

TIRIMOANA SCHOOL **ANIMAL WELFARE POLICY**

RATIONALE:

The school recognises that under the Animal Protection Act 1987 it is required to have a code of ethical conduct relating to the welfare and treatment of any animals under its care.

PURPOSES:

1. To encourage through example the proper care of living things within the school.
2. To provide experiences for children to observe, handle and care for a range of animals in a humane way.
3. To ensure that the care and welfare of animals must have the highest priority in any activity involving the keeping of an animal or its study on a field trip.
4. To educate children through example and discussion on the importance of animal care and welfare and the responsibilities involved in looking after animals.

GUIDELINES:

- “Animal” is defined as any living creature with a backbone, including land-based and aquatic mammals, birds, fish and reptiles.
- It is generally accepted that other living creatures such as snails, worms and insects must also be treated with care and kindness.
- If the appropriate care cannot be provided, the animals should not be kept in school. Creatures kept in classrooms for observation must be housed and fed properly and returned to their natural habitat on completion of the study.
- Creatures captured on field trips must be returned to their habitat prior to leaving the area unless their proper care in school can be guaranteed.
- Any teacher wishing to keep any type of animal must have notified either the Principal or DP, and have read the policy.

Responsibility for the welfare of animals rests with teacher/staff member involved, but ultimately with the Principal and Board of Trustees.

The following conditions apply:

1. Animals must have appropriate food, water and housing. Provision must be made for care at weekends and holidays.
2. Animals must not be subjected to extremes of noise, draught or sunlight.
3. Animals should be free from injury or disease. Diseased or injured animals should be treated and should not be kept at school.
4. Animals must be handled/kept in such a way that they are not subjected to stress or fear.
5. Animals should be able to express normal behaviour.

Where any activity is planned which may cause distress or suffering to the animal approval must be obtained from an Animal Ethics Committee. A record must be kept of procedures followed as set out in the act (see ERO Handbook 1994 pg A72 R5). Animal Ethics Committees may be contacted through the Science Adviser or MAF.