

# Pittsford Central Schools

## Parent Notification of Live Animals As Classroom Pets

Your child's teacher would like to house a \_\_\_\_\_ in the classroom as a pet. Due to safety concerns regarding the possibility of contracting salmonella or other infectious diseases from certain animals, Pittsford Central Schools has developed the guidelines below for animals in its schools. Your child's classroom teacher will provide instructions to his/her class on the appropriate handling of the animals and the required hand washing procedures.

Because of the increased susceptibility to diseases, we recommend that immunocompromised children (e.g. children with cancer, HIV, organ transplants, or other diseases that suppress the immune system, or on immunosuppressive drugs, like steroids or those used in chemotherapy) do **not** handle any animals in school.

**If your child is immunocompromised, has an animal allergy or other issue related to animals, please contact the classroom teacher or school nurse.**

Pittsford Central Schools: Guidelines For The Use Of Animals That Are Housed in the Classroom, but Are Not Part Of The Science Curriculum

The following is a list of animals that are appropriate pets to be housed in schools:

1. Small pet rodents (e.g. mice, rats, hamsters, gerbils, guinea pigs, chinchillas)
2. Pet rabbits
3. Aquarium fish (salt or fresh water)
4. Non-psittacine birds (e.g. canaries, budgies)

Animals should be kept in cages or localized areas. They may not be allowed to roam. All animals housed in schools should be provided an appropriate environment (e.g. secure housing, suitable temperature, adequate exercise) and a proper diet. In addition, there should be a plan for the continued care of these animals during the days that school is not in session. Consultation with a veterinarian is advised to help with environmental and nutritional needs and provide care in the event of illness or injury to the animal.

**All animals, that are brought to school, must be approved by the building principal. Verification of appropriate documentation shall be complete by the building principal and kept on file for the duration of the animal's stay.**

If any of the above animals are handled by the students, the procedures for the handling of animals (outlined in Section 3) must be followed:

- Non-latex gloves will be worn for designated animals
- Hand washing procedures will be followed
- Tables/desks/countertops will be cleaned in accordance with school policy
- No food or drink is allowed in the classroom during the activity

The classroom teacher must notify the parents of all students in his/her classroom, in writing, that there will be an animal housed in the classroom prior to exposure of the students to the animal. The written notification must include the type of animal and a request for parents to notify the teacher or school nurse if their child is immunocompromised, or has an animal allergy or other issue related to animals.

If there is a child with a diagnosed allergy to a particular animal, that animal will not be housed in the classroom.

## Live Animals as Classroom Pets

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### Housekeeping of animal pens and cages

Strict housekeeping and safety practices are essential in providing a safe environment for student and animals.

- ❑ Animal pens and cages should be cleaned regularly.
- ❑ The classroom will be free from animal debris and droppings.
- ❑ Students may not handle any form of animal waste.
- ❑ Animal waste and soiled bedding should be disposed of where children can not come into contact with it, such as in a plastic bag or a container with a well-fitted lid.
- ❑ Gloves will be worn when cleaning animal pens and cages, followed by strict hand washing.
- ❑ Human food should not be allowed in areas where animals are kept.
- ❑ Cages should not be placed near ventilation systems to avoid circulating allergens throughout the room or building.