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Denmead Junior School Guinea Pig Risk Assessment January 2024

General Guidance

Original risk assessments must be kept for a period of 7 years. On completion a hard copy should be printed off and placed in your local/site health and safety folder.

Instructions for Use: Please remove this section once you have completed the assessment as this is guidance for completing the assessment.

Risk	School Guinea Pigs
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What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing (existing Control Measures)?	Do you need to do anything else to manage this risk (Additional Control Measures)?	Action by whom?	Action by when?	Done
Scratches, bites, nips etc	Guinea Pigs: being dropped Children & adults: being bitten, skin broken, bleeding	Children taught how to safely hold and look after Guinea pigs to limit animals becoming stressed. Adults will ensure that Guinea pigs are calm before being picked up. If guinea pigs are being carried from one location to another over a distance, they should be transferred into a small box to ensure their safety. Scratches, nips and biting cannot be avoided altogether. Appropriate first aid precautions and training in place. Children only allowed to handle any animal under staff supervision. Children warned not to put fingers through bars. Guinea Pigs selected for their calm temperament	NA	HT	Spring 1	

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Safety and care of animals	Guinea pigs: being harmed, unclean environment, not enough access to food and water	Children to understand high expectations regarding their behaviour around the guinea pigs. The Lead Pets in School person (HT) will check the guinea pigs daily for signs of stress or illness: weight loss (from weekly weigh in), hiding- isolating itself from the other guinea pig and the children, seems overly nervous, sleeping more than normal, hair loss, poor appetite. The Lead Pets in School person will lead the cleaning and care (food, water, grooming) of the Guinea Pigs. Signs of good health: agile, clear and bright eyes, clean nose, clean ears, fur is clean and matt free, nails are a good length, feet should not be sore, teeth should a good length, good appetite, interacting with children and the other guinea pigs, alert, squeaks, whistles, wheeks, popcorning and purring. If any of the following are noticed a vet will be consulted: • Any sudden change in behaviour or habits (vocalizing • more or less, scratching, licking, etc.) • Any change in eating or drinking (ingesting either • more or less, refusing favourite foods, etc.) • Any change in appearance (loss of fur,	<p>Veterinary nurse to make regular visits to continue to teach the children how to care for them. They can also conduct regular check-ups on the Guinea Pigs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inside hutch: A healthy spread of sawdust on the floor of the cage; A water bottle (changed each day) ; Spaces to shelter; A bowl of Guinea pig nuggets each morning; An afternoon vegetable snack; Toys to hide on and nibble on; Plenty of hay (grass & hay should form 80%-90% of their diet. 	HT	Spring and daily	

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		<p>swollen areas, • squinty eyes, flaky skin, etc.) • Any unusual discharge from the body (runny nose or • eyes, odd urine, bleeding, etc.) • Any change in movement (limping, unwillingness to move, etc.) • Any change in urination or faeces</p> <p>The Guinea Pigs will stay in school overnight. During school holidays and weekend, a member of staff will take them home. A secure and clean cage will ensure that they cannot escape, are not harmed and are healthy. The run and cages will include enrichments such as places to hide, climb over and places to gnaw to keep teeth from overgrowing. Guinea pigs will have access to an outdoor area daily (weather dependent).</p>				
Handling including allergies	Children and adults	<p>Children’s parents or carers sign a consent form for the school pets during induction. This will allow parents to indicate whether they give consent for their child to be in contact with the guinea pigs. Any allergies are also highlighted during children’s induction, which should alert us to allergies to pets. Children known to have allergic reactions to specific animals will have</p>	<p>A low dust hay will be used for the guinea pigs to eat and sleep on and fleece blankets will line their enclosure, travel carrier and handling box.</p>	HT/BM	Spring 1	

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		restricted access to those that may trigger a response. When handling pets, children will be under direct supervision. Children will not consume food or drink. Children will wash their hands with soap and water before and directly after handling the guinea pigs. If a child should show signs of an allergic reaction to the guinea pigs then appropriate first aid will be given and the parents will be informed				
Fear	Guinea pigs: stressed, being dropped Children and adults: stressed, scared.	Children will be given a choice in whether they want to hold the Guinea Pigs. The Guinea Pigs will be introduced slowly to the children.	NA	HT	Spring1	
Hazardous substance	Children, GP and staff	There is no need to use hazardous substances to clean the cage. Pet safe disinfectant is also safe for use around children and should be used during the regular clean. Although it is non-hazardous – it should still be kept out of children's reach.		HT		

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Disposal of waste	Children and staff	When disposal of bedding and waste, carrier bags are used to collect waste and then put it into the compost bin in Kitchen Garden. • Gloves are available for children/ adults to use as recommended when cleaning out the cage • Staff and pupils are instructed to wash their hands before and after contact. Water and soap for hand washing will be made available				
Fire Alarm or Immediate Evacuation at School	Either a fire practice, accidental or deliberate activating of alarm and whole school evacuation	The guinea pigs will not come to school until later that day/the following day in a practice. In the event of a fire alarm, HT will move the guinea pigs straight to their travel carrier and take them outside in line with the school fire policy. If HT is not in her office at the time of the alarm, then the AHT will take them. HT will return for the guinea pigs if safe, or an office member of staff nearer, will be delegated this task.	Possible risk could be shock to the guinea pigs from the noise. Vet attention/advice will be immediately sought where necessary.	HT/AHT	During a fire evacuation or evacuation.	

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Risk Assessor	Signature	Date
Responsible Manager	Signature	Date
Rachelle Tomkins	<i>RTomkins</i>	25.1.2024

Date Reviewed	Signature	Role

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Action Plan for Risk Assessment

Action Plan to be completed based on the findings of the assessment. The following actions are to be undertaken to reduce the risk level as far as reasonably practical and to ensure that all of the standard controls and local arrangements are in place.

No	Hazard not fully controlled	Priority rating	Action required	Person Responsible	Target Date	Date of Completion
		High				
		Medium				
		Low				
1.						
2.						
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4.						
5.						
6.						
7.						
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Responsible Manager	Signature	Date
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