

School Dog Risk Assessment December 2024

Studies have shown that the presence of companion animals can improve the well-being of children and lower the rate of anxiety, simply by making the environment happier, more enjoyable, and less forbidding. The rationale behind this decision was as follows:

- For the school to have a pet that was able to live as naturally as conditions would allow.
- For the animal to be properly cared for outside of the school day.
- To have a pet that the children could interact with and be of benefit to the children's social and emotional development.

It is accepted that interacting with animals is not appropriate for all children but for some it has the potential to provide many positive benefits. Any parent who does not want their child to interact with the dog is invited to write to Mrs Russell and inform them of their wishes. There are no diseases associated with the dog as his vet will be responsible for vaccinations, completing regular health checks and necessary treatment. The dog will also be insured.

The risk assessment below is a working document and will be checked annually by The Senior Leadership Team and any other key staff.

Risk Factor	
1, 2	Low
3, 4	Low/medium
5, 6	Medium
7, 8	Medium/High
8 - 10	High

Hazard	Persons at risk	Risk Factor	Control Measures	To be informed
Dog Welfare and wellbeing				
Not meeting basic needs of the dog	Dog	1	Clean food and water bowls are supplied daily. Food and water bowls are not shared with other animals on site. The dog is not allowed to pick up things from the environment. The dog is taken outside regularly to the designated space to toilet. This is cleaned up immediately by the "responsible adult" and disposed of safely. Toys, enrichment and treats are available for the dog throughout the day when in school. The dog has a bed in school and has opportunities throughout the day to be in a quiet space away from pupils to allow it to rest and avoid over stimulation.	All staff Pupils
Dog does not feel safe in the school environment	Dog	2	The dog will have key people who it will spend periods of the school day with. There has been time spent to allow the dog to build a trusted relationship with these adults: Mrs Russell (owner) Mr Parker Mrs Miller Mrs Craven Miss Mitchell Key adults working with the dog know the signs for his behaviours to allow them to meet his needs. There will be time each day the dog is in school where he will spend time with his owner.	All staff
Dog becomes scared when there	Dog	2	Avoid where possible taking the dog in loud, crowded environments. Pupils will be and will continue to be taught about the consequences of their	All staff Pupils

are loud noises or crowds in the environment			actions. Education of this nature will be provided to the whole school through assemblies and PSHE sessions.	
Dog shows signs of fatigue or irritability when in school.	Dog	1	<p>“Safe spaces” for the dog established in the SLT hub and the school office. In these spaces water & food to be available when the dog is there with toys/comfort items there for the dog that he is familiar with.</p> <p>“Responsible adults” to know the signs of fatigue or irritability in the dog and to comfort him when noticing these. Dog to be taken to one of the “safe spaces.”</p> <p>Treats to be given to the dog when positive behaviours are displayed and praise to be given to the dog to re-enforce these behaviours.</p>	All staff
The Dog around school				
<p>Dog getting over excited when interacting with children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Child knocked to the ground. - Child scratched by dog. Child bitten by dog. 	Pupils Dog	4	<p>The dog will always be in the care of the designated handler or a “responsible adult” who is aware of the risks and responsibilities to both children and staff.</p> <p>The dog will never be left unattended.</p> <p>The dog will never be allowed to roam freely around the school premises.</p> <p>The dog must not be passed to any member of staff not deemed a “responsible adult”.</p> <p>Children will not be left unsupervised with the dog.</p> <p>To begin with the dog will be on a lead when moving between classrooms or on a walk by the responsible adult while the children are in school. As the dog becomes familiar with the environment, when with his owner he will gradually be allowed to move with the owner around school without the lead.</p> <p>Pupils will be and will continue to be taught about the consequences of their actions. Education of this nature will be provided to the whole school through assemblies and PSHE sessions.</p> <p>Pupils will be taught what to do to prevent the dog from chasing them.</p> <p>All staff will have been introduced to the dog.</p> <p>The designated handler will ensure the dog attends the vets regularly to ensure he is in good health and that his claws are kept short (groomers appointments every 6-6 weeks).</p> <p>The room where the dog is kept will have a sign on the door to inform others that the dog is present.</p>	All staff Parents Pupils
The dog causing allergies.	Pupils and staff	1	Breed of the dog chosen to ensure it is hypoallergenic (CavaPoo) - no dogs are 100% hypoallergenic. However, Cavapoos are bred from poodles, which are one of the most hypoallergenic breeds, so they may cause fewer symptoms in allergy sufferers.	All staff Parents Pupils

