

## Working With Animals Policy

The Green Room Foundation is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Owner: DH(BT)/KGM/SJ

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February 2018	February 2019	February 2019	2	February 2020
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### Introduction

This document is designed to ensure and encourage a consistently high standard of work amongst all staff and students at GRK when working with the animals. This information is intended to allow continuity of care in the animal department at GRK.

Please report to the Animals Tutor (Sophie Jackson) with any issues when working in the Animal department. In their absence, please report to the Head of GRK.

### Staff & Student Safety

Staff must read all risk assessments, as well as this document before starting to work with the animals.

Pupils must be made aware of the areas of policy that affect them.

Some jobs and tasks at GRK require specialist P.P.E, for example always wearing overalls when working with animals. These are detailed in the risk assessments and it is each member of staff's responsibility to ensure these are adhered to. Information read, where relevant, should be passed onto pupils/ volunteers/ work experience staff. Pupils are never left alone to work with animals, one member of staff at least is always present.

### First Aid

All first aid incidents, as a result of animal contact, should be recorded using an Accident Report Form. This can be filled in by any member of staff. First aid treatment should only be provided by trained first aid staff. Using any item from a first aid box requires an accident report form to be filled out. First aid boxes should be checked monthly by first aid trained and refilled when necessary. (See First Aid Policy)

## Lone Working

If any staff are working alone for a period of time, then they should 'check in' with other members of staff using GRK google chat group the following:

- When you arrive: send a message: I'm here
- After each hour: send a thumbs up emoji to show everything ok
- When you leave: send a message: I've left

If contact hasn't been reached with a lone worker then staff should endeavour to reach contact to confirm their safety. Please make sure all staff have a working radio that is checked and switched on at the beginning of every working day.

## Uniform & PPE

Staff members and pupils are provided with a uniform/PPE by GRK which must be worn when working with animals. This includes;

- Overalls
- Gloves
- Steel toe-capped boots
- Goggles

In quarantine areas staff are encouraged to observe quarantine procedures and be aware of site cross contamination that can occur from one enclosure to another or from an animal area to a classroom area.

Staff may wear hats and scarves etc. in cold weather; however they must be plain and have no tassels, bobbles or parts that may potentially fall off. Hair must be tied back if longer than shoulder length.

The only jewellery allowed when working with animals is:

Wedding bands / engagement rings.

Medical alert bracelet / necklace

Small ear studs.

A watch

## Staff Radios

All permanent staff will be allocated a numbered radio which will be theirs to use on a daily basis. All radios should be picked up on arrival by staff and put back in the office on charge overnight.

Radios must be used in a responsible manner. Radio transmissions must be kept to a minimum and conversations should be kept short and professional using only polite language. Under no circumstances should any form of swearing be conveyed over the radio or access given to those not employed at GRK.

## Staff Keys

Each staff member is given a set of keys which will access various areas of the school. Each staff member is responsible for their set of keys and under no circumstance should these keys be given to pupils (due to the risk of pupils gaining access to controlled areas). All staff must ensure doors to offices and classrooms are locked when not in use and lights and equipment are turned off.

Various keys are kept in the office which all staff can access, however pupils must not be given any of these keys. Pupils may only use standard enclosure keys as long as they are being supervised (dependent upon behaviour and competency).

All animal enclosures should be kept locked at all times, unless staff/pupils are directly working in there. As soon as all persons exit an enclosure (even for a short time) then it must be locked upon exit. It is the staff member who was leading work to ensure all enclosures are locked at the end of a work session, but all staff must do a final enclosure shut/lock check at the end of each day.

## Daily Duties and Expectations

All staff and pupils have the responsibility of ensuring that all the animals under their care receive the highest standards of husbandry possible. Management will clarify specific expectations, but general tasks include (but not limited to) a morning and shut down head check, feeding, cleaning, providing medication, keeping accurate records, enclosure checks and maintaining equipment.

Once duties are complete all PPE is taken off in the cabin before returning to indoor lessons. Staff and pupils wash hands before going back inside and any PPE that needs to be washed is placed in the wash basket.

It is expected that the animal manager will keep animals up to date with their required vaccinations and ensure any regular medication needed is bought in correct quantities at the correct time for the animals. The animal manager will ensure electronic record keeping systems are up to date

A daily briefing must be attended by all staff (unless unable to attend for a suitable reason) every weekday at 9am so all staff can be made aware of any animal issues.

## Animal Welfare at GRK

GRK follow the five principles below, which are based on the “Five Freedoms drawn up for livestock by the Farm Animal Welfare Committee.

