



# ANIMAL WELFARE POLICY

## 1.0 Rationale

The use of animals in any NSW Catholic school is governed by the following key legislation:

- NSW Animal Research Act 1985 and Regulations;
- NSW Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979 and Regulations;
- NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 and Regulations; and
- NSW Exhibited Animals Protection Act 1986 and Regulations.

The aim of the legislation is to protect the welfare of vertebrate animals used in teaching and research by ensuring that their use is justified, humane and considerate of the animals' needs. The above legislation has evolved in response to the attitudes of the Australian community and its concern for the welfare of animals in general and particularly the use of animals in teaching and research. Underpinning these attitudes is the notion that vertebrate species can experience pain and suffering and that there is a moral duty to minimise the harm to any animal.

*Our Lady of the Way's* Animal Welfare Policy is supported by accreditation given to the CEC NSW for Animal Research Establishment (Schools) for all NSW Catholic schools, under the provisions of the NSW Animal Research Act 1985 and the Animal Research Regulation 1990.

## 2.0 Aims

- To develop a respect for animals.
- To assist students to learn how to care for animals in a responsible and ethical manner.

## 3.0 Implementation

- Schools Animal Care and Ethics Committee (SACEC) provide teachers with a list of approved activities that may be undertaken at school. As a consequence of this privilege, teachers at *Our Lady of the Way School* will have access to the information they need to maintain the welfare of the animals at the level of "best practice".
- All teachers will be aware of the Animal Research Act (1985).
- All teachers will follow the Animal Welfare Guidelines (2001).  
Part A guides teachers in decision-making about the use of animals.  
Part B provides Species-specific notes about approved activities and resources.  
Part C presents case studies that act as support material for teachers.
- It is the responsibility of teachers to ensure they keep up-to-date with current legislation and that their practices are in accord with that legislation.
- Teachers using animals in schools must keep abreast of the ongoing ethical debate and community expectations about the use of animals in research and teaching, which may give, rise to changes in legislation.

- The **Principal** is responsible for:
  - ensuring compliance with all relevant legislation and these guidelines;
  - completion of the Animal Research Authority (Schools) form annually and retained in the school
  - ensuring that all relevant documentation under the Act is maintained and available for inspection by duly authorised people;
  - being the Animal Welfare Liaison Officer (AWLO);
  - 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 SACEC is advised when animal-related incidents trigger the reporting provisions under the serious incidents policy;
  - resolving grievances regarding the use of animals at the school; and
  - approval for use of any animals at school.
- The **Teacher** is responsible at all times for the care and use of the animals by:
  - ensuring that the care and use of animals is in accordance with all relevant legislation and guidelines;
  - 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;
  - maintaining appropriate records as required by the Code and the AWLO
  - 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; and where necessary
  - disposing of animals appropriately.

#### **4.0 Budget**

No budget is required for this policy at this time.

#### **5.0 Evaluation**

The Principal, with delegated responsibility to the Leadership Team is responsible for the planning, implementation and review of this policy.