



Academy *for*
Collaborative
Education *of* Brussels
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL



Cambridge Assessment
International Education

Cambridge International School

Animals in School Policy Including Checklist and Risk Assessment

Reviewed AUGUST 2026

This policy applies to animals that are regularly brought into school, live in school and animals that are visiting school such as mobile zoos. This policy applies to inside the school buildings and in the school grounds. It is particularly relevant to current health arrangements and considering that ACE has a School Support Dog.

The value of class or school pets and visiting animals is widely accepted as a powerful learning resource, an aid to learning stimulation and a support of social development, communication and emotional well being. Studies have shown that the presence of school or class pets can improve the physical and mental health of students and lower the rate of anxiety. School and class pets can also add to the curriculum as an area of study, as a trigger for literacy and numeracy and as a non-judgmental support for learning development in all areas, particularly for those students who require learning support.

To minimise any risk to students and staff in school, permission must be sought from the Principal to bring an animal into school. The definition of animal includes all pets, including mammals, rodents, insects, reptiles, fish and birds. The Principal will consider admitting a school or class pet using the checklist (appendix 1) and a completed risk assessment (appendix 2).

The only exception to this rule are assistant animals (e.g. dogs for the blind).

School or class pets and visiting animals must be able to live as naturally as conditions allow. The animals must be properly cared for outside of the school day as well as in school. The animal should add some value or benefit to the students' social, emotional or academic development.

While in school the animal must be kept in suitable accommodation and, when necessary, controlled with appropriate equipment.

Only healthy animals are allowed in school. Should an animal become ill it must be taken to the vet for diagnosis and treatment. It cannot return to school until fit. All animals must be maintained. They must be regularly groomed, cleaned and have all relevant inoculations and treatments.

Having school or class pets or visiting animals provides many positive benefits but it is accepted that interacting with animals is not appropriate for all students. Any parent who does not wish their child to interact with a school or class pet is invited to write to the principal with their wishes and arrangements will be made to ensure that the animal is kept away from them. If necessary, the animal may need to be excluded from certain areas.

Considerations when having a school or class pet or when animals visit the school.

The following considerations will be taken into account when considering an animal in school.

Practical arrangements

Cost

Back up plans, holidays and support

Location

Training

Qualifications of lead member of staff.

Further information can be found by clicking on the links below.

<https://ec.europa.eu/epale/sites/epale/files/2014-epale-lt-00125.pdf>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3959016/>

http://www.educationworld.com/a_admin/admin/admin559.shtml

<http://news.vet.tufts.edu/press-releases/>

<http://www.schooltherapydogs.org/>

Bark and Read Programme <https://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/barkandread>

APPENDIX 1 - CHECKLIST FOR A PARTICULAR ANIMAL

CHECKLIST	COMMENTS
DETAILS OF ANIMAL	
Type of animal	
Name of Animal	
Age of Animal	
Is the animal insured to be in school?	
Is the animal vaccinated, immunised according to European veterinary guidelines?	
PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENTS	
Who will be the member of staff in charge of the animal?	
What experience qualifies the member of staff to be in charge of the animal?	
Where will the animal be housed in school?	
Where will the animal be housed outside of school?	
How frequently will the animal be checked for infection and and health?	
Which vet is the animal registered with?	
Does the animal have any immunisation documentation?	
Where will the animal be housed if it becomes ill and cannot attend school?	
Who will attend to any grooming needs?	
How will toileting arrangements be managed?	
Are there any behaviour issues that need to be managed?	
Are there any allergy considerations?	

CHECKLIST	COMMENTS
COST	
Who will pay for food for the animal?	
Who will pay for insuring the animal?	
Who will pay for any veterinary bills?	
Who will pay for any additional cost?	
SUPPORT	
Who will look after the animal if it is ill?	
Who will look after the animal if the member of staff in charge of the animal is ill?	
Who will look after the animal during the holiday?	
Who will be in charge of any animal training or behaviour modification?	
HOW WILL THE ANIMAL ADD TO THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT?	
Learning	
Social	
Emotional	
ANY OTHER COMMENTS	
Authority to have the pet is given by the Principal.	Signed Date

APPENDIX 2 - RISK ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

This form can be amended to suit the animal.

TYPE OF ANIMAL						
HAZARD	RISK	RISK 1-5	LIKELIHOOD 1-5	TOTAL RISK	CONTROLS IN PLACE	REVIEW DATE & SIGNATURE
BEHAVIOUR						
ESCAPE						
ALLERGIES						
HYGIENE						
COST						
COMPLAINTS						