

# Standard Operating Procedures for the use of Animals in Schools

for Independent & Catholic Schools in  
South Australia

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## Standard Operating Procedures (available separately for downloading)

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## Definitions, Acronyms and Weblinks

<i>AIEFP</i>	Animal Ethics Focus Person
<i>DAIEFP</i>	Deputy Animal Ethics Focus Person
<i>AISSA</i>	Association of Independent School of South Australia
<i>CEASA</i>	Catholic Education of South Australia
<i>DEW</i>	Department for Environment and Water
<i>NGSAEC</i>	Non-Government Schools Animal Ethics Committee
<i>The Act</i>	Animal Welfare Act 1985 and Regulations 2012
<i>The Code</i>	Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes 8 <sup>th</sup> edition (2013)

## Overview

As a result of the 2008 review of the Non-Government Schools Animal Ethics Committee (NGSAEC) by the then Department of Environment and Heritage, a new administrative procedure for the approval to keep animals at schools was introduced commencing January 2009.

As a result of the review a simpler process was implemented for schools to keep animals. Activities involving animals in schools are divided into 5 categories of which related activities are detailed from page 5. There is a 6th category of prohibited procedures. These are outlined in full in this document.

The approval process is as follows:

- Category 1: must be approved by the Principal.
- Category 2: must be approved by the Principal / Director or delegated Animal Ethics Focus Person or teacher.
- Category 3: must be approved by the Principal / Director. Cannot be delegated
- Categories 4 -5: require approval by the Animal Ethics Committee.

All staff responsible for Animals in Schools **MUST** be familiar with the [Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes 8<sup>th</sup> edition \(2013\)](#) and comply with the requirements within the code when keeping animals in schools.

## Purpose

The purpose of this manual is to assist schools to satisfy the requirements of the *The Act* and the *The Code*. These apply to all non-government schools in South Australia.

The document will help to interpret the legislation that governs the use of animals used for teaching and research. This information applies to vertebrate animals and includes mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and fish, but does not include human beings.

## Application Forms

Application forms can be downloaded from the *AISSA* or *CEASA* website or from the Executive Officer of the Non-Government Schools Animal Ethics Committee.

## Legislation

All animals in SA are protected by the *The Act*. This applies to all people in South Australia and deals with the cruel and unconscionable treatment of all animals.

*The Code* from the Australian National Health and Medical Research Council Australian Research Council website details the care and use of animals for scientific and teaching purposes.

Teachers using animals in school must be familiar with the *The Code*, in particular, Section 4.

## Licensing

Each school that wishes to keep animals for teaching purposes must be covered by a *Teaching, Research and Experimentation* licence. The licence number must be included on applications submitted to the NGSaec when applying to keep animals in schools.

Schools that are members of the A/SSA will need to apply directly to the DEW using this link [CLICK HERE](#).

All Catholic schools are covered by the licence held by the CESA office.

It is important that teachers who use animals in schools keep abreast of the ongoing ethical debate and community expectations about the use of animals in research and teaching and the consequent changes that occur from time to time in the relevant legislation.

Teachers need to understand that even normal husbandry activities are covered by *The Act* when they are carried out for the purpose of demonstrating or teaching techniques or as part of a research project even though many of these activities differ little from normal procedures conducted in commercial livestock enterprises or in the routine care of a household pet.

Because the most common use of animals in schools is for teaching and demonstration rather than research, schools have been recognised as a special case under the legislation. Teachers in schools have special privileges relating to the use of animals for teaching and research provided that they are applied for in accordance with these procedures. This underpins the system of *Approved Activities* that teachers must adhere to.

## Non-Government Schools Animal Ethics Committee (NGSAEC)

*The Act* requires that the use of animals in teaching or research is supervised by an Animal Ethics Committee. The NGSaec was specifically set up to supervise the use of animals in non-government schools. Its role is to:

- interpret *The Act*
- prepare and publish a list of approved activities involving the use of animals
- consider applications for *category 4 and 5 activities* and those activities which are not listed in the guidelines
- monitor the use of animals in schools to ensure that it complies with the relevant legislation
- investigate complaints involving animals
- report to the appropriate school sector authorities
- perform other functions as described in its terms of reference.

