PORTREATH PRE-SCHOOL

**Pest Control Policy** **THE IONA SCHOOL & NURSERY**

**PEST CONTROL POLICY**

**REVISED AUGUST 2015**

***Introduction***

Vermin is the general term applied to animal and bird species regarded as pests and especially to those associated with diseases. Certain parts of settings, for example, kitchens, food stores, and outside areas can provide ideal conditions for certain pests and vermin.

Portreath Pre-school is commited to providing a safe, clean environment for the children under our care. We rent The Institute building from the Portreath Improvements Committee (PIC) and work with them with regards to pest control.

**What we already do**

* At Portreath Pre-school we practice high levels of hygiene in all areas. We employ a cleaner to clean the setting at the end of every preschool day. On certain days other users will use the hall after we have cleaned.
* Portreath Improvements Committee employ the services of ‘Pestakill’ to monitor any signs of vermin and pests.
* Any indoor bins are emptied daily and places in a lidded outside bin. This is emptied once a week.
* We stop pests getting in with well-fitted doors and covered drains.
* All staff look out for the evidence of the presence of pests including droppings, “chew-marks” on carpets and wiring, insect droppings and nests.
* We regularly check for deterioration in the building which could pose possible ways to pests entering the building.

**Awareness of different types of Vermin and procedure on discovery**

**Ants**

The commonest species of ant is the black garden ant. A highly organised and social insect, a colony will nest and include worker ants which are attracted to sweet food stuffs.

Ants may cause contamination to food stuffs and preparation areas. Limited measures can be taken by facilities staff but professional pest control contracters should be brought in if large numbers of ants nests are found.

**If Ants are found in any area the following procedure must be observed:**

1) Quarantine the area.

2) Contact the Portreath Improvements Committee building chairperson. .

3) Ensure that the surrounding areas are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.

4) Once pest has been eradicated deep clean the area.

**Bats**

Bats may only be handled by those licensed to do so. They cause no direct harm though their droppings may cause problems with smell and insect infestations.

European Bat Lyssauirus (EBL) is a rabies-like virus which infects insectivorous bats in Europe. It is very rare (only six confirmed cases identified in the UK). It rarely crossed the species barrier and since 1977 only four cases have been reported in Europe; all of which were in people working closely with bats. Anyone exposed to EBL but given prompt treatment (immunisation and immunoglobin) will not develop the infection.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 provides protection for all species of bat found in the United Kingdom. It is illegal to kill, or even disturb, bats in their roosts.

**If Bats are found in any are the following procedure must be observed:**

1) Quarantine the area.

2) Contact the Portreath Improvements Committee building chairperson.

3) Follow the instructions of the services they employ.

4) Ensure area is deep cleaned before allowing people back into the area.

The Bat Conservation Trust, www.bats.org.uk, can be contacted if help is needed to remove injured or dead bats.

**Bees, Wasps and Hornets**

Honey bees live in colonies often greater than 30,000 in roof and wall cavities and hollow trees. They swarm in early summer. They have a barbed sting and die once used but will sting when provoked.

Untreated infestations can cause contamination of foodstuffs, harm to mortar and building fabric and threats of stings. Some people may experience anaphylactic shock on being stung and will require prompt treatment.

**If Bees, Wasps or Hornets are found in any area the following procedure must be observed :**

**DO NOT ATTEMPT TO MOVE THE NEST YOURSELF**

1) Quarantine the area.

2) Contact the Portreath Improvements Committee building chairperson.

3) Assess the risk to children and staff and if deemed appropriate move from the building to the church hall and contact parents to pick children up.

3) Ensure that the surrounding areas are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.

4) Once pest has been eradicated deep clean the area.

**Bird Mites**

Bird mite infestations in settings are rare but late spring to early summer is the most likely time for an infestation to occur as that’s when birds are nesting. The problem begins with mites from abandoned birds’ nests finding their way into buildings and feeding upon humans once the bird host is no longer a source of food.

The mites are good at surviving in a human environment, by biting people, when the original avian host has gone, though they can’t survive in the long term without a bird host. A mature bird mite is only about 0.5 mm or less, and the immature mite is even smaller**.** Bird mites do not fly, however they are small and aggressive and when a host is detected, they can float down from the ceiling and other places to land on the individual. If staff and children end up transferring mites from the school to their home, the problems will be compounded.

Symptoms:

* Pinprick bites with or without lesions
* Frequently intense itching of the skin
* Vague sensation of crawling on the skin
* Bite marks and lesions that heal very slowly

Bird mites can be an extremely difficult problem to eradicate even for commercial pest control companies, as they are an unusual infestation, and a specialist firm with experience in this area may be required. The Local Authority’s Environmental Health Department and the Health and Safety Officer need to be informed and they should be able to recommend an approved specialist company to undertake the eradication.

All potential original sources of the infestation need to be checked and cleared, for example removal of abandoned bird nests in the roof space and all entry points for birds should be sealed off to prevent future roosting. However, this in itself may not be enough as the mites can get everywhere, including carpets, clothing, curtains, walls, ceilings, cracks and crevices.

Staff need to consider the potential risk of introducing bird mites to the classroom when using bird nests for discussion with the children.

