

Earl Soham Primary School Risk Assessment:

Activity covered by this risk assessment- Care and interaction with school guinea pigs				People at risk: Staff/ children/ guinea pigs			
Date: 03/11/2025				Review September 2026			
Hazards What are the specific sources of harm?	Current control measures	Score with Controls in Place 1 to 3			Further Control measures	Who will take action and when?	Completed Date
		Severity S	Likelihood L	Risk Level (S x L)			
Scratches, bites, nips to the skin Guinea Pigs: being dropped Children & adults: being bitten, skin broken, bleeding	Children warned not to put fingers through bars. If guinea pigs are being carried from one location to another over a distance they should be transferred into a small box to ensure their safety. Scratches, nips and biting cannot be avoided altogether. Appropriate first aid precautions and training in place. Children are only allowed to handle any animal under staff supervision. Guinea Pigs were selected for their calm temperament and been in school and handled from a young age.	3	1	3	Children taught how to safely hold and look after Guinea Pigs to limit animals becoming stressed. Adults will ensure that Guinea pigs are calm before being picked up.	Jen Carlyle JC to remind the children of safety when handling/ looking after guinea pigs regularly.	
2	1	2					
3	1	3					
1	1	1					
3	1	3					
2	1	2					

Safety and care of animals	Staff check the guinea pigs daily for signs of stress.	1	1	1	Children will be taught to understand high expectations regarding their behaviour around the guinea pigs. During school holidays, volunteer parents will take them home. A secure and clean cage will ensure that they cannot escape, are not harmed and are healthy. The Guinea Pigs will be kept in an outdoor shed during winter months. Shed will include enrichments such as places to hide, climb over and places to gnaw to keep teeth from over growing.	JC daily	
	Signs of stress or illness: weight loss (from weekly weigh in), hiding- isolating itself from the other guinea pig and the children, seems overly nervous, sleeping more than normal, hair loss, poor appetite.	3	1	3			
	Staff lead the cleaning and care (food, water, grooming) of the Guinea Pigs.	1	1	1			JC twice weekly (with assistance from children)
	Signs of good health: agile, clear and bright eyes, clean nose, clean ears, fur is clean and matt free, nails are a good length, feet should not be sore, teeth should be a good length, good appetite. If any of the following are noticed a vet will be consulted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any sudden change in behaviour or habits (vocalising more or less, scratching, licking, etc.) • Any change in eating or drinking (ingesting either more or less, refusing favourite foods, etc.) • Any change in appearance (loss of fur, swollen areas, squinty eyes, flaky skin, etc.) • Any unusual discharge from the body (runny nose or eyes, odd urine, bleeding, etc.) • Any change in movement (limping, unwillingness to move, etc.) • Any change in urination or faeces The Guinea Pigs will stay in school overnight and weekends.	2	1	2			
		2	1	2			

<p>Fear Guinea pigs: stressed, being dropped Children and adults: stressed, scared.</p>	<p>A secure and clean shed will ensure that they cannot escape, are not harmed and are healthy. Cage will include enrichments such as places to hide, climb over and places to gnaw to keep teeth from over growing.</p>	<p>1 3</p>	<p>1 1</p>	<p>1 3</p>	<p>Children will be given a choice in whether they want to hold the Guinea Pigs. The Guinea Pigs will be introduced slowly to the children.</p>		
<p>Assessment carried out by:</p>	<p>Jen Carlyle</p>		<p>Date of assessment:</p>	<p>03/11/25</p>	<p>Date of Review:</p>	<p>September 2026</p>	
<p>Score definition / Risk rating</p>	<p>1 – 3: Low risk (tolerable and only needs to be reduced if it can be done easily and cheaply) 4 – 6: Medium risk (should be reduced to a tolerable level within an agreed time frame) 7 – 9: High (operation should be stopped immediately until appropriate controls are in place)</p>						