			<p>If required a list of any children/staff who should not interact with the dog will kept in school.</p> <p>The children will have the opportunity to interact with the dog under the supervision of the designated handler or responsible adult and those with allergies will be able to opt out of interaction.</p> <p>Children will be taught to wash their hands after active participation with the dog.</p>	
Children getting germs from the dog, this could lead to contracting diseases that can be carried by dogs.	Pupils and staff	1	<p>Should the dog defecate on the school site a member of staff will clear this up immediately and dispose of it in a safe way.</p> <p>He will be trained to toilet in an area of the grounds that children have limited access to. The area will be disinfected as required.</p> <p>All immunisations are kept up to date. Flea treatment kept up to date. The dog will be regularly wormed.</p> <p>The dog will not be allowed in the school dining hall at mealtimes, and never in the food preparation area.</p>	All staff Parents Pupils
Noise/barking: Some children may find the noise a trigger.	Pupils	1	<p>The dog is very mild natured and has been trained by owners to reduce barking.</p> <p>The dog has been introduced into the school environment in stages at different times of day to allow him get used to the noises in the school environment so is less likely to bark.</p> <p>Extra welcome sessions for specific children. Ensure some children have ear defenders if needed.</p>	All staff Parents Pupils
Fear of dogs/ no previous exposure to dogs.	Pupils and staff	2	<p>When the dog is fully established as a school dog, letter to be sent to parents/carers, with a prompt that parents can inform us if any children are scared of or have a phobia towards dogs.</p> <p>In classes where pupils are scared of/ have a phobia of dogs, the dog only to be taken in on a lead or carried by the responsible adult.</p> <p>Option for pupils who are scared/ have a phobia of dogs to be introduced to the dog in a supported environment and some education around the dog and how to handle / interact with dogs to support the children with overcoming their fears/phobias should they and parents wish.</p> <p>Where staff have a fear of dogs/phobia of dogs, staff given the option of getting to know the dog or for interactions to be kept at a minimum. Dog to be kept on the lead around these members of staff.</p>	All staff Parents Pupils
Pupils misbehaving	Pupils	3	Whole school assembly and PHSE follow up lesson to be attended by all pupils	All staff

when around the dog	Dog		<p>and staff to educate around interacting safely with the dog. This will include understanding dog body language.</p> <p>School staff to intervene if any pupils misbehave or upset the dog.</p> <p>If the dog is showing signs of distress, then the dog should be removed immediately by the responsible adult and taken to a space where the dog has it's bed, toys or food. The dog to be reassured by the responsible adult and praise and treats given to highlight positive behaviour by the dog in the situation.</p>	Pupils
Activities and games involving the dog	Pupils Dog	2	<p>"Responsible adult" to remain with the dog at all times during activities.</p> <p>Limit for the number of pupils interacting with a dog at one time to support the dog's wellbeing.</p> <p>It is advisable to keep sessions involving the dog to no more than 20 minutes to prevent him from becoming fatigued or irritable.</p> <p>"Responsible adult" to clean up urine and faeces using a pet-safe disinfectant if needed.</p> <p>School staff remove pupils who misbehave or upset the dog. The pupils in question will then be reminded about the education provided in relation to acceptable behaviour around the dog</p> <p>Any games played with the dog during sessions should be more cognitive based, rather than high energy.</p>	All staff Pupils
Damage caused to school materials, equipment and the school site	Dog	2	<p>Dog to be mainly on a lead when in a session or being moved around the school site with "responsible adults"</p> <p>Dog kept in secured rooms, well ventilated and not too hot or cold.</p> <p>All school bags/personal items are removed before the dog enters.</p> <p>Only suitable dog toys brought by the owner to be given to the dog.</p> <p>Areas/classrooms are checked as much as possible before the dog comes to do a session in the room.</p> <p>Dog trained not to jump onto school furniture including chairs, soft furnished seats and tables.</p> <p>Dog trained not to scratch at doors or to chew at doors/ skirting boards/ carpets.</p>	All staff Dog owner