



AP A3 Animals as Part of an Instructional Program

Legislative References: BC Guide Dog and Service Dog Act

Policy Reference: *None*

Collective Agreement References: *None*

Date: January 10, 2024

1. Animals in schools that are not included in this Administrative Practice:
 - 1.1. Students and staff who qualify for an emotional support animal.
 - 1.2. Animal visitors, as outlined in Administrative Practice A2 Animal Visitors in Schools.
 - 1.3. Guide dogs and service dogs, covered under the Guide Dog and Service Dog Act, outlined in A4 Assistance Dogs.
2. With approval of the school principal, teachers are permitted to bring live animals into schools if required for instructional purposes.
3. Teachers must have a definite teaching purpose for bringing live animals into the classroom. Such curriculum connections for the use of animals in schools may include but are not limited to:
 - 3.1. the use of live animals as subjects for observation and data gathering on growth and development, body characteristics, habits, movement, feeding behaviour, instinctive reactions;
 - 3.2. subjects to use in language development, talking and writing stories about animals;
 - 3.3. development of a sense of responsibility, kindness and concern for other living beings;
 - 3.4. development of a healthy respect for the animals in our local environment.
4. Prior to introducing an animal into a classroom, the teacher must ensure that the following conditions have been met:
 - 4.1. students and school personnel are not allergic to or afraid of the type of animal(s);
 - 4.2. the animal(s) is healthy and free of disease;
 - 4.3. the animal(s) does not present aggressive behaviour towards the students or to school personnel; and
 - 4.4. appropriate standards of hygiene and sanitation will be met.
5. The teacher bringing the animal into the school must know the past history (if any) of the animal.
 - 5.1. Only relatively small animals, which are easily confined or caged, maintained and handled, may be kept in the classroom. Larger animals such as dogs and cats may not be kept in the school.
 - 5.2. Dangerous, wild, stray, or poisonous animals are not permitted in schools.



6. The teacher must ensure that any animal that is kept in the classroom receives adequate care and is not abused or neglected in any way. The teacher is responsible for determining the care, hygiene and feeding requirements for animals kept in the classroom, and ensuring that animal care procedures are posted and reviewed with the students.
7. The teacher is responsible for providing a suitable enclosure or cage. Students who assist the teacher with the care of animals in the classroom must be properly trained by the teacher and under on-site supervision by the teacher with the teacher present but not necessarily constantly viewing the activity.
8. The teacher must ensure that there is a plan in place to provide care to animals during weekends and holidays and provide a permanent home for the animal when classroom study is completed.
9. If, in the opinion of the principal, animal hygiene becomes a factor, approval to keep the animal in the school is withdrawn and the animal must be taken from the school at the end of the school day.
10. The teacher must be prepared to deal with the death of or injury to the animals kept in the classroom.
11. If the presence of an animal(s) causes a significant disturbance or poses a health and safety risk to staff/students/ visitors, the teacher must take all reasonable action to immediately address the concern.
12. In the event of any issues, the Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) will recommend whether the animal(s) can remain.