

## ANIMAL HANDLING POLICY

Contact with living things plays an important part in our pupils' education. In order that animals can bring the maximum amount of enjoyment, the following policy will ensure the health and safety of our pupils at Mavisbank:

### HANDLING ANIMALS

- Do not consume food or drink
- Cover any cuts or abrasions on the exposed skin of hands and arms with waterproof adhesive dressings
- Wash your hands with soap and water before and directly after handling animals
- Animals, small mammals especially, should be restrained sufficiently so they cannot damage themselves or the handler
- Mammals should be handled daily if possible (unless breeding or nursing when they should be disturbed as little as possible). In this way, they will normally become quite tame and accustomed to being handled
- Gloves should not normally be worn unless it is known that an animal for one reason or another is likely to bite or scratch, when rubber gloves would be a sensible precaution
- Handling small animals should always be carried out over a table or trough filled with a soft material such as sand/ sawdust

### PHYSICAL INJURIES

- Check any animals kept / brought in are docile , friendly and gentle in the pupils' presence
- Be vigilant pupils do not put their fingers towards an animal's mouth

### DISEAASE, PARASITES AND ALLERGIES

- The likelihood of diseases being passed on from pet animals is low. However, allergic reactions might result from handling animals or just being near them. This would be detected in the development of skin rashes, irritation to eyes / nose or breathing difficulties, so be vigilant for such signs in pupils who come into contact with animals

- Pupils with allergic reactions must of course be restricted from access to animals. If any allergic reactions occur, seek medical advice immediately
- Salmonella bacteria may be carried by reptiles, especially aquatic reptiles such as terrapins. It would perhaps be safer if pupils do not have contact with such reptiles or the environment in which the reptiles live or exercise

### BRINGING ANIMALS INTO SCHOOL

- Suitable arrangements should be made in advance for the wellbeing of visiting animals for the short time they are on the premises
- When a variety of animals will be together, consider carefully the possibility of unwanted interactions. Animals must be housed properly and separately whilst on the premises : any containers used to transport them must be appropriate and retain the animal securely

### ANIMAL SUPPLIERS

- In order for there to be minimal risk to humans of diseases being transmitted from animals, it is important that animals are obtained from accredited or high quality sources. Wild mammals and birds, even if taken legally should not be brought into school.

### ANIMAL HEALTH

During holiday times, it is preferable that animals remain at school. If this is not possible, they should not be sent home with people unless:

It can be guaranteed that the animals will be looked after as well as usual

Whoever is caring for the animals must have all the necessary information, equipment, food, skills etc.

Parents must have been informed and given their consent

Steps will be taken to ensure that the schools' animals will not come into contact with pet animals

Small mammals cannot come into contact with wild rodents while off the school premises

### CLEANING AND HYGIENE

- Hands should be washed before and after cleaning cages etc. and rubber or plastic gloves should be worn
- After removing soiled loiter material, cages should be scrubbed with hot water and liquid detergent
- Small mammal cages should be cleaned out every week including holiday times. If a cage is offensive before this period, it should be cleaned out immediately
- Soiled litter should be sealed in string plastic bags and placed with other waste in a dust bin

Updated: John Lochrie, Eileen McDonnell July 2015

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