



Chickens in School Policy

Originator	Authorised by	Date Adopted	Date of Review	Next Review
OCA/ M Draycott	Principal	August 2018	October 2021	October 2022

This document is intended for use as guidance only. The purpose is to provide example elements, structures and information commonly found in such policies. Schools and academies must ensure that any policies derived from the guidance in this model policy reflect their own specific requirements, such as setting, pupil ages, and percentages of pupils with special educational needs.

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Statement of intent

Ormiston Chadwick Academy believes that keeping chickens is an effective way of maximising the educational opportunity and attainment of our pupils.

Whilst keeping chickens at our school is particularly beneficial to our pupils, we understand that we have a legal duty of care towards any animals we are responsible for, and that this must be a priority at all times. This policy has been created in order to outline the key responsibilities and procedures for pupils and staff when looking after our chickens.

Signed by:

_____ Principal

Date: _____

_____ Chair of Governors

Date: _____

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Animal Welfare Act 2006
- The Environmental Protection Act 1990
- The Animals Act 1971
- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

1.2. This policy also has due regard to school policies, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Health and Safety Policy
- First Aid Policy

2. Duty of care

2.1. The Animal Welfare Act 2006 places a duty on schools to provide provision for the welfare of any animal that they are responsible for.

2.2. Under this Act, the welfare of an animal includes the following criteria:

- Its need for a suitable environment
- Its need for a suitable diet
- Its need to be able to exhibit normal behaviour patterns
- Its need to be housed with, or apart from, any other animals
- Its need to be protected from pain, suffering and disease¹

2.3. The Principal and the designated member of staff responsible for the chickens, **Tom Finnigan**, will conduct a risk assessment prior to looking after the chickens to ensure that all risks are manageable and are controlled.

3. Training for pupils and staff

3.1. All pupils and staff will undergo training on a termly basis to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities when looking after the chickens, including: feeding, hygiene, handling and how to spot signs of infestation and disease.

3.2. Information posters will be displayed next to the chicken coop in order to remind staff and pupils of their responsibilities.

3.3. Training will also be provided for pupils and staff in response to any incidents that occur, as well as any concerns for welfare, such as disease affecting chickens.

¹ RSPCA (2012) 'Guidance for educational establishments', p.3

4. Food

- 4.1. The school will establish a written care programme for the chickens, which will be implemented by the designated, trained member of staff, and will be communicated to all other members of staff.
- 4.2. The Principal will establish a rota for looking after the chickens before, during and after the school day, as well as during holidays and weekends. This rota will be given to all members of staff and will be posted in the school office.
- 4.3. Food for the chickens will be sourced from a reputable supplier, e.g. [Pets At Home](#), to ensure it is of appropriate nourishment suitable to their age and breed.
- 4.4. The school will comply with its legal duty to ensure that the chickens are not fed anything which has been prepared in a kitchen.
- 4.5. The school will purchase insoluble grit, such as hard flint grit, in addition to food, in order to aid with the chickens' digestion.
- 4.6. A dry, vermin-proof container will be used to store the chickens' food, keeping it dry and preventing any extra waste.
- 4.7. Food will be provided twice a day, in the mornings and afternoons, by a member of staff and/or pupils supervised by a member of staff.
- 4.8. The school will ensure that there is an adequate supply of food available at all times to avoid any draught of food.

5. Housing and environment

- 5.1. The chicken coop will be **constructed and maintained by the Premises Staff**
- 5.2. The chicken coop will:
 - Be warm, dry and well-ventilated.
 - Contain food and water inside.
 - Contain nest boxes, which will be draught-free and lined with a layer of dust-free, absorbent bedding.
 - Be spacious enough for the chickens to exercise and carry out their normal behaviours.
 - Contain perches for roosting, which are spacious enough for more than one chicken to roost at the same time and avoid injury.
 - Contain entrances large enough for the chickens to enter and exit without crouching.

- Have flooring covered with dry material, such as wood chips, to allow foraging and dustbathing.

5.3. The chicken run will:

- Be large enough to allow wet, muddy or barren areas to be sectioned off and allowed to regrow.
- Provide overhead cover, such as small trees or purpose-built shelters, to give protection from differing weather conditions and predators.
- Provide access to dry soil for the chickens to forage and dustbathe.
- Contain sheltered food and water to keep it clean and dry.
- Contain chicken wire, so that the birds cannot escape and to provide protection from predators.

5.4. Chickens will be provided with fresh clean water and this will be checked regularly by staff.

5.5. The coop will be checked by the designated member of staff or site staff on a daily basis to ensure that ventilation and insulation are sufficient, and to identify whether any repairs are needed.

5.6. The chickens will be secured within the wider enclosure at all times.

5.7. The chickens will also be secured into the coop in the event of any extremely cold. They will not be left in the coop during extremely hot weather but be allowed to roam within the wider enclosure.

