[This letter addresses the example of chicken hatching but it can be adapted for any form of animal use]

Dear [Head]

I am writing to ask that you end the practice of using live animals in class.

[Detail of the situation – for example hatching chickens in class]

Veganism is a way of living which seeks to exclude, as far as is possible and practicable, all forms of exploitation of, and cruelty to, animals for food, clothing or any other purpose. [They/we] live [their/our life/lives] according to this moral philosophy. This means that [they/we] do not use animals as if they were our resources.

Our right to live according to the fundamental conviction that it is wrong to use and kill non-human animals is protected under human rights law and equality law. This means that state schools must not interfere with our right to freedom of conscience and have a responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 to avoid any discrimination on the grounds of veganism. By using animals in class the school is in breach of these rights in relation to my child.

Moreover, as a public entity [name of school] is bound by the Public Sector Equality Duty, which requires them to have due regard for the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equal opportunity and foster good relations, including by taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups. It would be in line with this duty to stop using animals in class at all.

As a vegan parent, I also have the right to have my child educated in accordance with my fundamental convictions. The use of animals goes against those convictions. It is not possible to effectively remove my child from the activity as it is in the classroom over a period of weeks. They cannot avoid seeing their teachers and fellow students using the animals.

Using animals is not necessary in order to educate children. Whatever particular educational benefit it is thought that children will gain from this experience can be provided using an alternative that avoids animal use. In any event, the main thing that is conveyed to children by using animals in class is that other animals are things that we can buy and sell, obtain to use for our own unnecessary purposes and then dispose of when they are no longer of use or interest to us. That is not what we should be teaching children about animals.

I hope that you will agree that animals should not be used in class and that you will put an end to this practice and incorporate alternatives into the curriculum. For example, the children could learn about animals by visiting an animal sanctuary such as [name local vegan sanctuary] where animals are living out their lives and they can learn that they each have a personality, interests and relationships, just as dogs and cats do. Unlike a zoo, where animals are kept in captivity for our amusement, at a sanctuary they live as much as possible according to their own interests and for no other purpose than their own lives.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

[your name]