### 1. Provision of food and water

Both food and water are basic needs. The method of food presentation, the frequency of feeds and the nutritional balance must be taken into account. Food should be presented in a manner and frequency commensurate with the natural behaviour of the species, as well as its nutritional requirements, which may vary according to season.

### 2. Provision of a suitable environment

An environment consistent with species requirements must be provided. This should include shade and shelter from rain, heat and cold as appropriate.

### 3. Provision of animal healthcare

Injury: The provision of an enclosure designed to minimise the risk of injury is required. The design should allow animals to get away from each other. In mixed species exhibits, care should be taken that one species cannot injure another. Enclosures should be designed to minimise the risk of predators entering the exhibit.

Disease: curative and preventive veterinary medicine should be provided. Every effort must be made to provide a correct diet and suitably hygienic environment from which pathogens are excluded or controlled.

#### 4. Provision of an opportunity to express most normal behaviour

Animals should be allowed the opportunity to express most normal behaviour, taking into account current enrichment and husbandry guidelines.

#### 5. Provision of protection from fear and distress

Particular areas to look at are: group composition, sex ratios and numbers of animals in an enclosure and space and furniture in both indoor and outdoor areas.

Enclosure design should provide areas of escape from other animals and people. Animals often benefit from mixed species environments. However, interspecies conflict can cause stress and this needs to be monitored, recorded and reviewed, including safety from potential predators.

Specific husbandry guidelines on the current GRK species are found in the lab in the red folder.

## Signs

GRK has suitable warning signs and information provided where animals and visitors may come into contact. Hand washing signs are especially evident.

An adequate number of safety signs (in accordance with British Standards BS 5378 (or any future amendments) and, where appropriate, the Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996 (or any future amendments)), giving warning of the hazard either by symbol or a combination of symbol and words, should be provided on any electrified fence.

Any buildings where a hazard exists are kept locked. Warning notices are displayed to indicate that access is either unsafe or not permitted.

Other areas should be clearly defined, e.g. by means of barriers and warning notices; or, where access is allowed to vehicles operated by staff, by notices and road markings.

Symbol-based signs used wherever practicable to assist. Safety signs on any electrified section of perimeter fence should face both outwards and inwards.

## Euthanasia

Euthanasia is justifiable if, in the opinion of a vet, an animal is suffering from an incurable disease, or severe pain or suffering which cannot be alleviated. The animal manager will make the decision after taking the vets opinion and holding an ethics meeting with staff.

## Working with Animals

There are a number of hazards associated with working with any animals, for example:

- Zoonoses (diseases transmitted from animals to humans);
- Cuts, Bites, Kicks, Being knocked over

It should also be noted that individuals and groups of animals may have peculiarities which, depending on their age and sexual maturity, will be relevant in determining the safety of close-contact working. The animal manager will make this decision and inform other staff and students appropriately.

Categorisation of animals according to ability to cause harm to people in proportion to risk levels are shown below:

**GRK category 2 species:** Donkeys, Horses, Goats, Pigs, Ducks, Geese, Ferrets, Sheep, Pony

**GRK category 3 species:** Rabbits, Chickens, Mountain Horned Dragons Harvest Mice, Dumbo Rats

Giant African Land Snails, Madagascan Hissing Cockroaches, Stick Insects

Contact may be allowed between Category 2 and 3 animals and staff/pupils, so long as:

- There is adequate training and supervision;
- There is full awareness of zoonoses (implications and necessary controls);
- The peculiarities of individual animals are assessed.

At GRK the decision to allow 'hands on' contact must not be left to individuals' own personal preferences, but is part of a very clear organisational policy, with absolute limitations and controls.

GRK allows contact with its animals for pupils and staff from considering the following aspects:

- Awareness, training, and general suitability of the relevant employees;
- The age, size, demeanour and character of individual animals at the time any permitted contact commences;
- The potential for hierarchical challenges that could affect the safety of such contact;
- The need to establish and demonstrate an acceptable relationship between the animal and staff/pupil;
- Staff/animal ratios during contact;
- The provision of personal protective equipment;
- The need for supervision and control,

## Zoonoses

Animals have the potential to transmit diseases to humans. These diseases are known as zoonoses. Even where the animals appear disease-free, their health status at GRK is established by regular veterinary examination to identify latent infection or carriers, i.e. infected animals showing no symptoms. In the normal course of their work, staff and pupils are likely to be exposed to a variety of zoonotic infections.

Special precautions are taken to reduce the risk of staff, pupils and volunteers being infected. Such precautions include being able to isolate sick or suspect animals and the policy of wearing PPE during animal duties and hand washing once finishing work with animals.

