



Oak Flats Public School Preschool

Keeping chickens and tadpoles at preschool procedure 2024

National Quality Standard Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations	Associated department policy, procedure or guideline	Reference document(s) and/or advice from a recognised authority
<p>NQS: 3.2.3</p> <p>Law Section: 167</p>	<p>Leading and operating department preschool guidelines</p> <p>Animal Welfare – Schools policy</p> <p>Animals in schools</p>	<p>Kidsafe – Kids and animals</p> <p>ACECQA information sheet – Keeping pets and animals in education and care services [PDF 910 KB]</p>
	<p>WorldVision- https://www.worldvision.com.au/gifts/product?name=chickens-and-eggs</p> <p>OSKA - https://oska.uk.com/journal/chickens-improve-your-psychological-wellbeing</p> <p>The Book Book Book: Chickens in Early Childhood Settings by Gabby Millgate</p> <p>NSW State Environmental Planning Policy 2008 Subdivision 21 Fowl and poultry houses</p> <p>Local Government Regulation 2005</p>	



Oak Flats Public School Preschool Responsibilities



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School principal	<p>The principal as nominated supervisor, educational leader and responsible person holds primary responsibility for the preschool.</p> <p>The principal is responsible for ensuring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the preschool is compliant with legislative standards related to this procedure at all times• all staff involved in the preschool are familiar with and implement this procedure• all procedures are current and reviewed as part of a continuous cycle of self-assessment. <p>These tasks may be delegated to other members of the preschool team, but the responsibility sits with the principal.</p>
Preschool supervisor	<p>The preschool supervisor supports the principal in their role and is responsible for leading the review of this procedure through a process of self-assessment and critical reflection. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• analysing complaints, incidents or issues and the implications for updates to this procedure• reflecting on how this procedure is informed by stakeholder feedback and relevant expert authorities• planning and discussing ways to engage with families and communities, including how changes are communicated• developing strategies to induct all staff when procedures are updated to ensure practice is embedded.



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Preschool teacher(s) and educator(s)	<p>Preschool teachers and educators are responsible for working with the preschool leadership team to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• all staff in the preschool and daily practices comply with this procedure• this procedure is stored in a way that it is accessible to all staff, families, visitors and volunteers• they are actively involved in the review of this procedure, as required, or at least annually• details of this procedure's review are documented.
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Procedure



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Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Having a pet at our preschool gives children the opportunity to observe, interact and learn about animals. It is considered a valuable part of our children's education and care experience through enriching the children's learning about nature, ecology and relationships.• This procedure has been developed in consultation with families, children, trusted authorities, school policy, work health and safety committee.
Supporting children's learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing children with access to animals in our preschool can help them learn about: life cycles, caring relationships, opportunities for communication, scientific concepts, sustainability and connection to the natural world.• The outcomes of the EYLF can emphasise the role animals play in supporting children's learning. They include:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity: Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect.– Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world: Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment



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Choosing and keeping the right pet for our preschool

- The preschool educators and school leadership made the decision to keep chickens and tadpoles at our preschool with families and children in 2020. This responsibility has been taken on by educators, families and children since. We accept any educator, family and children's involvement in the care and upkeep of the animals. This was discussed with families in 2020 and is raised with current families as an existing project at family meetings. As a team we discuss how confident each staff member feels about looking after the chickens.
- We made decisions based on the following considerations:
 - The school will pay for the care and upkeep of the animal, including feeding, health care and cleaning.
 - If the animal is ill, the following will be put in place. The chicken will go to the vet.
 - The animal will be cared for on weekends and during school holidays by educators and school staff.
 - The physical space available at the preschool is adequate for the needs of the animals. This was determined through research and experience. The chickens will be housed in the coop. The tadpoles will be housed in the fish tank.
 - We have established if there are any children or educators at preschool who are allergic to, or have phobias of, animals through family questionnaires and meetings. Educators discuss the practices involved in caring for the chickens and tadpoles during staff inductions and team discussions. This is managed through sharing information with the team, staff induction and any teacher handovers.
 - Changes have been made to preschool local procedures to accommodate the keeping of our animals. These include:



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ hand washing,○ Close supervision,○ And supporting the children to learn about caring for animals through interactions with educators.
Assessing and managing risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● While there are many benefits to keeping animals at our preschool, there are also a range of issues we considered for the safety and wellbeing of both the children and the animals.● The preschool educators and leadership have developed risk and benefits assessments to ensure the safety of children and the animals. These include our approach to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">— Disease— Effective hand washing and cleaning— Appropriate supervision. <p>Risk Assessment available on the school website from April 2024.</p>