### ***Who are the members of the NGSaec?***

*The Code* determines the membership of animal ethics committees and the AEC is comprised of a minimum of the following:

- The A/SSA and CESA share the management of the committee on a rotational basis bi-annually. A nominee from a senior position will be the Chair of the committee and a nominee from an administrative position will be the Executive Officer.
- Two persons with recognised qualifications in Veterinary Science with experience involving animals commonly found in schools. These people should be nominated by an approved professional association of veterinarians or 'like body' (Category A).
- Two persons actively involved in animal use for teaching. These people should be nominated by an approved professional association of teachers or 'like body' (Category B).
- At least two people with demonstrable commitment to, and established experience in, furthering the welfare of animals, who are not employed by or otherwise associated with the institution, and who are not involved in the care and use of animals for scientific purposes. These people should where possible be selected on the basis of membership of, and nomination by, an animal welfare organisation or 'like body' (Category C).
- Two independent members who do not currently and have not previously conducted scientific or teaching activities using animals, and who are not employees of the institution, except under defined circumstances (Category D).

The NGSaec may co-opt any other person, as required, to complete the work of the committee.

### ***NGSAEC meetings***

The committee meets at least four (4) times per year. Discussions at these meetings include matters such as:

- correspondence
- applications from teachers seeking approval to allow students to carry out category 4 activities
- applications from teachers seeking approval to demonstrate category 5 activities
- applications from teachers seeking approval to carry out activities that are not listed in the guidelines
- school visits
- complaints and incidents
- curriculum issues involving the use of animals
- resources available for use by teachers.

### ***School visits***

One of the roles of the *NGSAEC* is to monitor the use of animals in schools to ensure compliance with the relevant legislation. The *NGSAEC* does this by selecting at least one school per year to visit. Generally three *NGSAEC* members are involved in each visit.

### ***SA AEC Annual Report***

*The Code* requires every animal ethics committee to prepare an annual report detailing the Category 4 and 5 activities that schools have been involved with.

## **Responsibilities**

### ***The School***

Once the school has a current, *Teaching, Research and Experimentation* licence it then has the responsibility to ensure the provision of:

- adequate resources and facilities for the appropriate care and welfare of the animals
- adequate security to ensure the safety of the animals, including during weekends and school holidays
- a plan for handling emergency situations, including bushfire, flood, drought and vandalism, based on a current risk assessment related to the animals in the school's care

### ***The Principal***

The Principal is responsible for:

- ensuring compliance with all relevant legislation and the advice, standards and guidelines provided on the *AISSA* & *CESA* websites
- ensuring that all relevant documentation under *The Act* is maintained and available for inspection by duly authorised people
- appointing an Animal Ethics Focus Person. In primary schools, the Principal can be this person.
- ensuring that adequate resources are provided to maintain in good repair the facilities for handling and holding animals and to ensure that the needs of animals can be met
- ensuring that the *NGSAEC* is advised when animal-related incidents occur by completing and Adverse Events form for submission to the committee.
- resolving grievances regarding the use of animals in his or her school.

### ***The Animal Ethics Focus Person (AEFP)***

For each School there is to be an *AEFP*. The *AEFP* can be the Principal of the school if a primary school. The *AEFP* in a secondary school is to be appointed for the school by the Principal. The duties of the *AEFP* include:

- promoting awareness of the requirements of *The Act* and *The Code*, other relevant legislation and the advice, standards and guidelines provided on the *AISSA* and *CESA* websites
- monitoring school programs to ensure that activities that use animals have *NGSAEC* approval where appropriate
- monitoring animal use at the school to ensure compliance with the guidelines or the terms of *NGSAEC* approval
- ensuring that the school maintains appropriate records relating to the use of animals.
- liaising with the *NGSAEC*, other teachers approved by the principal to use animals in the school, and the Principal (in secondary schools)
- making submissions on behalf of teachers to the *NGSAEC* for approval to conduct activities outside the guidelines

- promoting, among teachers and students involved in the use of animals, discussion of the ethical issues of using animals and the evolving community expectations about the use of animals in research and teaching.

### ***The Teacher***

The teacher is responsible for the decision to use animals to achieve educational objectives. When animals are used, the teacher is responsible at all times for the care and use of the animals by:

- ensuring that the care and use of animals are in accordance with all relevant legislation and the advice, standards and guidelines provided on the *AISSA* and *CESA* websites
- having an appropriate depth of understanding of the physical, behavioural and social needs of any species used
- instructing students in their legal responsibilities and providing them with opportunities to explore the ethical and social issues involved in the use of animals
- providing instruction and ensuring students have the appropriate level of competency to perform approved activities
- identifying and incorporating methods which may replace, reduce or refine the use of animals in schools
- obtaining written approval from the *NGSAEC* prior to commencement for any activities using animals for which approval is required. Applications are available from the *AISSA* and *CESA* websites.
- maintaining appropriate records as required by the *The Code* and *The Act*.
- carrying out close and competent supervision of students when they are engaged in tasks
- ensuring that parents have provided an appropriate written undertaking to care adequately for any animals that students may take home
- ensuring that appropriate monitoring of the animals occurs at all times (including during weekends and holidays)
- taking immediate steps to alleviate any pain, distress or illness in any animal
- disposing of animals appropriately.

