

Collaton St Mary Church Of England Primary School
Risk Assessment for the keeping and handling of Guinea Pigs

(The school policy gives additional details on the keeping animals in schools, addresses safety and wellbeing issues for both the animal and children.)



Risk	Level	Precautions	Additional Information
Disease passed from animal to child	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Animal was obtained by a reputable source (was disease free and in good health). Animals housing to be kept clean (disinfected weekly). Children to wash hands before and after handling. Children are not to eat or drink when handling the Guinea Pig. Cuts and grazes need to be covered before the handling of the animal. The animal to be checked by an adult regularly for illness or disease. The animal is not to be handled if it is thought the animal is not in good health. 	Guinea pigs carry very little diseases (especially when kept in captivity) that pass to humans. Good Hygiene is the most important aspect to consider to stop the potential spread of disease.
Physical Injuries to child	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Guinea Pig was well handled before being taken into school. Children to be educated in keeping fingers away from the mouth. Children educated in how to pick up the animal and hold securely so the animal is not frightened. Use of blankets and towels to avoid the animal scratching. Children not to feed the guinea pig directly. Animal to be checked by adults for injury (this may cause pain which may result in the guinea pig biting) Adult supervision at all times when handling the animal. Animal to be kept away from the face. 	<p>Guinea pigs are docile animals that rarely bite. If they do it is normally because they are being fed and mistake fingers for food.</p> <p>If a child is bitten. The area needs to be washed with warm soapy water immediately, wiped with antiseptic wiped and covered if needed. Parents to be informed.</p>
Allergy to Guinea Pig	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children should only handle the guinea pig when an adult is present. Adult checks for signs of allergy (sneezing, altered breathing, red swollen skin or irritation to the eyes). If allergy suspected animal and child to be kept separated, sawdust to be exchanged for bedding pellets or pet removed. 	Guinea pig hair does not cause allergies. It is normally the sawdust or the bedding.