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<p>Sustainable Practices in the Preschool</p>	<p>Caring for animals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The children are involved in all aspects of caring for the chickens. This includes cleaning and looking after the coop, providing the chickens with food and water, and locking them in at the end of the day.• By caring for the chickens, the children learn responsibility and collaboration. They learn about basic needs and the importance of being nurturing and kind.• The children and the educators together establish rules and expectations regarding the chickens. Educators display the rules and remind the children as necessary. It is hoped that the children take shared responsibility for ensuring that the rules are followed.• The children and educators learn how to correctly hold the chickens so that they are not injured. <p>Learning where food comes from</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• By providing fresh eggs we are reducing the distance taken from the chicken to the plate which has many environmental benefits.• The children learn about the benefits of growing their own food and take pride in this.• When children understand what exactly they are eating and how it got on their plate in the first place, they'll ask questions about food supply, the farmers, the animals, and other people's eating habits.• By teaching-children where their food comes from and encouraging good eating habits early on in life, the children will understand the importance of nutrition and nourishing their body. <p>Reducing food waste</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A container is used to collect the food scraps from the children's and staff's lunches. The container is labeled with scraps that the chickens can eat.• The children learn that if food waste is put in the rubbish bin, it is dumped in landfill. By recycling your food waste, you prevent it going to landfill, which helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions, odours, and saves space for things that need to be put in landfill.• The children and educators give the scraps to the chickens and also remove any scraps left over at the end of the day in order to discourage vermin from entering the chicken coop.• By providing the chickens with food scraps, the amount of pellets that need to be purchased is reduced. <p>Gardening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The straw and chicken poo is placed on the garden beds and used for fertiliser.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The children help to plant fruit, vegetables, flowers, herbs and other plants, some of which are then eaten by the children and chickens. The children learn about gardening as a means of sustainability.
<p>Community Engagement</p>	<p>Eggs for the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eggs are sold to the preschool families and community. If we have surplus eggs, a note is put on School Bytes advertising that the preschool has eggs. Egg cartons are recycled and reused whenever possible. Eggs are given to the canteen. This helps cut down costs. We are providing nutritionally dense eggs from free range chickens to the families, community and school. <p>Fundraising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The benefits of fundraising for the global community are shared with the children. Money raised from the sale of the eggs is used to gift chickens to villagers overseas through World Vision. \$10 purchases 2 chickens for a family. “Two chickens can provide a family with up to 1,000 eggs per year, a protein source, strong muscles, and income opportunities to help create brighter futures for the next generation. They provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a nest egg that contributes nutrition, 1,000 eggs and an income stream; easy breeding, so your gift grows and multiplies; and access to education, health and food for children, families and whole communities.” (From https://www.worldvision.com.au/gifts/product?name=chickens-and-eggs) <p>School involvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whilst the chickens are housed in the preschool the whole school is encouraged to be involved in their care. Children from the school visit the chickens as a reward or to help with self-regulation. Teachers use the eggs for experiences in their classrooms. A gardening club is to be established within the school and they will work with the preschool children. to plant and maintain the gardens in the preschool. The chicken poo acts as fertiliser for the gardens.



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Health and Safety	<p>Wellness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The chickens are handled as often as possible to get them used to human contact.• Spending time with the chickens can be beneficial for children who are not coping at school. “Chickens might not seem like a conventional therapy animal but they are proving a powerful therapeutic tool for those suffering from anxiety, depression, isolation, loneliness and dementia.” (Taken from https://oska.uk.com/journal/chickens-improve-your-psychological-wellbeing)• Children are encouraged to visit the chickens and spend time with them in order to improve their mood. <p>Hygiene</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All children and staff must wash their hands after handling the chickens and cleaning the coop.• Where possible gloves or dustpans and brushes are used when cleaning to minimise the touching of the dirty straw and chicken poo.• Tongs are used when handling the food scraps.• Containers and tongs are washed after use. <p>Risk Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oak Flats Public School Preschool in compliance with the Education and Care Services Regulations is required to have risk assessments in place.• A risk assessment for keeping the chickens is in place and reviewed annually. It is stored in the Procedures and Risk Assessment Folders in the Preschool Foyer and Office. <p>Supervision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children are supervised at all times by educators when in the coop, cleaning it, collecting eggs, feeding the chickens, and holding the chickens.• Children are unable to access the chicken coop without an adult.
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Record of procedure's review

Date of review	21/02/2024
Who was involved	Elisa Higgs, Alice Wigny, Natalie Shephard, Amanda Falcon & Jodi Niedermayer
Key changes made and reason why	Updates from Early Learning and other practice details added.
Record of communication of significant changes to relevant stakeholders	Principal: 6/3/24 Staff: 21/02/2024 Parents: 8/3/24 Please note, parents must be notified at least 14 days prior to a change that may have a significant impact on their service's provision of education and care or a family's ability to use the service.

Copy and paste the last 4 rows to the bottom of the table each time a new review is completed.