

Chebeague Island School  
School Committee Policy

Animals in School

The Chebeague Island School Committee recognizes that having animals in the classroom can offer valuable student learning experiences but the Committee is also concerned with the health and safety of students, staff and visitors and the humane treatment of animals when they are brought to school.

For the purpose of this policy “animals” includes mammals, reptiles, amphibians, birds, insects, and fish.

The presence of live animals in the school and on the school grounds during school hours must be directly related to the objectives of the instructional program. Permission must be obtained from the building principal before any animal is brought to the school by a teacher, student or any other person.

The following guidelines shall apply to the presence of animals in the Chebeague Island School:

- A. The presence of an animal in the classroom must be directly related to the instructional program. Staff who wish to have animals in the classroom must submit in writing a request to the Principal; the request should include the instructional purpose and activity, the type of animal, the length of time the animal is expected to be present, and a plan for the care of the animal. The principal, at his/her discretion, may approve or deny the request.

B. Students or parents who wish to bring animals to school for educational purposes must consult with the teacher who, in turn, will request permission from the principal. All other persons who wish to bring animals to school must obtain written permission, in advance, from the principal.

C. The Superintendent will be responsible for developing procedures to inform parents that animals may be visiting or residing in the classroom. During the school year. Parents are expected to notify the school if their child has an allergy or other health condition that will be affected by the presence of animals in the classroom.

The principal and staff will respond appropriately when health considerations are brought to their attention. An animal will not be housed in a classroom if a student in that classroom has a documented allergy to the animal.

D. Animals will NOT be transported in school vehicles.

E. No domestic mammals/pets (including dogs, cats, ferrets and primates) or livestock will be allowed in the school or on the school grounds unless current proof of rabies and/or other vaccination is provided. Smaller mammals such as mice, hamsters, gerbils, guinea pigs and rabbits do not need to be vaccinated against rabies. Bats, as they are carriers of rabies, are not allowed in schools.

- F. No wild, exotic, aggressive or poisonous animals will be allowed at school or on the school grounds unless under the control of an individual trained in the care and management of the animal and properly licensed by state or federal agencies as appropriate (e.g. zookeepers, veterinarians, biologists, Maine Fish and Wildlife personnel). Students will not be permitted to handle such animals.
  
- G. No animals will be allowed free range in the school or on the school grounds. All animals brought to school must be restrained by the owner/handler. The teacher is responsible for the proper supervision and control of students whenever there is an exhibit or activity involving animals at the school.
  
- H. Animals kept in classrooms or at the school (the look tank) must be housed in suitable cages or containers and fed and otherwise cared for properly. Only the teacher or students designated or supervised by the teacher may be allowed to handle these animals. Animal waste must be removed on an as-needed basis and in a sanitary manner by staff only.
  
- I. If a student is bitten/injured by an animal in school or on the school grounds, the principal, nurse and parents/guardians must be notified as soon as possible. If a staff member or visitor is bitten/injured, the building principal must be notified. The principal must notify appropriate public health authorities and the Maine Department of Health and Human Services Center for Disease Control for each incident. An accident/injury report must also be completed and forwarded to the Superintendent.

- J. If a stray or wild animal appears on school grounds, students shall not be allowed outside until the animal has left the premises or is removed by the animal control officer, game warden or other appropriate official.
  
- K. No animal may be used as part of a scientific experiment or for any other purpose in which the normal health of the animal is interfered with or which causes pain or distress. No person may practice vivisection or exhibit a vivisected animal in the school. Dissection of dead animals shall be confined to the classroom and to the presence of students engaged in the study of dissection and shall not be for the purpose of exhibition.
  
- L. The Chebeague School Committee recognizes that service animals may be used to assist persons with disabilities. This policy does not apply to the presence of service animals that have been or are being specifically trained for the purpose of assisting a person with a disability

Legal Reference: American with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq.)  
7 MRSA §3971, 22 MRSA §§ 801-825

Cross Reference: EB- Safety Program  
JLCE- First Aid and Emergency Medical Care

Adopted: November 12, 2019

