St. Andrew's C.P. School

Kirk Ella

Pet Policy - Goldfish

Date of last Review: Autumn 2026

Review in: Autumn 2028

Kirk Ella St Andrews Community Primary School

Pet Policy - Tortoises

Introduction

At Kirk Ella St Andrew's Community Primary School, we want our children to leave as well-rounded, knowledgeable, lifelong learners, who have strong emotional resilience and good wellbeing. A school pet has been shown to benefit children both educationally and emotionally; it can increase children's understanding of responsibility and develop their empathy and nurturing skills. In addition, children and staff take great enjoyment from interaction with animals, impacting on their mental health and wellbeing.

Is There a Risk to Bringing fish into the School Environment?

Yes, there is however, it is a manageable risk. A risk assessment has been carried out for the whole school and individual risk assessments will be undertaken for anyone with specific medical or emotional needs.

School Policy

- The fish will be paid for by a grant received from Arco and be the responsibility of Mrs Caley with assistance from other willing staff.
- The governors/headteacher have the right to request the fish to be removed from the school grounds.
- Only the school fish will be allowed onto the school premises. All other animals must not enter the school site. The headteacher should be informed of this before entry and should approve this.
- The governing body agree that school pets benefit the school community.
- Staff, parents/carers and children have been informed by letter that the fish will be in the school.
- The risk assessment will be reviewed on an annual basis.
- Children, staff, and visitors known to have allergic reactions or are uncomfortable around animals may choose not to have any physical contact with the fish.
- If the fish are ill, they will not be permitted to stay at school and must be taken to a staff members home.
- Children must never be left alone with the fish; appropriate adult supervision must be always in place.
- Children should be reminded of appropriate behaviour around the fish. Children should:
    - remain calm
    - not make sudden movements
    - not make loud noises
    - do not bang on the glass
    - do not remove lid without adult supervision
    - never handle the fish
    - always wash hands before and after
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- Children should not disturb the fish by banging or knocking the tank.
- Children can take turns to feed the fish with adult supervision.
- Adults should be in charge of cleaning and maintaining the tank
- Children should ask before feeding the fish.
- The fish will have their own designated space which will be maintained and cleaned on a regular basis.
- Parents may opt out of allowing their child to come into contact with the school fish.
- Appropriately trained staff will maintain records and evidence of the interactions and impact of the school fish.
- If someone reports any issue with the school fish, this information must be passed to the headteacher or school business manager as soon as possible. All concerns will be responded to by the headteacher or school business manager, in line with the complaints policy.
- Public Liability Insurance has been purchased by the school.

Roles and Responsibilities

The governing body has a responsibility to ensure that the school has a written policy for pets in school. The headteacher is responsible for implementing this policy. School staff, children, parents/carers and visitors into school are required to adhere to this policy. The curriculum will support learning about our school fish and about how to behave sensibly around the fish. This will include highlighting that animals although pets are not all well trained, and that caution must be used around unknown animals outside of school.

Reasons to Have a fish in School

To support the nurture room children with their development of independence and to be given a role of responsibility.

There are many benefits to having a pet in school. Research has shown some of the benefits to be as follows:

- Benefit children's social and emotional development.
- Have a calming effect on children, particularly those with emotional or behavioural needs.
- Improve behaviour and concentration, reduce stress, and improve self-esteem.
- Encourage expression and participation in children.
- Foster a sense of responsibility.
- Motivate children to think and learn, as children have a high level of natural interest and enthusiasm in animals.
- Encourage respect for others, improving children's relationships with other children, staff and parents/carers.
- Teach children to nurture and to have respect for life.
- Help children build confidence in reading, increasing literacy skills.
- Reduce children's anxieties.
- Where there is a fear of animals, reduce this fear.
- Improve attendance and willingness to attend school.

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RISK ASSESSMENT DOCUMENT - Pet Fish

Risk Factor Calculation Risk Factor = Probability Factor X Severity Factor		
Risk Factor	**Category**	**Action**
1-5	Low	Routine Action
6-10	Acceptable	Employ Safety Systems
11-15	Marginal	Reduce Risk / Employ All Safety Systems
16-20	Undesirable	Maximum Caution / Close Supervision
21-25	Unacceptable	Must not be allowed

Risk Assessment Guide Table			
Hazard Probability	**Probability Factor**	**Hazard Severity**	**Severity Factor**
Very Unlikely	1	Insignificant	1
Remote	2	Minor – Light Damage	2
Fair Chance	3	Moderate – Damage/Injury	3
Very Likely	4	Serious – Damage/Injury	4
Almost Certain	5	Dangerous - Fatal	5

Risks	**Probability Factor**	**Severity Factor**	**RISK Factor**	**Control Measures**
Slip / Trip / Falls Water spills	3	4	12	Staff aware of their environment, good housekeeping at all times. Clear up when necessary. Make sure all water spills are cleaned up.
Cuts Broken/cracked glass	3	3	9	Staff to check tank has no cracks/potential breaks. Make sure children are not banging on the tank

Carrying tank around school	3	3	9	Site Manager to supply equipment if tank need sto be moved.
Allergies	3	4	12	Establish if anyone has any relevant allergies before any contact is undertaken/permitted
Health hazard from dirty water	2	4	8	Good housekeeping always. Weekly checks of tank. Tank to be cleaned and water changed regularly
Spread of germs	4	4	16	Students given anti-bacterial gel to cleanse their hands after handling the fish related equipment. Asked to also wash their hands thoroughly. Children told to keep their hands away from their hands away from mouths. Check that cuts, grazes etc on children's hands are covered with a waterproof dressing.
Electrical Cables/Filter	3	4	12	All cables and equipment tidied and secured away or positioned behind display area away from public access. Adult to change filters.