Zoonoses are biological agents. This term is defined in the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH) (as amended) as 'micro-organisms which may cause infection or otherwise create a hazard to human health'. These Regulations require GRK to carry out an assessment of the health risks from all hazardous substances, including biological agents, in order to protect staff, pupils and volunteers. The specific diseases, caused by biological agents, which must be reported (RIDDOR) include:

- Anthrax;
- Brucellosis;
- Avian and ovine chlamydiosis (psittacosis);
- Leptospirosis;
- Rabies;
- Tuberculosis;
- Any other infection reliably attributable to work with animals or any potentially infected animal material.

Risk of infection may come from animal tissue, faeces, body fluids, bedding etc, and each source must be covered in risk assessments. Risk assessments include:

- The biological agent that may be present;
- What form it takes;
- The diseases it may cause;
- How it is transmitted;
- The likelihood of exposure and consequent disease, including the identification of workers who may be particularly susceptible, eg pregnant women and individuals who are immunocompromised;
- The control measures to be applied;
- The provision of information to employees and the use of medical contact cards;
- The need for monitoring procedures including health surveillance.

To reduce the risk of zoonotic infections, GRK use good animal husbandry techniques which include:

- Maintaining good standards of hygiene in animal enclosures and exercising care in the use of water hoses during cleaning, so as to reduce aerosols;
- Avoiding contamination of animal drinking water with faeces; regular animal health checks by a veterinary surgeon including worming, skin treatment programmes and vaccination;
- Disposing of animal waste correctly;
- Providing and monitoring the use of appropriate personal protective equipment
- Encouraging and following the highest standards of personal hygiene.
- The provision of adequate washing facilities, including running hot and cold or warm water, soap and paper towels wherever employees work with animals;
- Ensuring that cuts and abrasions are washed immediately with soap and running hot water (antiseptics should only be used by a trained first-aider);
- Ensuring that any existing cuts, abrasions and open sores are covered with a waterproof dressing before starting work;
- Ensuring that staff and pupils wash their hands regularly and especially before and after they eat, drink or use the toilet;
- Ensuring employees eat only in designated clean areas;
- Keep hands away from the face, in particular the mouth, nose and eyes;
- Avoid tasting food intended for animals;
- Training staff and pupils to recognise zoonotic infection risks as well as the necessary control measures;
- Ensuring that employees clean or change footwear and overalls before leaving animal areas, disinfect footwear if necessary and wash their hands after handling contaminated clothing.
- When an animal has died at GRK, care should be taken in handling the body. Any post-mortem examination and disposal of remains must follow agreed safe procedures. The Animal Manager would take it to the vet for post mortem where they would dispose of it. If they couldn't they could recommend another vet who could. It would be a staff only job using correct PPE and no pupils would pick up the body or touch it.

PPE at GRK must be suitable for the intended use and properly maintained. It must fit properly to be effective and to ensure that other risks are not introduced. All new PPE should be CE marked as this proves conformity with European directives.

The zoonotic risks associated with working in contact with animals should be included in the ongoing training of all employees. Sufficient information should be given to enable managers and their employees to effectively contribute to the assessment and control of the risks and thereby prevent infections. This should also cover the practical use of procedures, techniques and safety equipment required to control the risk of infection.

In addition, all employees should be encouraged to report any suspicious symptoms they may have to assist with early diagnosis and infection controls. Common zoonoses are listed at the end of this document. It gives brief notes on the likely source of infection, how it is passed to humans (eg directly or indirectly) and associated symptoms of the disease. Infection can be spread by various means, eg viral, bacterial, protozoal, fungal and parasitic.

If GRK need further advice they will try one of the following:

- Contact the Employment Medical Advisory Service. They can be contacted through your local HSE office or your local authority;
- Employ an occupational health consultant;
- Obtain advice on infections and their control from your local consultant in communicable disease control (consultant in public health medicine in Scotland). You can contact them through your local health protection unit of the Health Protection Agency, or your local authority environmental health department can advise you;
- Contact veterinary surgeons, who will also be able to provide guidance on zoonotic diseases. Contact the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons;
- See the DEFRA website for information on avian flu.

Common Zoonotic Diseases: [List of zoonotic diseases](#)

## Animal Sickness Procedure

If an animal is found which needs medical attention the procedure below must be followed:

During normal office hours:

- Inform the Animals Tutor immediately. If the Animals Tutor is unavailable then contact the Head of School.
- The Animals Tutor or Head of School will then decide upon the route of action:
- Contact Vet
- Isolate animal if required
- Monitor and await instruction
- If an external veterinary practice suggests a treatment with a cost implication, then this must be estimated and further verbal approval is required from the Head of School
- Any euthanasia must be in accordance with euthanasia policy. The body must be disposed of following the correct disposal procedure.

