

Pittsford Central Schools

Parent Notification of Use of Live Animals During Science Instruction

Your child will be participating in a science unit in his/her classroom on _____ that involves the use of live animals. 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 the instructional use of 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. Parents are asked to contact the classroom teacher or school nurse with this information.

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 as Part of the Elementary Science Curriculum

Approved live animals for instructional use in Elementary Classes

Pond snails, crickets, land snails, isopods, dwarf African frogs, fiddler crabs, toad eggs, toads, earthworms, crayfish, chicken eggs, chicks, butterflies, fruit flies, mealworms, owl pellets and fish are approved for instructional use in Pittsford elementary classes.

A request for an animal to be added to the approved-animal list must be made by the Science Standards Leaders to the District Health and Safety Committee for approval.

Procedures for the handling of approved animals during instructional activities

1. Non-latex gloves are required to be worn by students and staff during an activity that involves the handling of live animals that have the potential of carrying salmonella and other bacteria, i.e. dwarf African frogs, toads, chicken eggs and chicks. All other approved animals may be handled without gloves. The district recommends that persons with compromised immune systems do not handle any animals at school or school-related activities. Immunocompromised persons include those on steroids or other immunosuppressive drugs, i.e. those used in chemotherapy, or persons with cancer, HIV, organ transplants, or other diseases that suppress the immune system.
2. After an activity that involves the handling of live animals, with or without gloves, all students and staff are required to wash their hands following strict hand washing procedures. Strict hand washing procedures means using soap and water and rubbing the hands together for at least 20 seconds. If running water is not available, hands should be cleaned with an approved antibacterial gel sanitizer. (Purell and Vionex are the only approved antibacterial gel sanitizers.)
3. After each activity that involves the handling of live animals or a live animal demonstration, the tables and countertops used in the activity must be cleaned with a school-approved sanitizer cleaner.
4. During an activity that involves the handling of live animals, no food or drink is allowed in the classroom.