



RAINBOW PRE-SCHOOL

Established 1979

Registered Charity No: 1026005

BAPTIST CHURCH HALL

2 Dukes Avenue, Muswell Hill, London N10 2PT

Telephone 020 8883 4010

Animal Health & Safety Policy

Policy statement

At Rainbow Preschool, 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.

We recognise that preparation is key and have researched our choice(s) of animals, including gender, breed, numbers living together and suitability for our environment, taking relevant advice from [Blue Cross](#).

We do not permit dogs on the premises, unless they are assistance dogs (guide dogs, hearing dogs, etc.) or those attending to support educational purposes such as therapy or working dogs, which attend with prior notice and with suitable risk assessments in place.

Under no circumstances are banned dog breeds (as described in section 1 of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991¹) permitted on the premises.

Animals visiting the preschool (i.e. visits and workshops)

Our safety procedures are:

- We inform all parents and obtain permission to ensure no child has an allergy or phobia
- A full documented risk assessment is completed, including considerations for children with any allergies
- All animals 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 animals have had all of their relevant vaccinations, are registered with the vet and are child-friendly
- Animals 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 handling the animals. Staff explain the importance of this to the children

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/control-dog-public/banned-dogs>

- Children are encouraged to leave their comforters and dummies away from the animals to limit cross-contamination.

Pets from home

- If a member of staff plans to bring a pet from home to visit the preschool as a planned activity, all parents will be informed. We obtain 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 limit cross-contamination.

Visits to farms

- 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 preschool, in the transport used or in a bag carried by a member of staff to limit cross-contamination
- 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.