



'Where everybody is somebody'

School Dog Policy

2022-2023

Purpose:

Children can benefit educationally and emotionally, increase their understanding of responsibility and develop empathy and nurturing skills through contact with a dog, as outlined below. In addition to these benefits, children take great enjoyment from interaction with a dog.

Animals in school have been shown to reduce anxiety in some children who may find school challenging - researchers report that students can identify with and feel grounded by animals, and that having a dog in school can promote further positive behaviour across the school, including children showing more confidence and responsibility. With the presence of a calm and well-trained dog, children find social support and peer interaction.

Reading programmes with dogs have been shown to be highly beneficial for some children. Children who may be embarrassed to read aloud to the class or even adults are more likely to read to a dog - a dog won't judge or correct. Dogs are happy to have children read to them, or to join a group of children in the library whilst they are having a book reading session.

Dogs give unconditional acceptance, as they are non-judgmental, which is especially crucial to struggling readers who may lack confidence. Research has shown that children who read to dogs show an increase in reading levels, word recognition, a higher desire to read and write, and an increase in social skills when mixing with other children.

Our dog will therefore be used to encourage struggling readers to practise reading aloud.

Dogs in school offer an opportunity for improving social development. They are especially useful for teaching children social skills and responsibility.

Specifically, schools are using dogs to help children build self-esteem; learn about positive and negative reinforcement, responsibility, and boundaries.

Our school dog will also offer children who want it, a reward. Those children who have performed incredibly well during the week or those who have made progress in a certain subject, or those who have achieved tasks set for them, will be rewarded with spending time to interact with the dog. Walking and playing are some of the responsibilities children will be allowed to undertake.

Roles and Responsibilities

- The Governing Body has a responsibility to ensure that the school has a written policy for Dogs in School.
- The Head teacher is responsible for implementing this policy. The Head teacher may delegate this responsibility to the Deputy Head or a senior member of staff.
- All staff and visitors are required to abide by this policy

School Policy

General Points:

- The dogs for each year group are as follows: R -Aris (owner - Mr Maucin) R -Hunter and Dotty (Mr Turner) Fudge- Y1 (owner - Mrs Sammons) Y2 Rosie (Mrs Freeston) Y4/5- Arla (owners Ms Alexander & Mr Turner) Y4/5 Rocky, Toby, Kiki (Mrs Poderskis) Y4/5-Winnie (Hollie Chapman) Y6 - Orla (owner- Mrs Dickings) Y6 Bentley (Owner-Mr Bishop)
- The school has taken all reasonable steps to advise stakeholders of the school dog and to mitigate any risks, including full communication with stakeholders - Staff have been informed by the Head teacher that the school will have a dog per year group. Parents have been informed by newsletter that a dog will be in school, and children have been informed through assemblies - the drawing up and distribution of a School Dog Policy; the drawing up of a School Dog RA; the inclusion of the school dog in the school's Behaviour Policy
- Briefings for stakeholders to remind people of the salient points of this Policy will take place at the start of each school year, and during the year for any new starters -staff and students
- Information about the school dog will form part of the school's recruitment practice for any potential members of staff
- A dedicated risk assessment has been produced which will be reviewed annually
- The dog will be fully vaccinated and kept in good health, under the care of *their owners surgery*.
- The dog is fully insured.
- If the dog is ill, he will not be allowed into school
- The school dog will have a permanent base, in addition to moving around the school, which will be the FLOs Office.

- Dogs express their feelings through their body language. Growling or baring of teeth indicate that the dog is feeling angry or threatened. Flattened ears, tail lowered or between their legs, hiding behind their owner, whining or growling are signs that the dog is frightened or nervous. If the dog is displaying any of these warning signs he will be immediately removed from that particular situation or environment.
- Any dog foul will be cleaned immediately and disposed of appropriately by an adult only.
- The person overseeing the dog at any given time is responsible for ensuring that the requirements of the School Dog Policy are met

Visitors to the School:

- All supply staff will be advised that the school has a dog and asked regarding any allergies
- Visitors will be asked on arrival if they would prefer not to have any contact with the school dog

Contact with the School Dog:

- Staff, visitors and children known to have allergic reactions to dogs must not go near the dog. Parents will be asked to advise if their child does not desire contact with the dog for health/emotional reasons. A timetable for the dog will be produced, and the school will ensure that such students have no direct, school initiated contact with the dog. NB: this does not include visits to classrooms by the dog on learning walks or walking around site during the day
- The dog will be kept on a lead when moving between classrooms or on a walk, and will be under the full control and supervision of an adult
- Children will never be left alone with the dog and there will be appropriate adult supervision at all times when the dog is present with children

Child and Adult Conduct with the Dog:

- Children and adults will be reminded of what is appropriate behaviour around the dog at assemblies and during the school day
- Children and adults are reminded of what is appropriate behaviour around the dog:
- Children and adults must follow the instructions of the adult handler at all times and without question
- The supervising adult with the dog will decide how many children/adults can be with the dog at any one time

- Children and adults with known medical/allergies must not go near the dog at any time
- Children and adults should remain calm around the dog
- Children and adults must not make sudden movements or loud noises, and must never stare into a dog's eyes as this could be threatening for the dog
- Children and adults must not put their face near to the dog and should always approach it standing up
- Children and adults must never go near or disturb the dog if it is sleeping or eating
- Children and adults must NEVER play too roughly with the dog
- Children and adults must not feed, or eat close to the dog at any time
- Children and adults must always wash their hands after handling the dog
- Children and adults not abiding by the above do so at their own risk
- Any deliberate attempt to harm the school dog is a serious matter and will result in exclusion/ staff disciplinary measure

Date of policy: January 2023

Review date: September 2023