6. Cleaning and maintenance

- 6.1. The chicken coop and run will be cleaned on a weekly basis by the designated member of staff, or the member of staff indicated on a rota.
- 6.2. The school will purchase appropriate cleaning materials, including a shovel, bucket, stiff brush and detergent cleaner.
- 6.3. The detergent cleaner, as well as any other chemicals purchased, will be checked in accordance with the school's COSHH Policy to ensure that they are not hazardous to the chickens or to the members of staff using them.
- 6.4. All bedding will be removed and replaced, and all droppings will be scraped into the bucket provided. Both the bedding and droppings will be disposed of appropriately by the member of staff carrying out the cleaning duties.
- 6.5. Detergent cleaner will be used to clean the inside of the coop and run. When doing so, the member of staff will check for any red mites, which can be harmful and

deadly to chickens. Any evidence of these will be dealt with in accordance with the process outlined in [section 8](#) of this policy.

- 6.6. The water and food feeders will be cleaned on a weekly basis to avoid any build-up of green algae which can be harmful to chickens.
- 6.7. When cleaning the chicken run, the member of staff will ensure that it is weather- and predator-proof, and will check for any repairs that are needed. In particular, the run will be checked for any signs of tunnelling or gnawing.
- 6.8. Any works required will be reported to the **Premises Manager**, who will make appropriate repairs or will report to the Principal if new equipment is needed.
- 6.9. If the individual carrying out the cleaning duties is the staff member indicated on the rota, the individual must first report any repairs needed to the designated member of staff, who will then follow the process above.

7. Contact with the chickens

- 7.1. Pupils are able to provide the chickens with food and water. When doing so, pupils will be supervised by an adequate number of staff. One member of staff is required for every five pupils.
- 7.2. The amount of food and water given to the chickens will be measured before allowing the pupils to feed the chickens, and will be adequately controlled at all times.
- 7.3. Only the designated member of staff is able to handle the chickens. All pupils and other members of staff are not permitted to touch the animals. Pupils are allowed to handle the chickens under the supervision of an appropriate member of staff if they are wearing PPE such as gloves.
- 7.4. Pupils will be supervised at all times and are instructed to treat the chickens with respect. Pupils must not harm the animals or cause them any distress, e.g. by throwing things at them.
- 7.5. Pupils and staff will be able to visit the chickens in small, supervised groups, of no more than 10 at a time.
- 7.6. 'Rest periods' will be established throughout the school day in order to identify specific times in which groups can visit the chickens. This is to avoid any distress that the animals may experience by constant visitors.
- 7.7. The **chickens will only be visited during their Animal Care lesson, 4 hours per week, or during enrichment sessions, 1 hour daily.**

NB. All times between those listed above are rest periods – only the designated member of staff, or the member of staff identified on the rota, is able to visit the chickens during these times.

7.8. The school will use any laid chicken eggs for the following purposes:

- Members of staff may take the eggs home.
- Parents/carers may purchase the eggs.
- The eggs will be used for educational purposes such as egg painting.

NB. In accordance with The Registration of Establishments (Laying Hens) Regulations 2003, the school is able to sell eggs to parents/carers as the school is not covered by these regulations.

7.9. In accordance with the school's Health and Safety Policy, pupils and staff will apply the relevant hygiene practices detailed in this policy when looking after the chickens.

7.10. Before and after any contact with equipment used for the chickens and their food, pupils and members of staff are required to wash their hands, using warm water and soap.

7.11. Pupils and staff will dry their hands with paper towels after washing.

7.12. If required, pupils and staff will wear personal protective equipment (PPE), such as plastic gloves, to avoid any skin contact with food or equipment.

7.13. When carrying out cleaning duties, the designated member of staff will wear PPE equipment, such as plastic gloves, at all times.

8. Infestation and disease

8.1. All members of staff are responsible for identifying ill health of the chickens and reporting any concerns to the designated staff member, who will then contact the attending vet and inform the Principal.

8.2. A veterinary health plan will be developed in conjunction with the attending vet in order to arrange the following:

- Monthly visits and check-ups
- Any additional check-ups as required
- Treatment for prevention of external and internal parasites, including vaccinations
- Response to, and provision for, seriously ill or deceased chickens
- Any other procedures necessary for the maintenance of the chickens' health

8.3. Signs of poor health in chickens include the following:

- Hunched posture
- Raised feathers

- Head tucked under the wing
- Reluctance to move
- Hiding in corners

8.4. All members of staff will be alert to the common act of feather picking, which includes where one or more chickens peck and pull at the feathers of other chickens. All members of staff will report any instances of this to the designated member of staff immediately.

8.5. The designated member of staff, in conjunction with the attending vet, is responsible for worming the chickens and checking for any lice, red mites and green algae.

8.6. In any case of infestation or disease, appropriate treatment will be sought immediately and the chicken(s) will be moved into a separate enclosure away from the others until they are back to full health.

8.7. If the chickens are found to have any disease which is contagious to humans, the Principal will inform parents/carers immediately and the chicken(s) will be removed from the premises for appropriate treatment.

9. Injuries sustained to pupils and staff

9.1. Any injuries sustained to pupils or staff during the looking after of the chickens will be reported to the Principal immediately, and will be dealt with in accordance with the school's First Aid Policy.

9.2. All incidents will be reported using the [Chicken Incident Log](#) found in the appendix of this policy.

10. Monitoring and review

10.1. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the designated member of staff, in conjunction with the Principal, who will communicate any changes to all members of staff.

Chicken Incident Log

Date and time of incident:	Reported by:	Recorded by:	Description of incident:	Was property damaged? (Y/N)	Were pupils or staff placed in danger or harmed? (Y/N)	Recommended actions:

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