Out-of-Hours 5pm-8am:

- Call the animal manager or Head of School
- Follow the procedure above from point 2

## Waste Management

- Recycling: Any plastics, cardboard, paper, tin or other recyclable material should be placed into the bins located on the side of the barn opposite GRK.
- Compost: All safe non-toxic animal waste can be composted on the site compost heap. This can include, straw, hay, sawdust and animal waste
- Clinical Waste: All items from Veterinary related equipment should be put into clinical waste bags and securely fastened (i.e. with a cable tie) and be professionally collected by an external company for incineration.

- Hazardous Chemical waste: Any chemicals that require professional disposal (from COSHH or stated on packaging) should be stored in safe storage and await correct disposal.
- General Waste: All general waste must be placed in black bin bags and put into the bins opposite GRK.
- Industry standard husbandry techniques and general hygiene measures should be carried out.

## Disinfection:

The company's chosen and preferred disinfectant is Virkon S.

Virkon S is a powerful broad spectrum virucidal disinfectant, it is UK DEFRA approved.

It should be used, following the strict dilution instructions for all cleaning and disinfection purposes for day to day use and as well quarantine use.

## Control of Infection

The Green Room undertakes precautions and procedures to minimise any cross contamination and to control the risk of infection.

The Green Room follows a strict cleaning procedure. The areas to be cleaned will include all areas of The Green Room, including kitchens and toilets, that are accessible on the ground floor or by stairs. Cleaners are not required or allowed to access walls or roofs. No step ladders or ladders are provided.

Please see the table below for the cleaning schedule.

## Health & Safety

Staff must adhere to the following cleaning health & safety guidelines:

- Appropriate personal protective equipment - gloves, apron, brush etc must be used. These are found in the cleaning cupboard. The office must be informed if any new equipment is needed.
- Safety instructions on the cleaning products must be followed All cleaning products will be provided by The Green Room and adhere to COSHH regulations. The office must be informed when it is time to replenish products.
- Legionella checks are carried out monthly. The temperature for hot and cold taps are tested and must comply with regulation - under 20 degrees C for cold water and over 50 degrees C for hot.
- If a pupil has been ill they must stay away from the school for 48 hours to prevent the spread of infection.

## Containment of animals and escape prevention

Animals at GRK are effectively contained in order to protect staff, students and any visitors to GRK . Even 'least risk' animals can become a safety hazard should they escape. Containment takes the form of an outer perimeter boundary enclosing the entire school, in addition to:

- Fenced enclosures within the GRK;
- Fenced, walled, moated or ditched paddocks ;
- Tanks;
- Vivaria; (an enclosure, container, or structure adapted or prepared for keeping animals under semi-natural conditions for observation or study or as pets; an aquarium or terrarium)

The perimeter boundary of GRK, including all entry and exit points, is appropriately designed, constructed and managed to prevent, so far as is reasonably practicable, both the escape of animals and the entry of unauthorised people and predators.



## Animal Enclosures

The enclosures are designed, constructed and maintained so animals can be effectively contained to prevent their escape.

Where GRK has free running animals, this may well be the perimeter fencing of the school. At the same time, the enclosure should be constructed to minimise the chance of unauthorised people gaining entry.

Sections of electric fence may be used in certain circumstances where the risks associated with its use can be effectively controlled.

Staff and pupils enter animal enclosures for feeding, cleaning, alterations and maintenance.

Risk	Species	Capture Equipment	Catch up procedure
Medium	Mustelids(e.g. ferrets)	Container Nets Extra staff Ladders Gauntlets	A radio call to all staff can be made if their presence is required to assist Move all visitors & students away from the specific area Ensure all doors are closed and are manned to ensure they are not opened Staff to use equipment to usher animal(s) into a suitably sized container and then return to enclosure Assess enclosure to determine how animal(s) escaped
Low	All birds Donkeys Sheep Goats Pigs	Nets Safety gloves Transport tub/carry box Ladder	A radio call to all staff can be made if their presence is required to assist Ensure all doors are closed and are manned to ensure they are not opened Pick up the animal, usher it into a box or back to its enclosure, or if necessary use a net to recapture. Once captured place back in its enclosure Assess enclosure to determine how it escaped
Low	All other invertebrates reptiles and rodents	Safety gloves Container	A radio call to all staff can be made if their presence is required to assist Ensure all doors are closed and are manned to ensure they are not opened Pick up the animal (use safety gloves if unsure) or usher it into a container. Once captured place back in its enclosure Assess enclosure to determine how it escaped

## Staff and Training

GRK will make every effort to ensure that their staff do not have any convictions or a background of the ill-treatment of animals under any animal welfare or conservation legislation including: Animal Welfare Act 2006; Pet Animals Act 1951; Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963; Riding Establishments Act 1964; Riding Establishments Act 1970; Breeding and Sale of Dogs (Welfare) Act 1999; Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976; Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981; Control of Trade in Endangered Species (Enforcement) Regulations 1997; Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.