### ***The student***

Students are required to treat animals with respect and consider their welfare at all times. Students should be given opportunities to exercise responsible care and use of animals. Students should:

- care for and use animals in accordance with instructions from responsible teachers
- obtain a written undertaking from the parent or caregiver that the animal will be adequately cared for if the student takes the animal home
- comply with legislation relating to the care and use of animals for scientific purposes
- actively consider ethical and community values and expectations as well as legislative requirements for the care and use of animals.

## Approved Activities and their respective Categories

Any activities that a teacher may wish to carry out with animals for educational purposes (including demonstration or student participation) that are not included in this list MUST be submitted to the NGSAC on the application form prior to the activity being carried out.

## Prohibited Activities

The following procedures may not be undertaken in schools unless done by a veterinarian.

- Pregnancy detection by rectal palpation.
- The surgical opening of any body cavity (e.g. cattle spaying)
- Performance of surgical procedures without anaesthesia.

The activities set out below may not be carried out by students or demonstrated to them:

- Induction of infectious diseases.
- Nutritional deficiencies.
- Administration of drugs or chemicals other than those recommended for a particular therapeutic purpose.
- Administration of ionising-radiation or other biohazardous material
- Activities, other than approved activities, giving rise to distress.
- Imprinting e.g. simulated parenting.
- Animals used as prizes for raffles.
- Caustic debudding
- Removal of pouch young marsupials for the purposes of hand-rearing (unless the mother is incapable of rearing the joey)
- Breeding animals solely for the purpose of dissection
- Killing animals other than emergency euthanasia. This does not prohibit sending animals to a slaughter house or market.
- No killing of animals by students.
- Fire branding horns of stud sheep.
- Fire branding of cattle and horses.
- Mulesing of sheep, and
- Performance of surgical procedures without anaesthesia, other than in the conduct of normal animal husbandry operations

## Category 1

### ***Approval level***

Approval by the School Principal is required. The activity is undertaken in accordance with a Standard Operating Procedure endorsed by the NGSAC. If there is any change to the Standard Operating Procedure approval is required by the NGSAC. These types of activities mainly encompass animals that are on loan, excursions or animals under the control of their owner.

### ***Student interaction, training or responsibility***

None. The animals are only observed by students. The animals are not owned by the school and the students do not feed, handle or in any way interact with them. The teacher or the owner is responsible for all husbandry and care.

### ***Reporting to the Animal Ethics Committee and statistics***

None. These animals are not included in the statistics of animals used for research and teaching.

### ***Activities included in this category***

Category 1 activities are purely observational

- Observation of animal behaviour
- Observation of pets under the control of their owner. This includes "Show & Tell"
- Excursions to observe animals in their natural surroundings or to zoos or wildlife parks
- Excursions to farms for observation of animal behaviour and husbandry activities, appropriate to the age, prior experience and maturity of the students

## Category 2

### *Approval level*

Approval by the School Principal if the activity is undertaken in accordance with a Standard Operating Procedure endorsed by the NGSaec. The Principal **may delegate** the ability to approve to the Animal Ethics Focus Person, a senior biology teacher or other suitably qualified staff member.

### *Student interaction, training or responsibility*

Students may participate in the routine care of the animal (e.g. feeding, cleaning etc) if they are trained before doing so.

### *Reporting to the Animal Ethics Committee and statistics*

At the end of each year, the school must advise the NGSaec of the number of Category 2 animals used are included in the statistics of animals used for teaching. (The Nature Education Centre is not included in the statistics because data is provided directly to the Department for Education and Child Development (DECD)).

