# Operational Policy: Animal Welfare (NAG 6)

## Blind & Low Vision Education Network NZ

## Statement of Intent:

To ensure animals in the care of the Blind & Low Vision Education Network NZ (BLENNZ) are treated in a humane manner. BLENNZ recognises its legal obligation to those species defined as “animals” under the Animal Welfare Act 1999, and its moral responsibilities with regard to other invertebrate animals studied or kept in any BLENNZ location, including the Homai Early Childhood Centre.

BLENNZ will:

* Encourage through example the proper care of living things
* Provide experience for ākonga to observe, handle and care for a range of animals in a humane way
* Ensure that, in any activity involving the keeping of an animal or its study on a field trip, the welfare of the animal is given high priority
* Education ākonga through example and discussion on the importance of animal care and welfare and the responsibilities involved.

## Policy Guidelines:

The day-to-day care of all vertebrates, and some invertebrates, in the care of people and/or used in experiments and teaching will be governed by the Animal Welfare Act 1999.

All living creatures at any BLENNZ site will be treated with care and respect.

Responsibility for the welfare of animals rests with the teacher involved and, ultimately, with the principal and the board of trustees.

Animals kept at the BLENNZ Homai Campus School and Visual Resource Centres will be provided with their five basic needs (sometimes expressed as the five freedoms).

* Freedom from thirst, hunger, and malnutrition (including during weekends and holidays).
* Freedom from discomfort and lack of shelter (by being provided with appropriate cages or containers that are properly ventilated and hygienic and do not allow exposure to extremes of noise, draughts, and sunlight).
* Freedom from injury, disease, and parasite infestation (by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment). Diseased or injured animals will be treated promptly and will not be kept until they have recovered. If this is not feasible, they will be humanely destroyed.
* Freedom from distress (through proper care and handling).
* Freedom to display their normal patterns of behaviour.

Other than Guide Dogs, animals cannot be brought on, or live on, the Homai Campus without the permission of the Principal or delegated Senior Manager.

If appropriate care and facilities cannot be provided, animals will not be kept at any BLENNZ site.

In the case of classroom pets, prior arrangements about long-term care (including holiday care) will be made before any animals are kept. When the animal is no longer required or is no longer able to be kept, appropriate arrangements will be made to return it to its natural habitat (in the case of a wild animal) or to find a suitable home for it. Non-native classroom pets will not be released into the wild under any circumstances. If appropriate arrangements cannot be made, the animal will be humanely destroyed by a veterinarian.

When animals are used for a specific study, the surviving animals will be returned to their natural habitat or home at the end of the study.

Animals captured on field trips will be returned to their habitat before ākonga leave the area unless their proper care has been prearranged.

Native animals will not be kept at any BLENNZ site.

Where the use of animals in any study (including science fair projects) involves a manipulation in accordance with the law, the study will be carried out in accordance with a code of ethical conduct approved by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

## Supporting Documents

[Animal Welfare Act 1999](http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1999/0142/latest/DLM49664.html)

[Ministry of Agriculture & Forestry](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ministry_of_Agriculture_and_Forestry_%28New_Zealand%29)

Approved: 

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Next Review: 2024