**If Bird Mites are found in any area the following procedure must be observed:**

1) Quarantine the area.

2) Contact Portreath Improvements Committee buildings Chairperson.

3) Ensure that the Local Health and safety officer is contacted.

3) Bear in mind, if the infestation is great, the setting may need to be fully closed in order to allow for full fumigation.

Further information at www.birdmites.org.

**Cockroaches**

There are two types of cockroach found in the UK; the Oriental cockroach and the German cockroach.

Cockroaches will feed on almost anything from food to faecal matter. They are commonly found in kitchens and heating systems. They prefer warm moist conditions and they reproduce rapidly; a German cockroach can produce up to 240 eggs per month.

They can spread bacteria and usually indicate that food preparation areas are not clean. Germs can be spread from the body of a cockroach or from their droppings. They can carry dysentery, gastro-enteritis, typhoid and food poisoning organisms. Contamination occurs when the cockroaches come into contact with foodstuffs.

**If Cockroaches are found in any area the following procedure must be observed:**

1) Quarantine the area.

2) Contact the Portreath Improvements Committee building chairperson and await instructions from them.

3) Ensure any contaminated food stuffs are professionally disposed of.

4) Ensure that the surrounding areas are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.

5) Once pest has been eradicated, deep clean the area.

**Mice**

“House” mice are considered amongst the most troublesome and economically damaging rodents in the UK. They nest in the ground or in any protected location in nests constructed of shredded fibrous material such as paper. The female produces 5 to 10 litters per year, averaging five per litter.

Mice contaminate foodstuffs with their urine, droppings and hair and amongst the diseases they may transmit to humans are:

* salmonellosis (food poisoning)
* rickettsia pox
* lymphocytic choriomeningitis

Mice also chew cables and wiring and this can cause short-circuiting and increase fire hazard.

**If mice are found in the school area the following procedure must be observed:**

1) Quarantine the area

2) Contact Portreath Improvements Committee buildings chairperson and await instructions from them.

3) Risk assess the risk to children and staff at the setting and if deemed appropriate the setting may have to close to allow time to deep clean.

4) Ensure that the surrounding areas are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.

5) Once pest has been eradicated deep clean the area.

**If Mice are observed outside the school area**

1. Quarantine the area.

2. Contact Portreath Improvements Committee buildings chairperson and await instructions from them.

**Rats**

Common rats live in any situation that provides food, water and shelter. The common rat is the most widespread of its species and is widely found in urban and rural areas. In homes they will live in loft spaces, wall cavities, cellars or under floorboards. In gardens, they will burrow into compost heaps and grassy banks or under sheds. They are also commonly found living in sewer systems and rivers. Rats will eat or contaminate food intended for humans. It is estimated that up to five per cent of food produced world-wide is lost as a result of rodent activity.

Their favourite foods are cereal products, although they will eat almost anything that humans eat.

Rats can transmit several diseases to humans including Weil’s disease which is a bacterial infection that attacks the kidneys and liver and can be deadly. It can be contracted after swimming in rivers or lakes as it is spread by rat urine found in river water and banks and it can be transmitted through cuts and scratches or the lining of the mouth, throat or eyes, after contact with infected rat urine or contaminated water.

Cases of Weil’s disease have been increasing in recent years, linked to winter flooding of the rats habitat, followed by high summer temperatures. Teachers organising visits to places where there is a risk of transmission from contaminated water need to be aware of this and include it in their risk assessment.

**If Rats are noted in the building or outside area, the following procedure should be followed:**

1. Quarantine the area.
2. Contact Portreath Improvements Committee buildings chairperson and await instructions from them.
3. Risk assess the risk to children and staff and if deemed appropriate the setting will close to allow time for the rats to be dealt with and for deep cleaning to take place.

**Foxes**

Foxes are increasingly seen in urban and suburban areas as well as rural areas. The fox is primarily carnivorous, and they are highly effective scavengers finding waste in towns and cities plentiful.

The law prevents the use of poisons or illegal traps or snares to control foxes and it is illegal to shoot them in urban areas.

Foxes can carry toxocariasis, a parasitic roundworm which can be passed to humans. Infection is extremely rare and only affects around two people per million in the UK each year. Fox faeces may contain bacteria which can cause sickness in humans, so faeces should not be directly handled.

Fox dens are established in January/February for cubs born in March.

**If a fox den is noted in the pre-school grounds**

1. Quarantine the area.

2. Contact Portreath Improvements Committee buildings chairperson and await instructions from them.***Pest***

***Contacts/Useful Information***

NEU on infectious diseases <https://neu.org.uk/advice/health-and-safety/infectious-diseases-and-illness>

NEU on anaphylaxis in schools <https://neu.org.uk/advice/health-and-safety/health-and-safety-schools-and-colleges#:~:text=All%20employees%20have%20a%20duty,health%20and%20safety%20at%20school>.

British Pest Control Association (BCPA) – http://www.bpca.org.uk

Environmental Health – http://www.ehjournal.net

Cornwall Environmental health telephone number – 0300 1234 212

The local authority websites provide details of the Environmental Health Services in our local area.

**Issue date**

This policy takes effect from October 2018

**Review date**

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Last reviewed 24/06/2024