### *Activities included in this category*

- Mustering, drafting (in crush or bailhead), capture, restraint and handling of non-free-living domesticated animals (grooming or holding an animal, collecting a milk sample, non-invasive measurements, leading or riding an appropriately trained animal).
- Observation of particular animal behaviours, e.g. oestrus, parturition
- School performance by outside agencies that have animals as part of their exhibits
- Organisations bringing animals to school (such as Delta Society programs, RSPCA or PetPep).
- Breeding of mice or other appropriate animal in the classroom.
- The appropriate care of classroom pets.
- Non-invasive measurement of body weight, body condition by visual assessment or condition scoring, growth, body proportions, pulse or blood flow, respiration, skin temperature (non-invasive), age by dentition, scrotum and testicles (palpation).
- Egg hatching programs e.g. Living Eggs.
- Familiarisation activities.
- Administering water as a treatment.
- Collection of wool, milk, faeces or urine samples (non-invasive).
- Administering a topical treatment to the udder.
- Coat care and grooming.
- Tail tagging.
- Animals on loan from the Nature Education Centre.

## Category 3

### *Approval level*

Approval by the School Principal if the activity is undertaken in accordance with a Standard Operating Procedure endorsed by the NGSAC. The Principal **may not** delegate the ability to approve to another staff member.

### *Student interaction, training or responsibility*

Students may participate in the routine care of the animal (e.g. feeding, cleaning etc) if they are trained before doing so and may have a level of responsibility for the maintenance and welfare of the animal.

### *Reporting to the Animal Ethics Committee and statistics*

At the end of each year, the school must advise the NGSAC of the number of Category 3 animals used are included in the statistics of animals used for research and teaching.

### *Activities included in this category*

Category 3 comprises many routine techniques but none which require the breaking of skin or any blood loss (e.g. blood samples, ear tagging etc).

- Non-invasive measurement of body condition by ultrasound
- Measurement of mild dietary effects (provided the normal nutritional needs for the life stage of the animals are met), high/normal protein, high/normal energy, high/normal fat, palatability
- Taming/gentling.
- Training for competition or showing.
- Tethering animals.
- Collection of saliva.
- Measurement of body temperature (invasive).
- Administering topical treatment by backline, spray or dip.
- Administering drench or capsules orally.
- Coat clipping.
- Hoof paring: sheep and goats.
- Hoof trimming: cattle.
- Shearing of sheep and goats.
- Dagging
- Milking
- Putting nose clips on cattle.
- Loading and unloading animals onto transporters.
- Showing animals at school and away.
- Foot bathing.
- Flystrike treatment.
- Jetting animals.
- Using sire harnesses.
- Restraining with ropes.
- Pregnancy detection by external ultrasound.
- Horn tipping.

## Category 4

### ***Approval level***

Approval by the NGSAC using a standard application form approved by the NGSAC for the procedure. The application will also require notification (but not approval) of any category 2 or 3 procedures being done in conjunction with the application. The NGSAC has provided a standard application form. If the proposal does not abide by the parameters a new application must be completed.

### ***Student interaction, training or responsibility***

Students may participate in these activities if they are trained before doing so and may have a level of responsibility for the maintenance and welfare of the animal.

### ***Reporting to the Animal Ethics Committee and statistics***

At the end of each year, the school must advise the NGSAC of the number of Category 4 animals used are included in the statistics of animals used for research and teaching.

### ***Activities included in this category***

Category 4 comprises many routine husbandry techniques which have the potential to be painful or distressing to the animal.

- Breaking-in cattle or horses.
- Administering intraruminal, subcutaneous or intramuscular injections.
- Administering winged capsules orally.
- Administering intravenous injections or intrauterine pessaries.
- Ear marking/tagging of livestock.
- Tattoo application.
- Shearing of alpacas and llamas. Should this be removed?
- Crutching.
- Castration of lambs
- Castration of calves
- Tail docking of lambs
- Tail docking of piglets
- Tooth trimming/removal in piglets.
- Beak trimming.
- Oestrus synchronisation.
- Microchip tagging.
- Dehorning cattle under six months of age.
- Detusking boars.
- Disbudding calves and kids.
- Aquaculture and related enterprises
- Commercial activities(for example growing turkeys for commercial sale)
- Collecting and observing frog spawn and tadpoles (refer to Additional Information section)

## Category 5

### ***Approval level***

Approval by the NGSaec using an application form specifically prepared by the application for NGSaec approval of the procedure. The application will also require notification (but not approval) of any category 2 or 3 procedures being done in conjunction with the application.

### ***Student interaction, training or responsibility***

Students may participate in these activities if they are trained before doing so and may have a level of responsibility for the maintenance and welfare of the animal.

### ***Reporting to the Animal Ethics Committee and statistics***

At the end of each year, the school must advise the NGSaec of the number of Category 5 animals used are included in the statistics of animals used for research and teaching.

