



School Dog Policy

Drighlington Primary School

1. Purpose

Drighlington Primary School recognises that animals can have a positive impact on children's emotional wellbeing, confidence and engagement in school. The purpose of having a school dog is to support pupils' wellbeing, nurture and engagement with learning.

Research shows that interactions with calm, well-trained dogs can:

- reduce anxiety and support emotional regulation
- encourage reluctant readers to read aloud
- help children develop empathy and responsibility
- support children who may struggle with confidence or social interaction

The dog will be present in school on limited, planned days and will always be supervised by a trained member of staff.

2. Supervision

The school dog will always be under the supervision of the designated responsible adult.

The dog will:

- never be left alone with pupils
- always be supervised during interactions with children
- only interact with children in controlled and planned situations

Children will be taught how to behave safely and respectfully around the dog.

3. Areas of the School

The dog will only access certain areas of the school.

The dog will **not** access:

- the school kitchen

- food preparation areas
- certain classrooms where allergies or phobias have been identified

A quiet space will always be available for the dog if it needs rest away from children.

4. Hygiene

To ensure hygiene standards are maintained:

- children will wash their hands after touching the dog
- the dog will be well groomed and clean
- regular flea and worm treatment will be maintained
- the dog will not be allowed near food areas

5. Allergies and Phobias

Before introducing a school dog, parents will be informed.

The school will consider:

- pupil allergies
- pupils with a fear of dogs
- religious or cultural concerns

Alternative arrangements will always be made where necessary.

6. Health and Safety

A full risk assessment will be in place and reviewed regularly.

The dog will:

- be fully vaccinated
- be regularly vet checked
- be well trained and suitable for working with children

If at any point the dog shows signs of stress or discomfort, it will be removed from the situation.

7. Insurance

The school's public liability insurance will cover the presence of the school dog.

8. Monitoring and Review

The impact of the school dog will be monitored by school leaders and governors and the policy reviewed annually.

The wellbeing and safety of pupils will always remain the priority.