

2.8 ANIMALS

Policy Statement:

Mackay Family Day Care Scheme recognises that having pets around can bring a lot of pleasure to children, however steps must be taken to reduce the risk of children in care becoming injured by household pets and/or animals.

Background:

“Having a pet at your service gives children the opportunity to observe, interact and learn about animals. It can be a valuable part of a child’s education and care experience, enriching their learning about nature, ecology and relationships.”

“While there are many benefits to keeping animals in a service, there are also a range of issues that educators need to consider for the safety and well-being of both the children and the animals.” NQS QA3

Legislative Requirements:

Section/regulation	Description
Section 165	Offence to inadequately supervise children.
Section 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards.
Regulation 168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures.
Regulation 169	Additional policies and procedures - family day care.
Regulation 170	Policies and procedures to be followed.
Regulation 171	Policies and procedures to be kept available.
Regulation 176	Time to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority.

Procedures:

1. To maintain a safe family day care environment, educators must ensure that domestic pets and/or farm animals are provided with an area separate to and apart from the areas used by children. This area must be inaccessible to children.
2. Pets must be inaccessible to children at all times an educator is providing education and care to children, except when documented as part of the educator’s program.
3. Specific activities that involve child/animal interaction, such as brushing or bathing a dog, bottle feeding a lamb etc., must be directly supervised by the educator.
4. Household pets kept at the family day care residence must be kept clean, and require regular treatment for worms and fleas (if appropriate).
5. All animal faeces must be removed from play areas before children arrive for care and, if necessary, during the day.
6. Pets are restricted from surfaces used for food preparation and where children eat.
7. If household pets or farm animals are kept at the family day care residence, the educator must develop a risk assessment which addresses any hazards and risks associated with keeping that/those animal/s as part of a childcare service.

8. Educators are required to inform parents/guardians and Coordination Unit Staff when additional household pets are acquired.
9. Parents and co-ordination unit staff must be notified of any incident involving an animal at the family day care residence, resulting in injury or illness to a child who is being educated and cared for as part of the family day care service.

Date Implemented	Review Due	Date Reviewed	Date Updated	Source
2010 August	2012 February 2013 August 2015 February 2016 August 2018 February 2019 March 2021 January 2022 July 2024 January 2025 July	2012 February 2013 August 2015 February 2016 August 2019 March 2021 January	2017 September 2019 July 2022 July 2024 January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 • Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 • National Quality Standard Information Sheet – Keeping Pets and Animals in Education and Care Services.