### ***Activities included in this category***

Category 5 comprises many husbandry techniques which have the potential to be painful or distressing to the animal and require a level of expertise or supervision to ensure that adverse events do not occur.

- Collection of faeces, ruminal fluid or blood (invasive).
- Nose ringing.
- Freeze branding of cattle and horses.
- Artificial insemination.
- Semen collection.

## **Additional Information**

- A staff member may euthanize any animal in an emergency situation (e.g. dog attack of a sheep or a kangaroo with a broken leg) if the staff member has the skills and appropriate equipment to do so in a humane manner using an approved method. If at all avoidable, students must not be present when the animal is killed. The euthanasia and reasons for it must be reported to the Principal and to the NGSaec.
- All activities must be in compliance with relevant Livestock Codes of Practice and Standards and Guidelines
- Approvals given by the Principal or the Animal Ethics Committee may be subject to any conditions set down in the approval.

## Guidelines for schools collecting frogs/tadpoles

Schools should not be taking frogs/tadpoles if they are not 100% sure about the ID. Taking of protected species is prohibited.

The eight species of frog now protected in South Australia under the National Parks and Wildlife Act are:

- Golden Bell Frog - *Litoria raniformis*
- Shoemaker Frog - *Neobatrachus sutor*
- Orange-crowned Toadlet - *Pseudophryne occidentalis*
- Marbled Toadlet - *Pseudophryne semimarmorata*
- Knife-footed Frog - *Cyclorana cultripes*
- Smooth Frog - *Geocrinia laevis*
- Brown Toadlet - *Pseudophryne bibroni*
- Small-headed Toadlet - *Uperoleia capitulate*

Frogs/tadpoles taken from any water ways must be returned to the same site. Frogs/tadpoles taken must be kept in isolation during their life in captivity. This includes from students who may have frogs and fish at home. Schools should be following environmental guidelines, not just for Chytrid but also other factors such as Phytophthora. Students need to be informed about the legal issues of 'taking' from the wild.

### ***Minimum hygiene requirements for the collection, observation and temporary housing of tadpoles in schools***

All contact equipment, including the housing tank, tank furniture, filtration equipment, water containers, food dishes, collection nets must be sterilised prior to use. It is recommended that this equipment is cleaned with a dilute bleach solution (5%), rinsed and sun dried for a period of 5 days, prior to use and between uses.

1. The collection of tadpoles is to be undertaken by the class teacher either with or without student participation. If multiple classes are interested in the activity it is strongly recommended that a single collection event be organized.
2. Students must not be encouraged or asked to collect tadpoles and bring them to school.
3. Collection is to be made from a single site only, e.g. one pond/creek/dam. Under no circumstances may tadpoles be collected from multiple locations or from National Parks.
4. On metamorphoses, frogs are to be returned to the exact point of collection. Frogs are not to be distributed to students, staff or other parties but are to be released at the point of capture.
5. At the completion of the activity all contact equipment, including the housing tank, tank furniture, filtration equipment, water containers, food dishes, collection nets must be sterilised. It is recommended that this equipment is cleaned with a dilute bleach solution (5%), rinsed and sun dried for a period of 5 days.

It is important that teachers not only carry out this procedure carefully but explain to students its significance.

## Dissection of Animals

All requests for dissection of animals require approval from the Animal Ethics Committee. No dissections should take place without prior approval. Application for Dissection is available on the AISSA and CESA websites.

## Adverse Events

If there is an unexpected / adverse incident involving any animals at a school they must be reported to the NGAEC immediately on the appropriate form (Appendix 6). An adverse event is something that is UNEXPECTED e.g. marking of lambs has an adverse affect on the lamb but it is expected and an Adverse Event form is not required to be completed. Death of an animal as a result of infection, vandalism, accident etc is an Adverse Event and MUST be reported to the NGAEC.

## Animal Donations to Schools

It is important that animals used in schools and early childhood settings are healthy and free from disease. This applies to those animals, which are donated to schools, or those on a short or long-term loan.

Animals can come from a variety of sources – pet shops, breeders, aquarium shops, licensed traders, auctions, and family or community donations. Animals can be purchased, donated or loaned.

School staff need to ensure any animals kept at their school are inspected and appear normal in appearance and behaviour, healthy, free from disease and are non-poisonous. Check their movement, coat, skin, feathers or scales, overall body tone and condition, and alertness. Ensure they do not present with mite or lice infestations, ears, nose and eyes are clear and respiration seems normal. If unclear what is normal behaviour check the relevant Standard Operating procedure for the species.

