

PROCEDURE 48: ANIMAL WELFARE

RATIONALE

Whareorino School recognises its legal obligations to those species defined as “animals” under the Animal Welfare Act 1999 and its moral responsibilities with regard to other invertebrate animals studied or kept at Whareorino School.

GOALS

- To encourage, through example, the proper care of living things within Whareorino School situation. (See *Science in the New Zealand Curriculum, Making Sense of the Living World*, achievement aims 3 and 4, page 52.)
- To provide opportunities for children/students to observe, handle, and care for a range of animals in humane ways.
- To ensure that, in any activity involving the keeping of an animal or its study on a field trip, the welfare of the animal is given high priority.
- To educate children/students by example and discussion about the importance of caring for animals and the responsibilities this involves.
- **NAG 1: Curriculum**
 - It is important to have established guidelines for the keeping of animals in the school, either as a pet or as part of a class study. The Animal Protection Amendment Act 1987 requires the school to have a Code of Ethical Conduct relating to the treatment and welfare of any animal under the school’s care.
 - In all cases, animals must have written approval to enter the school premises. Teacher(s) must apply in writing to the Board for approval to have a class pet with a removal date documented, as the Board and Principal are ultimately responsible for the welfare of the animal.

OBJECTIVES

- To encourage, through example, the proper care of living things within a school situation.
- To provide experiences for pupils to observe, handle, and care for a range of animals in a humane way.
- To ensure that in any activity involving animals in our school, the care and welfare of the animals will have the highest priority.
- To educate pupils through example and discussion of the importance of animal care and welfare as well as the responsibilities involved.

GUIDELINES

1. Responsibility for the welfare of animals, rests with the teacher(s) involved, but ultimately with the Principal and the Board.
2. The animals should only be retained for the minimum time, which will enable the pupils, to complete any study.
3. If the appropriate care cannot be provided, animals are not to be kept in school.
4. There must be a minimisation of distress eg. when transporting or studying the animals.
5. Animals must be given the appropriate balance diet, including ready access to clean drinking water.
6. Animals must be kept in a secure place surroundings, protected from harm.
7. Any cages or containers used for housing animals must be of adequate size, and designed with safety, servicing, and hygiene in mind.
8. Proper provision must be made for the care of the animals during weekends and school holidays.
9. High standards of cleanliness and hygiene are necessary when caring for or handling animals.
10. Appropriate arrangements must be made for the disposal of animals when they are no longer required in the school.

11. The behaviour of any animal on school grounds is the responsibility of the owner/caregiver.
12. Animals in the school will always be treated with the utmost care and treated as humanely as possible.
13. The following occasions usually *do not* require ethical approval:
 - **Bringing a pet to the school or ECE centre.** Visits from pets should preferably be planned because, depending on such circumstances as the type of pet and the duration of stay, the animal may need water, shelter, food, and/or a secure place away from children/students where it can be kept when it is not needed during the day.
 - **Pet days.** When pets are brought to the school or ECE centre for pet day, teachers, students, and children should:
 - provide them with water
 - ensure that they do not have food withheld in an attempt to make them more obedient during judging
 - provide shelter from the hot sun or from bad weather
 - provide advice that they should be transported to and from the ECE centre/school in secure enclosures, such as cages or pet boxes for small animals and secure, non-slippery trailers or truck decks for lambs and calves
 - remember that some pets will not be used to crowds and may find it stressful to be surrounded by lots of students and children wanting to pat them and high noise levels from people and loudspeakers
 - if they are to be tied up, check that no animals can come to harm. For example, dogs should be kept far enough apart to prevent fights, and livestock should not be tethered near poisonous plants or on steep slopes.
 - **Classroom and ECE centre pets.** Keeping an animal in a classroom or ECE centre as a pet and/or for observational purposes does not require ethical approval. However, teachers should:
 - make prior arrangements about long-term care before any animal is obtained
 - provide proper care and facilities
 - provide for adequate weekend and holiday care.
 - **Classroom and ECE studies involving animals** including such activities as:
 - observing animal behaviour and movement, body structure and function, growth (including regular weighing to chart a growth curve), diet preferences, and food treats
 - preference testing of cage equipment used to enrich the environment of the animal, for example, tubes, platforms, and ramps
 - learning animal care and handling techniques and taking responsibility for the care of an animal
 - using breeding pairs to teach reproduction and development. Before breeding animals, make suitable arrangements for the placement of offspring.
 - **Doing dissections and experiments involving non-living animal tissue**, with dissection material obtained from reputable sources. However, note the requirement(s) in *Safety and*

Science: A Guidance Manual for New Zealand Schools, for dissection material to be obtained from reputable sources.

The following occasion may require ethical approval, depending on what is involved:

- **Science fair projects in schools.** Although science fair projects might not be undertaken on school premises, teachers should nevertheless ensure that students are informed at the outset of the ethical considerations of using any living creature. Students should also be made aware that special procedures must be followed if an animal manipulation (as legally defined) is planned as part of the project.
- Classroom and ECE studies involving animals other than those listed above.

CODE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT

The following freedoms apply:

1. Animals must have appropriate diet, including access to water. Provision must be made for care at weekends and over holidays.
2. Animals must have cages/containers of an appropriate size and be ventilated and hygienic. Animals must not be subjected to extremes of noise, draught, temperature, or sunlight.
3. Animals must be free from injury or disease. Diseased or injured animals must be treated and must not be kept at school.
4. Animals must be handled/kept in such a way that they are not subjected to stress or fear.
5. Animals must be able to express normal behaviour.

