



# School Dog Policy

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Policy covering procedures and guidance for safety around school dogs, visiting dogs, and staff owned dogs temporarily on the school site.

This policy must be used in conjunction with individual risk assessments for each named dog, and countersigned by the dog owner and the site manager/ headteacher.

Risk assessments must be signed by the dog owner and shared with relevant parties.

Approved by Governors on 08/03/2023

Signed: Chair of Governors

Headteacher

Review date: March 2025

## **Why allow dogs in the school?**

- Dogs teach children responsibility. Having to remember to feed, provide water and show support for a dog can give children a sense of importance and satisfaction that they can't get from school or other chores. The relationship that develops can be lifechanging for a child and a great support system as they themselves continue to grow and develop.
- Dogs teach children patience. Dogs do not always do as they are told first time!
- Dogs teach children compassion. Just like humans, dogs feel emotion and pain. They are prone to injuries and the infirmities of age during their relatively short lives.
- Dogs teach children about socialisation. Like most of us, dogs are social animals who enjoy and need attention and affection. By learning how to interact with a dog, children can learn how to better socialise with other children. If they can learn the social cues of a dog, then interacting with humans who can talk will be a walk in the park (pun intended).
- Dogs are fun. Last, but certainly not least, dogs are a lot of fun. They greet you with a wagging tail every day and can cheer you up even on your worst day.
- Many people have studied dogs in attempts to decipher their behaviour, and the theories abound. However, you just have to witness the interactions between dogs and children to realise the potential for greatness. Dogs can sense when children with epilepsy are about to have a seizure, they can sense when a diabetic child's sugar is low, and they can help children with severe physical disabilities find happiness in life.

## **Guidelines to interaction with the School Dog**

- No child shall be forced into interaction with the school dog if this makes them feel unhappy in anyway.
- At all times interaction with the school dog must be controlled and safe for adults, children and the school dog himself. If the following guidelines are not followed interaction with the school dog will be cancelled.
- At all times of interaction there must be an authorised adult who takes the leading role when interacting with the school dog. If children, or visiting adults, do not abide by the guidance given by the authorised adult the interaction will be cancelled.

**The following guidelines must be followed when interacting with the school dog.**  
**These guidelines apply to all adults and children.**

- Never enter the school dog's room without an authorised adult
- If the door to the school dog's room is shut make sure you knock and wait for the authorised adult to let you in. Never let yourself in as the school dog might not be ready.
- There must be an authorised adult present during all interaction
- Always approach the school dog calmly (voice and movement). Always approach the school dog slowly. Never run up to the school dog. To start interaction the back of a hand will be offered for the school dog to sniff. Keep noise levels low during interaction with the school dog.
- All interaction must remain calm with the authorised adult staying in control at all times. Only the authorised adult can move any of the school dog's resources, including food and treats. Visiting children and adults can only handle equipment if the authorising adult gives permission.
- Whilst the school dog is new to the school no visiting adult or children will give him any food/treats. There must not be any interaction with the school dog whilst he is eating.
- After all interaction with the school dog hands must be washed with soap and water/ hand gel. When interacting with the school dog all children must remain on their feet and not kneel or lay down unless guided to by the authorised adult. If the school dog is with an authorised adult he does not need to be on his lead when in school.

**The school's responsibilities**

- No children will ever be asked to pick up faeces
- If walking the school dog, an authorised adult must be present at all times. Children may hold the school dog's lead if they are confident to do so. The authorised adult remains in charge of the situation at all times and will take back the school dog's lead if necessary

**Visiting dogs**

- All of the above guidelines should be considered when bringing a dog into school
- A risk assessment must be completed before the dog is allowed onto the school site. This needs to be agreed with the site manager and the headteacher before the dog is allowed on site. The allowed interactions with children will be agreed by the headteacher and the site manager, and noted onto the risk assessment.

If the dog shows any signs of intolerance, aggression, unhygienic habits, or disobedience, it will not be allowed onto the school site again.

If the dog shows signs of ill health, the owner will be asked to remove the dog from the school site.

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**Details of dog to whom this policy applies:**

Name of dog: .....

Breed (or similar of not known, ie cross between) .....

Age: ..... Vaccinated: Yes/No Wormed: Yes/No

Therapy Trained: Yes/No

Reason for being on school site: .....

I have read and understood this policy and completed the Risk Assessment (Appendix 1) attached:

Signed: ..... Date: .....

Name of owner: .....

## APPENDIX 1:

### RISK ASSESSMENT Dogs in School

**Where any risk has been deemed high, the dog will not be allowed onto the school site.**

**Where the risk is low or medium, control measures must be put in place**

Hazard	Who is affected/at risk	Risk rating (low, medium or high)	Actions/control measures	Person responsible
Bites and scratches	Staff, pupils and handlers		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dogs must have a good temperament and be used to being around children</li><li>• Dogs must be at least 1 year old</li><li>• Dogs must be well trained not to bite, scratch or jump up</li><li>• Handler(s) will remain with dogs at all times</li><li>• Children are taught how to approach and interact with the dog</li></ul>	
Poor hygiene and health risks	Staff, pupils and handlers		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All dogs that visit are vaccinated, wormed, and treated for fleas</li><li>• Dogs are groomed before the visit</li><li>• All staff and pupils are required to wash their hands after contact with dogs</li><li>• Handlers clear up dog urine and faeces promptly and dispose of this safely - pupils are told to stay away</li><li>• Dogs are not taken anywhere near food preparation areas</li></ul>	
Allergies	Staff and pupils		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We seek parental permission for children to interact with dogs</li><li>• Alternative activities are provided in a separate room for those with allergies</li></ul>	

Hazard	Who is affected/at risk	Risk rating (low, medium or high)	Actions/control measures	Person responsible
Phobias	Staff and pupils		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We tell parents and children about the visit in advance</li> <li>• Contact with dogs is optional</li> <li>• Alternative activities are provided in a separate room for those with a phobia</li> </ul>	
Activities and games involving the dog	Staff, pupils, dogs and handlers		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Handler(s) remain with dogs at all times</li> <li>• Handler(s) speak to school staff in advance and ensure the area and activity is safe</li> <li>• We check with the handler(s) and set a limit for the number of children who can interact with a dog at once</li> <li>• Handler(s) clean up urine and faeces</li> <li>• School staff remove children who misbehave or upset dogs</li> <li>• We set a time limit on activities as recommended by handlers, so dogs do not get tired</li> </ul>	
Children misbehaving	Pupils, dogs and handlers		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children are told in advance what to expect and how to behave</li> <li>• School staff are present at all time during the visit</li> <li>• School staff are ready to remove children who misbehave or upset dogs</li> </ul>	
Damage caused to school materials, equipment and the school site	Dogs		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dogs remain on a lead at all times</li> <li>• Dogs are kept in secured rooms, with closed doors</li> <li>• Handlers bring suitable toys if necessary</li> <li>• Areas/classrooms are cleared as much as possible before dogs visit</li> </ul>	

Signed: ..... Dog Owner

Date: .....