Also, continuous in-house staff training and development will occur, topics include: animal husbandry; animal welfare; health and safety and first aid; action in emergencies, escape, illness; safety procedures; food hygiene; diseases; in-situ and ex-situ conservation and educational techniques.

### **Animal Covid Policy (as per Government guidance)**

If you, or a member of your household, have symptoms of coronavirus you should self-isolate for 10 days and not come to work with the animals at GRK. If you're self-isolating you should make alternative arrangements to take care of your animal's welfare. You should ask for support from others who are not self-isolating or use professional services.

#### **Animals with coronavirus**

It is rare for an animal to contract coronavirus, and they may show only mild clinical signs and recover within a few days. Limited evidence available at present suggests that coronavirus:

- may pass from infected humans to certain pets such as dogs, cats and ferrets following close contact
- does not easily pass between cats or most other pets, but this cannot be ruled out
- may pass between ferrets and humans based on the evidence from mink infections

#### **GRK Animal handling**

In line with public health guidance, you should:

- wash your hands before and after any contact with GRK animals, its food and bedding
- not share food with your GRK animals
- avoid contact such as kissing or cuddling if you're self-isolating

There is no evidence that you need to wash your pets to control the spread of coronavirus. Only wash or use products on your pets that are approved for use on animals.

#### **GRK Ferrets**

You should isolate your ferret for 21 days if:

- you or your household are self-isolating
- you've brought your ferret to England from a country not on the [travel corridor list](#)

Isolation means avoiding contact between your ferret and either ferrets or people from other households.

If your ferret needs emergency veterinary care while you're self-isolating, you can arrange to have it taken to the vet, or take it to the vet yourself where necessary. You should tell the vet in advance that you're self-isolating.

#### **If GRK animal needs vet treatment**

You can leave home for animal welfare reasons, such as to attend veterinary services for advice or treatment. If your animal needs vet treatment, phone first to arrange the best way to meet their needs.

You may also leave your home to access urgent veterinary services when you're self-isolating. You should only do this if it is not possible for another person to take the animal to the vet.

#### **GRK Dog walking**

You may leave your house to walk your dog:

- by yourself
- with the people you live with
- with your support bubble (if you're legally permitted to form one)
- or, when on your own in a public outdoor space, with one person from another household

This is covered by the exemptions for animal welfare and exercise. Although the government generally advises you should exercise once a day, you can go out more often if you need to walk your dog but should limit this where possible. You should stay 2 metres apart from anyone outside of your household or support bubble. When walking your dog in areas used by other people, you should consider putting your dog on a lead to ensure you can stay 2 metres away from others. You should wash your hands before and after handling your dog.

**If you're walking dogs on behalf of someone not able to**

You may walk a dog for someone who is unable to leave their house because they are self-isolating. You should wash your hands before and after handling the dog and keep 2 metres away from other people and animals, including when handing over the dog to the owner.

**If you're self-isolating**

If your dog cannot be exercised at home, you should ask someone outside of your household or support bubble to walk your dog for you, or access walking services provided by a professional. You should notify anyone walking your dog on your behalf in advance that you're self-isolating and arrange a no-contact service where possible.

**Horses, livestock and other animals**

You may leave your house to visit and provide care for your horse or livestock - that includes where you keep your animal in livery or on private land

- ride your horse or walk your animals to maintain their health and welfare

This is covered by the exemptions for animal welfare and exercise. At sites where this activity is permissible, you may ride your horse or walk your animals to maintain their health and welfare in a public outdoor place:

- by yourself
- with the people you live with
- with your support bubble (if you're legally permitted to form one)
- or, when on your own in a public outdoor place, with one person from another household

Although the government generally advises that you should exercise once a day, you can go out more often if you need to ride your horse or walk your animals but should limit this where possible.

You must follow social distancing rules set out in national guidelines. You should stay 2 metres away from others. You should wash your hands before and after contact with any animals. You should make a plan for the care of your horse or livestock in case you need to self-isolate.

This policy is approved by the Co-CEO of The Green Room School

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Co-CEO: \_\_\_\_\_