To protect both staff and students/children it is **highly recommended that before accepting an animal, it is checked by a veterinarian**. This recommendation does not apply to animals on loan from the Nature Education Centre.

In addition, students/children may bring injured animals to school or early childhood setting, but these schools are not an appropriate setting for the rehabilitation of such animals, especially as they may also carry a disease. Assistance can be obtained through the RSPCA or National Parks and Wildlife Service who will refer you to the nearest wildlife carer.

## Emergencies

Fire evacuation, Flooding, Theft, Vandalism, Power Failures, Severe Storms have the potential to stress, injure or kill animals.

Schools must give due consideration to the housing and security of animals in its care as part of its approval process but emergency plans should also be in place.

Animals need to be protected as much as possible from deliberate acts of harm and unexpected circumstances (see Security below).

The school needs to consider the risk involved and determine possible solutions. Responses will need to consider the type and number of animals, their location, transport needs, cost and practicalities of the solution etc.

For example:

- Theft; locked and secured housing, buildings, sheds.
- Fire; appropriate fire fighting equipment, shed sprinkler systems.
- Vandalism; monitored alarms systems, secured housing.
- Power failures; back up generators, more frequent cleaning of aquariums to avoid fouling.
- Severe Storms; moving animals indoors, into sheds or shelters.

Where injury to or the death of individual or large numbers of animals occurs consideration should also be given to how the school will handle informing children, staff, and families. Sensitivity to a wide range of responses is necessary.

The school will need to report the incident of any injuries and deaths to the Animal Ethics Committee on the *Adverse Events* form.

Any injury to animals must be treated immediately or as soon as possible to reduce further stress and harm to the animal. Where treatment falls outside the capacity of staff a veterinarian should be contacted and where the injury is severe and chance of recovery unlikely the correct procedures for euthanasia must be followed. Disposal of any dead animals must comply with the Standard Operating Procedure recommendations and local Council requirements.

Following any such emergency the school should undertake a risk assessment and address any matters possible before seeking approval to obtain further animals.

## Security

The security of animals is an issue that schools must address in order to apply for approval to keep a species and for their ongoing safety and wellbeing.

There have been a number of instances of theft, injury and death to animals because schools have not taken appropriate security steps.

All indoor-housed animals should have; protection from unauthorised access by children or others, protection from likely predators, locks where applicable and covers/cages to prevent escape and should be located in buildings that are locked and have security systems and procedures in place.

All outdoor-housed animals should have; fully enclosed housing to protect them from predators, children and others, and to prevent escaping, locks fitted to cages and hutches and should have protection from the elements.

All outdoor paddock animals should have; secure and appropriate height fencing, fencing in good repair, shutting and securing/locking access gates as applicable.

Regular checks during school open times and during any closure periods are essential to ensure the well being and safety of animals at the school.

## Holiday and Weekend Care

Animals will need to be cared for appropriately during vacation periods. **All animals MUST be tendered to daily.**

### *Animals cared for on-site*

Proper provision must be made for the care of all animals during the weekends and especially during longer holidays. Where students/children are given responsibility for care and feeding during these times, adult supervision should be provided on a regular basis to ensure that the animals are well cared for. In addition, casual employees such as cleaners, ground persons and caretakers should be asked to check the animals' well-being over vacation periods and should be provided with contact telephone numbers for emergencies and copies of applicable SOPs. Conditions of management and feeding should be uniformly suitable.

It is desirable that there should be adequate technical assistance to maintain the entire stock of animals at all times. Written instructions on maintenance procedures and on the proper use of equipment to any person who may be responsible for looking after animals in schools during weekends and holiday periods must be provided.

### *Animals cared for off-site*

If maintaining this level of on-site care is difficult, it may be appropriate to house animals off-site during vacation periods, eg in students'/children's homes under adult supervision. The following should be attended to in this case:

- Notification in writing from parents/care-givers that they are willing to accept responsibility for the care of the animal(s).
- The provision of food and water consistent with the animal(s) regular diet.
- Animal housing similar to that supplied on-site.
- An understanding of the needs/issues pertaining to the species being cared for.
- All living organisms, particularly birds and mammals, which have been 'boarded out' must, on their return to the school, be subject to a period of quarantine and observation to ensure that they are in good health.
- Formal arrangements regarding veterinary attention must be provided to the personnel caring for the animal(s) during holiday periods. School could notify veterinarian that animals have been placed with carers.