



Animal Health and Safety Policy

West Green Playgroup does not keep pets or animals on the premises. Children, families and staff are not permitted to bring pets or animals into the setting.

Assistance dogs may enter the premises. Animals attending for an agreed educational or therapeutic purpose may only enter with the manager's prior approval and following completion of an appropriate risk assessment.

Stray or uncontrolled dogs entering the premises

If a stray or uncontrolled dog enters the Playgroup premises or outdoor area, staff will not approach, chase, corner or attempt to restrain the animal.

Staff will immediately:

- Move children calmly indoors or into another secure area away from the animal.
- Initiate the Playgroup's lockdown procedure and close and secure all doors and gates where it is safe to do so.
- Complete a headcount and check all children against the register.
- Keep children away from windows, doors and the animal until the area is confirmed as safe.
- Inform the manager or deputy immediately.
- Contact the appropriate dog warden or animal control service. The police will be contacted if the animal presents an immediate danger.
- Inform parents and record the incident where appropriate.

The outdoor area will not be used again until the dog has been removed, all gates and boundaries have been checked and the manager is satisfied that the area is safe

Under no circumstances are banned dog breeds (as described in section 1 of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991¹) permitted on the premises.

This includes XL Bully dogs and banned dogs that have an exemption certificate. Parents and carers will be informed that banned dog breeds must not be brought onto the Playgroup premises.

If the Playgroup has reason to believe that a child under 12 is being left in close contact with a banned dog in a private place without adult supervision, this will be treated as a safeguarding concern and managed in accordance with our Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy. Advice may be sought from the local authority, council dog warden or police where appropriate.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/control-dog-public/banned-dogs>

Family visits to farms and animal attractions

West Green Playgroup may arrange an annual family outing to a farm or animal attraction. Every child must be accompanied by their parent or an agreed responsible adult. That adult remains responsible for directly supervising and caring for the child throughout the visit. Children cannot attend without their parent or agreed responsible adult.

The Playgroup will:

- Complete a proportionate outing risk assessment and check that the venue has suitable safety, first-aid, handwashing and emergency arrangements.
- Provide parents with relevant safety and hygiene information before the visit.
- Make clear that parents or agreed responsible adults must supervise their children at all times.
- Remind adults and children not to eat, drink or place their hands in their mouths while in animal-contact areas.
- Ensure that children wash their hands thoroughly with soap and running water after contact with animals and before eating or drinking. Hand gels and wipes are not a substitute for proper handwashing.
- Ensure that food and drink are consumed away from animal-contact areas.
- Record and respond to any accident, illness or safeguarding concern involving Playgroup staff or families during the organised outing.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the Playgroup	Date for review
<i>September 2026</i>		<i>September 2027</i>