An “animal” is defined as any living creature with a backbone, including land based and aquatic mammals, birds, fish, and reptiles. It is generally accepted that other living creatures such as spiders, snails, worms and insects must also be treated with care and kindness.

Where any activity is planned which may cause distress or suffering to the animal, approval must be obtained from an Animal Ethics Committee. A record must be kept of procedures followed as set out in the Act.

Information can be obtained from Animals Welfare and Environment section of MAF (04) 4744 129

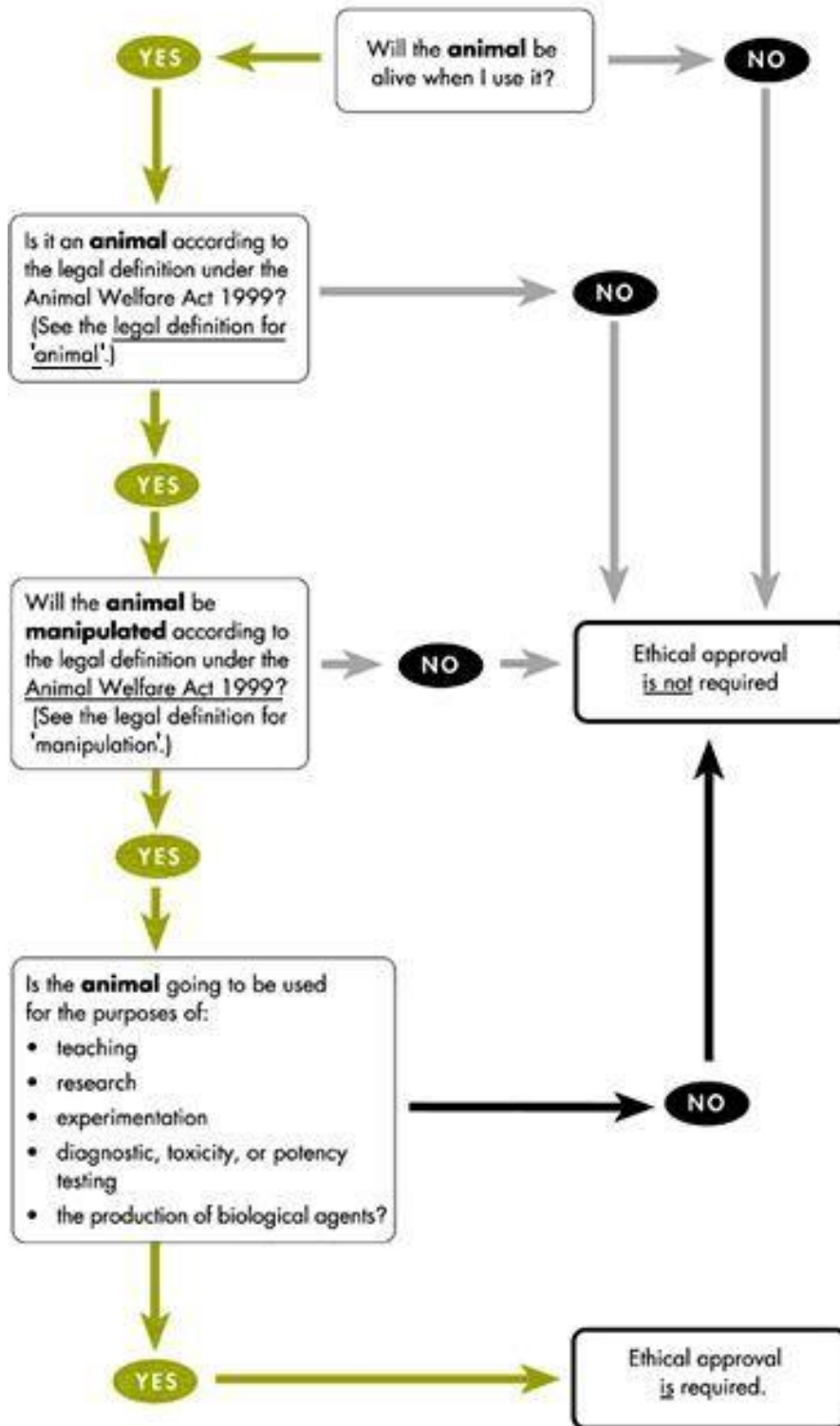
ETHICS APPROVAL

Early childhood, primary and secondary teachers who are planning on carrying out investigations with animals may apply for a three-year approval. Biology teachers often need to apply for a three-year approval for their students’ Achievement Standard 3.1 investigations.

Students completing individual projects, including science fair projects that involve animals, need to gain ethics approval before they start their project. Once approval is given the student receives a sticker to attach to their project. <https://gazette.education.govt.nz/articles/animal-ethics-and-schools/>

The following flow chart should help you to decide whether ethical approval is needed.

Do I Need Ethical Approval to Use Animals?



Resources: Teachers' Portal teachers.spcaeducation.org.nz
 SPCA Kids Education kids.spcaeducation.org.nz
<https://interfaceonline.co.nz/2016/06/22/spca-education/>



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 PRINCIPAL
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