

Pest Control Policy

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

Longwood School & Nursery is committed to providing a safe, clean environment for the children under our care.

What we already do

- Longwood School and Nursery practises high levels of hygiene in all areas,
- We employ Spearhead to maintain a robust pest control system. They manage secured bait boxes in safe areas. These boxes are maintained every month.
- Any bins are emptied daily and children encouraged to clear up any spilt food immediately
- 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

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 contractors 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) Relevant caretaker to contact Spearhead
- 3) ensure that the surrounding areas are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected
- 4) once pest has been eradicated deep clean the area. If a deep clean is required, liaise with cleaning manager.

- 5) Catering manager to inform EHO if required

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) Relevant caretaker to contact Spearhead
- 3) ensure that the surrounding areas are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected
- 4) once pest has been eradicated deep clean the area
- 5) Catering manager to inform EHO if required

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) Relevant caretaker to contact Spearhead
- 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
- 6) Catering manager to inform EHO if required

Fleas

Fleas are external parasites, living off the blood of mammals and birds and include cat/dog fleas, human fleas and rat fleas.

Beside the problems posed by the flea itself, they can also act as a vector for disease, for example, fleas can transmit a variety of viral and bacterial diseases to humans and other animals.

Fleas have helped cause epidemics by transmitting diseases such as the bubonic plague between rodents and humans by carrying bacteria.

In the UK human fleas are rarely a problem (and can be cured by removal of infested clothing) but cat/dog fleas may cause considerable nuisance. A few adult fleas live on the animal host, while hundreds of eggs and larvae contaminate the pet's bedding and favourite resting places. The eggs are just visible to the naked eye as small pearly white round objects. Adult fleas require blood meals to survive (and the female needs a blood meal for her eggs) but can survive months without a feed. Cat/dog fleas are not thought to transmit any serious illness to humans but they can cause severe irritation.

If fleas are found in any area the following procedure must be observed

- 1) Quarantine the area
- 2) Relevant caretaker to contact Spearhead
- 3) Ensure that the surrounding areas are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected
- 4) Once pest has been eradicated deep clean the area
- 5) Catering manager to inform EHO if required

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) Relevant caretaker to contact Spearhead
- 3) Ensure that the surrounding areas are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected
- 4) Once pest has been eradicated deep clean the area
- 5) Catering manager to inform EHO if required

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.

Staff need to be aware to ensure food is not left out in rooms.

If Rats are noted in the building, the following procedure should be followed

- 1) Quarantine the area
- 2) Relevant caretaker to contact Spearhead
- 3) Ensure that the surrounding areas are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected. Remove any items that may have been exposed to rat droppings.
- 4) Once pest has been eradicated deep clean the area
- 5) Catering manager to inform EHO if required

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 school grounds

1. Quarantine the area
2. Contact Hertsmere Borough Council – Environmental Health

Pest Control Companies used

Spearhead is registered with the British Pest Control Association which is a UK trade association representing the industry. The Association represents the industry to Government and has an established code of conduct and professional standards by which all members must conform. Their website (www.bpca.org.uk) provides some useful background information.

They are able to eradicate pests/vermin and ensure that premises are clean and safe for reoccupation. The contractors will also ensure that any pesticides or other toxins used to eradicate infestation are safely administered without risk to users of the building.

Closure of Buildings

Where possible, we will aim just to isolate the area identified as having pests. We will constantly be guided by Spearheads advice and will only open an area once they deem it safe to do so

Contacts/Useful Information

NUT Briefing on 'Infectious Diseases' can be found at <https://www.teachers.org.uk/node/12533>

Health Protection Agency – <http://www.hpa.org.uk>

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

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

Related policies

Health and safety policy

First Aid policy