GEMS TINEY HOME NURSERY

HOME FROM HOME CHILDCARE

# Pet Policy

## Purpose and animals at the setting

Gems tiney Home Nursery has an elderly dog aged over 15 years, two Maine Coon cats and multiple fish in a tank. Animals can support learning about care and respect, but children's safety and the animals' welfare determine whether and how contact takes place. No animal is assumed safe simply because it is familiar or has previously been calm.

## Supervision and separation

Children are never left alone with the dog or cats. Any direct contact is closely supervised by an adult able to intervene promptly; if this cannot be provided, animals and children are separated using suitable secure arrangements. Children may choose to observe from a distance and are never pressured to touch an animal.

Each animal has a quiet area where children cannot follow or disturb it. Children do not approach animals while they are eating, resting, sleeping, unwell or caring for young. Adults teach gentle handling and prevent chasing, climbing on, hugging tightly or pulling fur, ears or tails.

The elderly dog may have pain, reduced hearing or sight, fatigue or a lower tolerance of activity. Adults watch for discomfort or avoidance and separate the dog promptly if needed. The dog has undisturbed rest, safe movement and veterinary attention for relevant changes; children do not wake or startle it.

## Health and animal welfare

Pets receive appropriate feeding, exercise, grooming and veterinary care. Vaccinations and parasite prevention for the dog and cats follow veterinary advice appropriate to their

age and health. Pet medicines, food, treats, bowls and equipment are kept securely away from children.

Changes in health, behaviour, mobility or household animal arrangements trigger a review before contact continues. Sick or distressed animals are separated and veterinary advice sought. We do not allow visiting animals into childcare areas without prior assessment. Banned dog breeds must not be kept or present on the childcare premises under the current EYFS.

## Hygiene and toileting

Adults check indoor and outdoor childcare areas for animal urine, faeces and other contamination before children use them and throughout the day. The elderly dog's possible toileting accidents are managed promptly: children are kept away while waste is removed and the area cleaned and disinfected appropriately, then allowed to dry before reuse.

Litter trays and pet toileting areas are inaccessible to children. Adults use suitable protection for cleaning waste, dispose of it securely and wash hands afterwards. Children wash hands with soap and water after touching animals or pet-related items and before eating.

Pets are kept away from food preparation areas and food-contact surfaces and from children's eating areas while food is served. Cleaning and grooming reduce hair, but this is not a pet-hair-free environment. Sleep spaces, bedding and care equipment are protected from animal access and contamination.

## Fish tank safety

The fish tank is stable and secure with safe access controls and a suitable cover. Children do not climb on it, open it, put hands or objects in the water or access fish food, treatments or cleaning equipment. Cables, sockets and electrical equipment are secured from children and checked for safety.

Tank maintenance and water changes are carried out by adults with children kept safely away. Hands are washed afterwards and tank equipment is cleaned and stored separately from food and children's care equipment. Any child involvement, such as observing feeding, is assessed and directly supervised.

## Allergies incidents and family information

Parents are told about the animals before starting and must share allergies, health needs, fears or previous reactions. We discuss controls and reasonable adjustments, including separation, without promising complete elimination of allergens. Relevant care plans are kept current.

Bites, scratches or other animal incidents receive prompt first aid, appropriate medical advice and parent contact. Serious injury or immediate danger requires emergency help. We record what happened, separate the animal and review controls before further contact. Statutory and tiney notifications follow our accident and safeguarding procedures.

## Review and references

Gemma ensures assistants understand separation, supervision, hygiene and emergency arrangements. This policy is reviewed annually and sooner after an incident or change in pets or children's needs. References: current EYFS childminder framework, risk assessment, hygiene and banned dog breeds; relevant public health and veterinary advice.

Policy owner: Gemma Bayley
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