the setting.

The owner carriers out a risk assessment detailing how the animal/creature is to be handled and how any safety or hygiene issues will be addressed.

**Further guidance**

Good Practice in Early Years Infection Control (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2009)