



## Animals in the Early Learning and Childcare Setting

The Curriculum for Excellence and Care Inspectorate documents such as 'Animal Magic' suggests that we provide rich opportunities for children to care for living things. However, animals, birds and fish may carry infections, which can be transmitted to humans. **Strict hygiene procedures are therefore required when handling and caring for these creatures to prevent illness.**

Points to consider in relation to animals in the setting:

- Staff must carry out a risk assessment in advance of children's contact with animals.
- Parents must be informed before an animal visits the setting to establish if a child has an allergy or phobia to a particular animal
- It is recommended that children should not be allowed to handle animals unless under the supervision of a reliable adult
- Staff should be aware that all species of reptiles may carry the salmonella organism so particular care with hygiene must be taken when introducing these animals into the setting
- For guidance relating to safety precautions during farm visits and animals in ELC please refer to: <https://publichealthscotland.scot/publications/health-protection-in-children-and-young-people-settings-including-education/health-protection-in-children-and-young-people-settings-including-education-version-1/overview/>

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