



## Rutland Early Years

### Pet Policy

Being in a childcare setting with age-appropriate pets helps children to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world and can promote personal, social and emotional development. Pets can help children to learn to respect animals and be confident around them. However, animals can be unpredictable and may be unhygienic. This policy informs parents/carers of the pets that are in my setting and how I promote the benefits of having pets whilst also reducing the risks.

#### Pets within my setting

- I currently have: Tiger-Lilly a tiny friendly chihuahua.

#### Promoting the benefits of pets within my setting through:

- Speaking to children about the pets to encourage respect and confidence. Discussion will include what each pet likes and dislikes and how we can treat and handle each pet appropriately.
- Talking about the pets natural habitats.
- Exploring how related animals live.
- Including the pets names in stories we create.
- Pretending we are pets and other animals in imaginative play.
- Asking the children for further ideas on including the pets in activities.

#### Reducing risks from having pets in my setting through:

- Keeping pet food out of reach of children.
- Not allowing children to play with the pets unsupervised.
- Having the pets treated for worms and fleas as appropriate.
- Keeping pets out of rooms in which babies / children are sleeping.
- Ensuring that children are aware that not all animals are child-friendly through talking to the children and by leading through example. This could be achieved through me asking other pet owners if it is appropriate before allowing children to touch their pets.





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- Encouraging good hygiene by ensuring children know to wash hands properly after touching pets.
- Ensuring my setting is kept scrupulously clean and hygienic by regular cleaning of floors, garden areas accessible to the pets, kitchen and eating areas, and any other areas accessible to the pets and children.
- Ensuring litter trays are out of reach of children where possible. Trays are cleared of excrement immediately. Trays are changed and cleaned daily.

### Further information

For any children who may be scared of any of my pets named, the above measures are in place to teach children how to act around animals and through demonstration are taught how to treat my pet. Confidence will grow over time. All prospective parents are informed that I have a dog so they can make an informed decision before placing their child in my care.

