



Department of  
**Education**

# **Use of Animals in Public Schools Policy**

Effective date: 5 August 2014

Version: 2.3

Accurate at the time of printing 29/07/2021.

## Table of contents

1. Policy statement	3
2. Policy rules	3
3. Responsibility for Implementation and Compliance	4
4. Scope	4
5. Supporting Procedures	4
6. Definitions	5
7. Related documents	6
8. Contact information	7
9. History of changes	8
10. More information	9
Policy review date	9
Policy last updated	9

## 1. Policy statement

The Department of Education requires all employees to adhere to consistent and high quality practices for the care and use of animals in schools.

## 2. Policy rules

When using animals for a scientific teaching activity principals and teachers must:

- adhere to the requirements of the [Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes 8th edition](#);
- obtain prior written approval from the Schools Animal Ethics Committee;
- where an activity is pre-approved by the Schools Animal Ethics Committee, adhere to any guidelines or [Standard Operating Procedures](#) that apply to the activity to be conducted; and
- report on the use of the animals in the manner prescribed by the Schools Animal Ethics Committee.

When using animals for teaching activities other than science, at an agricultural college or school with a farm, principals and school staff must:

- promote and protect the welfare, safety and health of animals;
- undertake proper and humane care and management of all animals in accordance with generally accepted standards, guidelines and [Standard Operating Procedures](#) that apply;
- ensure that students also adhere to high quality practices for the care and use of animals;
- obtain prior approval from the Director, Agricultural Education for activities not generally accepted as routine management; and
- report on the use of animals in the manner prescribed by the Director, Agricultural Education.

For animals kept on school premises, where the circumstances are not included in the above policy rules (for example, classroom pets and chickens in vegetable gardens) principals will be responsible for the welfare of these animals.

### Guidance

Animal welfare is managed in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act 2002.

This policy does not apply to:

- the use of living things not within the definition of animal, for example insects, spiders, worms, and snails; and
- the use of animals for dissections where those animals are obtained already euthanized from a licensed scientific supplier (such as the Animal Resource Centre).

Approval of an application for the use of animals for a scientific teaching activity can be granted for a period of up to three years.

Detailed information regarding the requirements and processes of the Schools Animal Ethics Committee are available on the [Animal Ethics website](#).

Agricultural colleges and schools with farms do not require approval from the Schools Animal Ethics Committee for routine management and care of animals or use of animals for teaching activities under the technologies curriculum. Should a school or agricultural college undertake a scientific activity using their farm animals they are required to seek approval for the activity from the Schools Animal Ethics Committee.

### **3. Responsibility for Implementation and Compliance**

Principals are responsible for the implementation of the policy.

The Deputy Director General, Public Schools is responsible for compliance monitoring.

### **4. Scope**

This policy applies to principals and school staff in public schools.

### **5. Supporting Procedures**

[Routine Care and Management of Animals in Public School Farms Procedures](#)

[Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes in Public Schools Procedures](#)

## 6. Definitions

### **Animal**

Any live non-human vertebrate (that is, fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals encompassing domestic animals, purpose-bred animals, livestock, wildlife) and cephalopods

### **Scientific teaching activity**

Any action or group of actions to impart or demonstrate knowledge or techniques to achieve an educational outcome in science, as specified in the relevant curriculum or competency requirement.

## 7. Related documents

### Relevant legislation or authority

[Animal Welfare Act 2002 \(WA\)](#)

[Animal Welfare \(Scientific Purposes\) Regulations 2003 \(WA\)](#)

### Other documents

[Animal Use Licence](#)

[Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes 8th edition](#)

[Form A: Proposal for the use of animals on school farms for non-routine activities](#)

[Form A1: Proposal for the use of animals: primary and secondary schools](#)

[Form B: Unexpected animal incident report](#)

[Form C: Livestock report](#)

[Form C1: Animal use and health records](#)

[Form C2: Illness/injury, death or unexpected incident report](#)

[Form D: Annual report](#)

[Guidelines for post mortem](#)

[Standard Operating Procedures](#)

## 8. Contact information

**Policy manager:**

Director, Teaching and Learning Services

**Policy contact officer:**

Senior Consultant, Specialist Services

T: (08) 9402 6106

## 9. History of changes

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<b>Effective date</b>	5 August 2014
<b>Last update date</b> <b>Policy version no.</b>	2.0
<b>Notes</b>	Animals in Schools policy reviewed and recast as Use of Animals in Schools Policy and Procedures. Endorsed by DG on 27 June 2014.

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<b>Effective date</b>	5 August 2014
<b>Last update date</b>	2 August 2017
<b>Policy version no.</b>	2.1
<b>Notes</b>	Minor change to contact details D17/0045097.

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<b>Effective date</b>	5 August 2014
<b>Last update date</b>	31 August 2018
<b>Policy version no.</b>	2.2
<b>Notes</b>	Minor changes to include reference to Public Schools D18/0151652, updated legislation links D18/0207680 and updates to reflect organisational changes D18/0388845.

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<b>Effective date</b>	5 August 2014
<b>Last update date</b>	20 February 2020
<b>Policy version no.</b>	2.3
<b>Notes</b>	Minor changes to contact information D19/0473431

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## 10. More information

### Supporting content

#### Procedure

[Routine Care and Management of Animals in Public School Farms Procedures](#)

[Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes in Public Schools Procedures](#)

### Policy review date

5 August 2017

### Policy last updated

20 February 2020

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