

POLICY STATEMENT

PETS & ANIMALS IN CARE ENVIRONMENTS

AUTHORISATION

POLICY TYPE:	Operational
POLICY LOCATION:	Corporate
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Children Services Coordinator
AUTHORISED BY:	Director, Corporate and Community Services
DATE ADOPTED:	27 June 2023
ADOPTED BY:	Manex
MINUTE NO: <i>(If required)</i>	
REVIEW DUE DATE: <i>(Four years unless statutorily required sooner)</i>	May 2026
REVISION NUMBER:	
RELATIONSHIP TO THE COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN	This policy supports Council's Delivery Program Strategy 4.2: Provide quality, accredited and affordable Education and Care Services within Bland Shire and surrounds (Bland Preschool, Family Day Care, Mobile resource Unit and Toy Library services).

DOCUMENT HISTORY

VERSION NO.	DATE	DESCRIPTION OF AMENDMENTS <i>Include names of former policies that this policy will replace if applicable</i>	AMENDED BY <i>(Where required)</i>
0	February 2012		
1	March 2019		
2	May 2022		May 2026

REVIEW OF THIS POLICY

This Policy will be reviewed within Three (3) years from the date of adoption or as required in the event of legislative changes. The Policy may also be changed as a result of other amendment that are to the advantage that Council and in the spirit of this Policy.

Any amendment to the Policy must be with the approval of the General Manager/Manex.

1. Purpose:

To minimise health risks, allergies and injuries to children from exposure to pets and animals whilst in the service care environment.

2. Scope:

This policy document applies to Educators and staff employed by Bland Shire Council and Family Day Care Educators registered within the Bland/Temora Family Day Care scheme.

3. Outcomes:

Children have a strong sense of identity, they learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect. Children are connected with and contribute to their world, becoming socially responsible and respectful to the environment and animals.

4. Roles and Responsibilities:

The Educators will:

- Complete a risk assessment for all pets/animals within the service (inclusive of incursions).
- Inform families upon enrolment of any pets or domestic animals within the service.
- Be aware of any allergies or illnesses children may suffer by coming into contact with animals at the service.
- Check with a veterinarian prior to introducing the animal to ensure it is a safe option for children.
- Be empathetic towards children's fears and anxiety when introducing an animal.
- Maintain active supervision at all times whilst children are interacting with an animal.
- Secure animals in a secure location (away from children) when active supervision cannot be maintained to a high standard.
- Encourage safe hygiene practices after handling animals.
- Be positive role models when handling animals, demonstrating care and respect toward the animal.
- Notify families if any animals will be temporarily visiting the service.
- Ensure animal food, water, litter trays, animal toys and bedding is not accessible to the children at the service and are not within the daily play or sleep environment (both indoors and outdoors).
- Ensure animals are healthy (wormed and vaccinated), maintained and clean.
- Perform daily safety checks prior to attendance to clean up any dropping, dog bones, toys and cover any holes in the lawn.
- Ensure licencing requirements and local government registration is met and maintained.

Family Day Care Educators will:

- A Family Day Care Educator with a pet on the premises must ensure that they have an area where the animal can be kept, separate and apart from any area used by the children to allow the animal a place to retire/retreat to should it require its own space.
- As per Regulations, Educators must notify the Coordination Unit, in writing, that they have a new pet or domestic animal on their premises in which the FDC children will be in direct contact with. A Risk Assessment must also be completed when a new pet/animal is obtained.
- Provide parents with information about any pets they have (or seeking in the future). Families are to be informed of the arrangements the Educators have made in relation to animal housing, supervision around children and care of animals kept on the Family Day Care premises.
- NOT travel in a motor vehicle with the children and the pet/animal at any time children are receiving care from the FDC service.

Specific animals, including certain breeds of dogs which are identified from time to time as dangerous to children must be kept in an enclosed area separate and apart from any area used by children in care. At no time should children have access or the ability to gain access to these pets/animals.

The Family Day Care Educator must ensure that animals are NOT present, nor have access to the same area in which a child is sleeping.

Animals that have been cited 'Dangerous' (by Council Ranger or by FDC staff) must by no means be allowed to interact with children under any circumstances.

5. Definitions:

This policy refers to Educators registered with Bland/Temora Family Day Care. The term 'scheme' refers to Bland/Temora Family Day Care Coordination Unit with Bland Shire Council licenced as its approved provider.

6. Legislation and Supporting Documents:

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (2022) Guide to the National Quality Framework – Keeping Pets and Animals in Education and Care Services (Quality Area 3)

Education and Care Services National Law 2010

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011