

Chicken Policy October 2025 (New Policy)

Tiny Toes believe keeping chickens is an effective way of maximising the educational opportunity and attainment of children. Whilst keeping chickens is beneficial to children, we understand that we have a legal duty of care towards any animals we are responsible for, and that this must be a priority at all times. This policy has been created in order to outline the key responsibilities and procedures when looking after our chickens.

Feeding

- Children are able to provide the chickens with food and water under supervision of an appropriate number of staff.
- The amount of food and water given to the chickens will be measured before allowing the pupils to feed the chickens, and will be adequately controlled at all times.
- Children and staff will follow a feeding routine twice per day involving cleaning out food bowl and replacing with new feed.
- All feed must be purchased from a reputable store.
- No cooked foods to be given.
- Grit to be provided to chickens to aid digestion as necessary.

The Chicken Coop will:

- Be warm, dry and well-ventilated.
- Contain food and water inside.
- Contain nest boxes, which will be draught-free and lined with a layer of dustfree, absorbent bedding.
- Be spacious enough for the chickens to exercise and carry out their normal behaviours.
- Contain entrances large enough for the chickens to enter and exit without crouching.

Cleaning and maintenance

- The chicken coop and run will be cleaned on a weekly basis by a member of staff.
- The nursery will provide appropriate cleaning materials, including a shovel, bucket, stiff brush and detergent cleaner.
- The detergent cleaner, as well as any other chemicals purchased, will be checked in accordance with the school's COSHH Policy to ensure that they are not hazardous to the chickens or to the members of staff using them.
- All bedding will be removed and replaced, and all droppings will be scraped into the bucket provided. Both the bedding and droppings will be disposed of appropriately by the member of staff carrying out the cleaning duties.
- Detergent cleaner will be used to clean the inside of the coop. When doing so, the member of staff will check for any red mites, which can be harmful and deadly to chickens.

- The water and food feeders will be cleaned on a weekly basis to avoid any build-up of green algae which can be harmful to chickens.

Handling of Chickens

Only designated member of staff are able to handle the chickens.

Children and other members of staff are not permitted to touch the animals unsupervised.

Children are allowed to handle the chickens under the supervision of an appropriate member of staff.

Children will be instructed to treat the chickens with respect.

Children must not harm the animals or cause them any distress, e.g. by throwing things at them.

Chicken Welfare

- The designated member of staff, in conjunction with a vet, is responsible for worming the chickens and checking for any lice, red mites and green algae.
- If the chickens are found to have any disease which is contagious to humans, the parents/carers will be informed immediately and the chicken will be removed from the premises for appropriate treatment.

Signs of poor health in chickens include the following:

- Hunched posture
- Raised feathers
- Head tucked under the wing
- Reluctance to move
- Hiding in corners