



Pet Policy

Policy Created: 1st January 2025

This policy is reviewed on an annual basis

We would like to make you aware that we do have animals in our setting.

At Conscious Kids, we have Simba, our small friendly, and loving toy pet dog Cavapoo, and Nala, our very small friendly, and loving pet toy Pomeranian.

Children can learn a lot from having contact with animals, with research showing clear links to the development of children's personal, social, and emotional development when caring for and engaging with animals and the natural world.

Caring for animals can be a great way to help children begin to break down barriers, and can support children's conversation, questioning, and understanding of the natural world around us. If your child has not had much contact with animals, and may therefore be wary, or if they have any worries or concerns, please do inform us of this, so that we can be sensitive regarding their needs, and to help us effectively support your child.

The following procedures will be followed in the setting, to ensure the safety of the children and the animals:

- The dogs will be kept in a separate area which children do not have access to, and may occasionally be brought in to interact with the children to learn about animal behaviour, empathy, and socialisation. They may also be occasionally brought into the outdoor playground for further learning and play.
- Children will be encouraged to treat all animals with respect and will be shown how to hold/handle the pet, building up the child's confidence over time.
- Touching and engaging with our pet will always be optional, and all children will not be forced to touch the pet at any time if they do not want to.
- Children will never be left alone with any of the pets, and contact will always be supervised.
- Good hygiene practice will always be encouraged, and the children will be supported to wash their hands after any contact with animals, discussing the importance of good hygiene routines.
- Children will be taught that not all animals want to be touched, and we will have discussions with the children about animal behaviour, helping them to learn and understand the importance of always checking with an animal's owner before attempting to stroke or handle them.
- All pet food will be stored safely away from the children's reach.

- A high standard of hygiene will be followed, where the placing of the feeding and drink bowls of the dogs are kept in a separate area to which the children do not have access.
- Animals will not be allowed onto food preparation areas, or on tables where children eat breakfast/lunch/snack.
- Children will also be educated that we respect all living creatures, no matter how big or small. We will observe and care for nature in outdoor spaces, being careful not to hurt any wildlife or disturb their habitats.
- The garden/play areas will be checked every morning before the children are permitted outside to play, to ensure that no animal waste presents any risk to the children.

Our animals are an integral part of Conscious Kids, and our goal is to educate children on how to care for and interact with animals to enhance their levels of emotional intelligence while also providing comfort. If, despite our efforts, we feel that your child is not getting along well with the pets and is affecting the animals' welfare, we will communicate this with you immediately while also putting in place an action plan to ensure the protection and welfare of Conscious Kids animals. If, however, this issue is still unresolved, we will have to look into the potential termination of the contract/placement to ensure the protection and welfare of the animals.

While Conscious Kids pets are insured, if there are any injuries caused directly by your child(ren), you may be responsible for any excess payment that the insurance company does not cover. To minimise any sort of risk towards the welfare of our animals, Conscious Kids will screen children requesting a home nursery placement/relevant services to ensure the safety of both parties.