

Guinea Pig Risk Assessment – St Bart’s C of E Primary School

What are the hazards?	Who may be harmed and how?	What are we doing to minimise risk?	Review June 2023
Scratches, bites, nips etc.	Guinea Pigs: being dropped Children & adults: being bitten, skin broken, bleeding	Children taught how to safely hold and look after Guinea pigs to limit animals becoming stressed. Adults will ensure that Guinea pigs are calm before being picked up. If guinea pigs are being carried from one location to another over a distance, they should be transferred into a small box to ensure their safety. Scratches, nips and biting cannot be avoided altogether. Appropriate first aid precautions and training in place. Children only allowed to handle any animal under staff supervision. Children warned not to put fingers through bars. Guinea Pigs selected for their calm temperament.	
Safety and care of animals	Guinea Gigs: being harmed, unclean environment, not enough access to food and water	Children to understand high expectations regarding their behaviour around the guinea pigs. The Lead Pets in School person will check the guinea pigs daily for signs of stress or illness: weight loss, hiding/isolating from the other guinea pig and the children, seems overly nervous,	

		<p>sleeping more than normal, hair loss, poor appetite.</p> <p>The Lead Pets in School person will lead the cleaning and care (food, water, grooming) of the Guinea Pigs.</p> <p>Signs of good health: agile, clear and bright eyes, clean nose, clean ears, fur is clean and matt free, nails are a good length, feet should not be sore, teeth should a good length, good appetite, interacting with children and the other guinea pig, alert, squeaks, whistles, wheeks, popcorning and purring.</p> <p>If any of the following are noticed a vet will be consulted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• any sudden change in behaviour or habits (vocalizing more or less, scratching, licking, etc.)• any change in eating or drinking (ingesting either more or less, refusing favourite foods, etc.)• any change in appearance (loss of fur, swollen areas, squinty eyes, flaky skin, etc.)• any unusual discharge from the body (runny nose or eyes, odd urine, bleeding, etc.)• any change in movement (limping, unwillingness to move, etc.)• any change in urination or faeces <p>The Guinea Pigs will stay in school overnight. During weekends and school holidays, a member of staff or carefully selected parent will take them home.</p>	
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Allergic reactions	Children and staff handling them	<p>Children's parents or carers sign a consent form for the school pets during induction. This will allow parents to indicate whether they give consent for their child to be in contact with the guinea pigs.</p> <p>Any allergies are also highlighted during children's induction, which should alert us to allergies to pets.</p> <p>Children known to have allergic reactions to specific animals will have restricted access to those that may trigger a response.</p> <p>When handling pets, children will be under direct supervision.</p> <p>Children will not consume food or drink.</p> <p>Children will wash their hands with soap and water before and directly after handling the guinea pigs.</p>	
Fear	Guinea pigs: stressed, being dropped Children and adults: stressed, scared.	<p>Children will be given a choice in whether they want to hold the Guinea Pigs.</p> <p>The Guinea Pigs will be introduced slowly to the children.</p>	