



The **Daffodil** Project CIC

Animal Welfare Policy

The Daffodil Project CIC

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1. Policy Statement

The Daffodil Project CIC is committed to the highest standards of animal welfare. As a therapeutic animal-based inclusion centre, we recognise our ethical and legal responsibility to ensure that all animals in our care are treated with kindness, respect, and dignity at all times. The welfare of animals is directly linked to the emotional and educational outcomes of the children we support, and we understand the importance of modelling compassionate, responsible behaviour. This policy sets out our approach to ensuring that all animals receive appropriate care, are housed in safe and comfortable environments, and are protected from harm, neglect, and unnecessary distress. Our practices comply with the *Animal Welfare Act 2006*, the *Welfare of Animals (Transport) Order 2006*, and guidance from the *RSPCA*, *DEFRA*, and *Ofsted* where applicable.

- Ensure all animals are treated with dignity, compassion, and respect
 - Meet the physical and psychological needs of all animals
 - Promote safe, positive animal interactions that support children's learning and wellbeing
 - Ensure compliance with legal and ethical standards
 - Model responsible animal care as part of our therapeutic provision
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2. Scope

This policy applies to all animals kept on-site at The Daffodil Project CIC, whether permanently or temporarily, and to all staff, volunteers, children, and visitors who come into contact with them. It covers the care, handling, housing, and emergency management of animals used in therapeutic, educational, or recreational activities. It also includes requirements for any off-site transport of animals and the criteria for accepting animals into our care.

- Applies to all animals on-site or used off-site under our supervision
 - Applies to staff, volunteers, children, and visitors
 - Covers both permanent residents and temporary or foster animals
 - Includes animal housing, feeding, care, health, and interaction
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3. Legal & Regulatory Framework

The Daffodil Project CIC adheres to the following legal frameworks and guidance documents:

- **Animal Welfare Act 2006** – Five Welfare Needs: suitable environment, suitable diet, ability to exhibit normal behaviour, housing with or away from other animals, protection from pain, suffering, injury, and disease
- **Welfare of Animals (Transport) Order 2006** – Covers the humane transportation of animals
- **DEFRA Codes of Practice** for the welfare of dogs, goats, poultry, and small mammals
- **Health and Safety at Work Act 1974** – Duty to protect staff and children from risk
- **Ofsted Education Inspection Framework** – Ensuring safeguarding and wellbeing are embedded across practice
- Follow all UK animal welfare legislation
- Reference DEFRA, RSPCA, and veterinary best practice
- Maintain records and policies that demonstrate legal compliance

- Ensure safe handling and supervision practices are in place
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4. Roles & Responsibilities

The Director (Magdalena van de Voort) holds overall accountability for the welfare of animals at The Daffodil Project CIC. The Director is responsible for ensuring that all animal care policies are implemented, reviewed regularly, and compliant with legal requirements.

Animal Care Lead(s) will be designated to manage daily care routines, liaise with veterinary services, monitor animal wellbeing, and train staff and volunteers in handling procedures.

Staff and Volunteers must adhere to all procedures for animal interaction, hygiene, and reporting concerns. They are expected to role model respectful, safe behaviour and report any issues immediately.

Children and Young People will be supported to engage with animals safely and compassionately under adult supervision, with appropriate risk assessments in place.

- Director holds overall policy responsibility
 - Animal Care Lead oversees daily health, hygiene, feeding, and veterinary liaison
 - Staff/volunteers must follow training and raise concerns promptly
 - Children interact only with supervision, with behaviour guided and monitored
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5. General Animal Care Standards

All animals at The Daffodil Project CIC will be cared for in accordance with the five welfare needs. Each animal will have a care plan tailored to its species and individual needs, including feeding, exercise, enrichment, and rest periods. Animals will never be overworked or used in ways that could cause distress. Their psychological wellbeing will be given equal weight to physical health. Routines will be consistent, calm, and supportive.

- Provide species-appropriate food, water, exercise, and rest
 - Develop individual care plans for each animal
 - Prioritise emotional as well as physical wellbeing
 - Avoid excessive handling or stressful conditions
 - Ensure access to safe, secure enclosures at all times
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6. Handling & Interaction with Animals

Animal interaction is central to our therapeutic model. However, it must always be safe, structured, and purposeful. Children will be taught how to approach and interact with animals calmly and respectfully. Only trained staff or volunteers may facilitate handling. Animals showing signs of stress, fatigue, or illness will be removed from interaction sessions immediately.

- Supervise all animal interactions
- Train children in calm, safe, respectful handling
- Withdraw animals showing signs of distress
- Limit duration and frequency of handling sessions
- Rotate animals to avoid overexposure to therapy work

7. Animal Health & Veterinary Care

The health of all animals will be monitored daily. Preventative veterinary care, including vaccinations, deworming, and parasite control, will be recorded and kept up to date. A local veterinary practice will be retained for regular check-ups and emergencies. Any animal showing signs of illness or injury will be isolated and assessed promptly.

- Conduct daily health checks
- Maintain vaccination and parasite control schedules
- Retain a named veterinary practice
- Record all veterinary visits, illnesses, and treatments
- Isolate and assess unwell animals immediately

8. Housing & Environment

Animals will be kept in clean, secure, species-appropriate housing that protects them from extreme weather, predators, and hazards. All enclosures will include enrichment items and allow space for movement, play, and rest. Bedding will be clean, dry, and regularly changed. Enclosures will be inspected and cleaned daily.

- Provide clean, secure, species-specific enclosures
- Clean and disinfect housing daily or as needed
- Include enrichment and adequate space
- Monitor temperature, ventilation, and protection from elements
- Conduct regular safety inspections

9. Hygiene & Infection Control

Strict hygiene standards will be enforced to prevent the spread of disease between animals and humans. Handwashing will be required before and after animal contact. All animal waste will be disposed of using safe methods, and cleaning will use pet-safe disinfectants. Children with weakened immunity or allergies will be risk assessed before contact.

- Enforce handwashing before and after animal contact
- Clean surfaces and tools with pet-safe disinfectant
- Dispose of waste hygienically
- Conduct risk assessments for immunocompromised individuals
- Maintain hygiene logs and checklists

10. Emergency Procedures & Incident Reporting

Emergency procedures will be in place for animal escapes, bites or scratches, illness, injury, and fire. Staff will be trained in appropriate first response actions, including isolation, first aid, and contacting veterinary services. All incidents involving animals will be reported to the Director and logged. Where required, safeguarding procedures will also be followed.

- Respond to emergencies using pre-planned procedures
- Isolate injured or aggressive animals

- Contact veterinary services immediately if needed
 - Record and investigate incidents promptly
 - Follow safeguarding reporting where harm to a child occurs
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11. Monitoring & Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Director and updated in line with any changes to legislation, best practice guidance, or operational needs. Feedback from staff, volunteers, families, and veterinary partners will inform improvements. Regular audits of animal welfare records and environments will be undertaken to ensure ongoing compliance and high standards.

- Review policy annually or following incidents/updates
- Audit animal health, housing, and hygiene records
- Act on feedback from staff, families, and professionals
- Ensure continuous improvement in welfare standards

Signed:

Magdalena Van De Voort



Director, The Daffodil Project CIC

Date: January 2026