



Animals at Nursery Policy

Animals, particularly pets, are a large part of many children's lives. Early Years research identifies that caring for a pet supports children's self-importance, social competence and self-esteem.

Being located on a working farm and having our own resident pets, we understand the positive impact animals can have on a child's holistic development, particularly their developing language and personal, social and emotional skills.

To ensure the children have safe access to both domestic and farm animals, we will adhere to the following procedures:

Pets

- If a child or staff member brings a pet from home to visit the nursery as part of a planned activity, parents of all children who will be in contact or in the same area as the pet must be informed. Written permission must be obtained from parents to ensure no child has an allergy or phobia and that parents are happy for their children to participate in the activity. A full documented risk assessment will be completed prior to the visit and risks analysed before this type of activity is authorised. We would always ensure the pet has had all relevant vaccinations, is registered with the vets and is child friendly.
- Pets should not be allowed near food sources, dishes, worktops, or food preparation areas. Children should wash their hands with soap and water after handling animals and should be encouraged not to place their hands in their mouths during the activity. The staff will explain the importance of this to the children prior to the activity to enable them to make healthy choices and safe practices.
- Children will be encouraged to leave their comforters and dummies away from the animals to ensure cross-contamination is eliminated.
- Alfie the tortoise is a permanent resident at Loversall Farm Day Nursery. Alfie will support the learning and development of all children. Alfie will be handled, fed, watered and bathed by the children under strict adult supervision. Any children who handle the tortoise will be supported to follow appropriate hygiene procedures. Alfie will be 'cleaned out' regularly by the children with adult support. Alfie will go home with the nursery manager at

weekends and when the nursery is closed, for e.g. Christmas holidays and other bank holidays.

- The Baby Room have two resident goldfish. The fish tank changes colour to support the babies sensory development. As with the tortoise the fish will be cared for by the staff and the children within the baby room. Hygiene procedures will always apply. The staff will clean the fish out regularly. A feed block will be placed in the tank when the nursery is closed for holidays and pellets added to support the fish over the weekends.

Visits on the Farm

- We ensure that there is an adequate number of adults to supervise the children, considering their ages and stages of development. However, ratios will always be maintained in line with the EYFS Statutory Framework (September 2025).
- If children are in contact with, or feeding the animals, staff will explain to them not to place their faces against the animals or put their hands in their own mouths afterwards, and the reasons why.
- Children are encouraged 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 eliminated.
- After contact with animals and particularly before eating and drinking, we will ensure that all children, staff and volunteers wash and dry their hands thoroughly. If young children are in the group, hand washing will need to be supervised. Always explain why the children need to do this.

Chickens

- Our chickens live in their hen house within the vegetable garden
- They are fed and their water changed and topped up daily
- Eggs are collected from the nesting box daily
- The hen house is cleaned out by the nursery gardener on a weekly basis
- Children are encouraged to tend to the chickens and hands must be washed afterwards with anti-bacterial soap, however this will not happen should a child have an associated allergy to either the hens and/or the eggs.

- The chicken's will be isolated away from the nursery should there be a bird flu pandemic and not return until we are told it is safe to do so
- If the child has a contact allergy to eggs, they will not be actively involved in collecting the eggs

Sheep

Our sheep live in the orchard near the nursery. They form part of the herd of Lee and Co and all routine care, feeding, maintenance and documentation relating to them will be carried out by the farmer, Matt Lee.

Children are encouraged to view the sheep and hands must be washed afterwards with antibacterial soap. Staff supervision will be required to ensure children have washed their hands thoroughly.

Pigs

Our pigs live in the barns on the farm. They form part of the livestock of Lee and Co and all routine care, feeding, maintenance and documentation relating to them will be carried out by the farmer, Matt Lee.

The children at nursery are able to visit the pigs and to view them but do not have any close or physical contact with them.

The procedures also apply to other forms of livestock housed on the farm including:

- Cows/calves
- Horses/foals and ponies
- Donkeys
- Goats
- Alpacas

This policy was adopted on	March 2016
Signed on behalf of the nursery	
Signed by Nursery Owner	
Date of next review	September 2025