


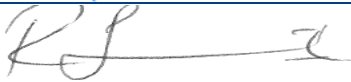
Christ Church New Malden

Church of England Primary School



Dogs in School Policy

Committee responsible	Governing Body
Approval required by	Governing Body
Statutory or Recommended	Recommended
Frequency of review	Every 3 Years
Date last reviewed	21st May 2021
Date of next review	21st May 2024
Display on website	Yes
Purpose	To provide a framework to allow dogs in school
Consultation	Governing Body
Link with other policies	Health & Safety Policy

	Signed	Date
Headteacher		2021
Chair of Governors		2021

Introduction

Research has shown that children can benefit educationally and emotionally, increase their understanding of responsibility, and develop empathy and nurturing skills through contact with a dog. In addition to these benefits, lots of children take great enjoyment from interaction with a dog.

Is there a risk in bringing a dog into a School environment?

A variety of accidents can happen within the School environment which far exceed the number of injuries or incidents that might be caused by a dog. Therefore, a dog or dogs on site is just another risk that needs to be managed. A thorough risk assessment has been carried out and this is included at the end of this document (Appendix 3).

In general, dogs are not allowed anywhere on the School site at any time unless specifically authorised by the Headteacher. This includes drop off and collection times, and School fixtures. This policy outlines measures put in place to allow a dog to be present.

School Policy

- Only authorised dogs are allowed on the premises. No dogs should come on site unless the Headteacher has been informed beforehand and specific permission given.
- There will only be one dog on each site at any time (apart from the reading dog).
- The dogs must be kept in an office space and children or staff can visit them there, unless they are taken by a responsible adult on a lead to an agreed place.
- Staff, parents and children will be informed that dogs will be in School. The risk assessment will be reviewed annually.
- Staff, visitors and children known to have allergic reactions to dogs must not go near the School dogs. All visitors will be informed on arrival about the presence of dogs on the School Premises.
- Any dogs that are ill will not be allowed into School and if they become ill, they will be kept away from children.
- The dogs will be kept on a lead at all times when on a walk during the School day and will be under the full control and supervision of an assigned adult.
- Children must never be left alone with any dog and there must be appropriate adult supervision at all times.

- Children should be frequently reminded of what is appropriate behaviour around dogs. Children should remain calm, should not make sudden movements and must never stare into any dog's eyes as this could be threatening for the dog. Children should not put their faces near any dog and should always approach it standing up.
- Children should never go near or disturb a dog that is sleeping or eating.
- Children must not be allowed to play roughly with a dog.
- Everyone must wait until a dog is sitting or lying down before touching or stroking him.
- The adult in charge of a dog must ensure that s/he monitors the situation in case the dog becomes nervous when surrounded by children.
- If a dog is displaying any warning signs, s/he should be immediately removed from that particular situation or environment. Dogs express their feelings through their body language. Growling or bearing 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.
- Children should not eat close to a dog.
- Children should be careful to stroke a dog on his body, chest, back and not by his face or top of head.
- Children should always wash their hands after handling a dog.
- Any dog foul should be cleaned immediately and disposed of appropriately.
- The office will know the whereabouts of a dog and which staff are supervising at all times.
- The relevant dog will be included in the fire evacuation procedure under the supervision of the adult they are with. They will be brought out and led to the Assembly point.

Actions

If someone reports having an issue with a dog, this information must be passed to the Headteacher as soon as possible. All concerns will be responded to by the Headteacher.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher is responsible for implementing this policy.

Teachers, staff, pupils, parents and visitors are required to abide by this policy.

Assemblies and other gatherings may be used to teach the children about dogs and how best to behave around all dogs. This will include highlighting that not all dogs are well trained and that caution must be used around unknown dogs outside School.

Appendix 1 - Reasons to have a dog in School

In summary, academic research (see *School Dogs for Happy Kids*) has shown that dogs working and helping in the School environment can achieve the following:-

1. Improve academic achievement;
2. Increase literacy skills;
3. Help to calm children with negative or disruptive behaviours;
4. Increase social skills and self-esteem;
5. Increase confidence;
6. Teach responsibility and respect to all life;
7. Help prevent truancy;
8. Motivate children who are often less attentive.

The following information has been taken from a range of sources to provide further detail about the benefits of having a dog in School:

Social Development

Dogs in School offer an opportunity for improving social development. They are especially useful for teaching students social skills and responsibility. Specifically, Schools are using dogs to help older students build self-esteem, learn about positive and negative reinforcement, responsibility, and boundaries. Older students use dogs to help communicate, teach kindness, and empower students.

With a dog in School, students have the opportunity to learn how to care for the animal. This includes walking and grooming. Researchers report that involving students in the daily care of classroom dogs is a positive experience, promoting their own daily care. The students also learn about responsibility, caring, and sharing when helping each other take care of a dog at School.

Education

Reading programmes with dogs are doing wonders for some students. Children who might be embarrassed to read aloud to the class or even adults are likely to be less scared to read to a dog. "It might be less stressful for a child to read aloud to a dog than to a teacher or a peer. After all, a dog won't judge or correct you." (Mary Renck Jalongo, Professor of Professional Studies in Education, Indiana University of Pennsylvania). Dogs are used to encourage reluctant readers to practise reading aloud.

Behaviour

In some Schools, dogs are making a difference to the behaviour of pupils. Researchers report that students who can identify with animals, and with empathy for the dog, can better understand how classmates may feel. Some Schools are using dogs to improve behaviour problems by promoting positive behaviour in students. In a controlled study, students were found to have fewer disciplinary referrals in Schools with a dog than

Schools without. Students' behaviour improved toward teachers, and students also showed more confidence and responsibility. Additionally, parents reported that children seemed more interested in School as a result of having a dog at School.

As a reward

Dogs will be gentle and loving, but at the same time full of fun and enjoyment for the students. Those students 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 during lunch or break to interact with these dogs. Walking, grooming, playing and training are some of the responsibilities students will be allowed to undertake. It has been proved that working and playing with a dog improves children's social skills and self-esteem.

Appendix 2 - School Dog Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q Who are the legal owners of the dogs and who pays for its costs?

A The legal owners of the dogs are members of staff; they will bear the costs associated with owning the dog and will have appropriate insurance cover at all times.

Q Is the dog from a reputable breeder?

A Yes. The dogs come from homes where both parents were seen and have been specifically chosen for temperament. The owner will have the dog assessed by a suitably qualified animal behaviourist from the ABTC Animal Behaviour and Training Council and their report and recommendations kept on file.

Q Will the dog be a distraction?

A. The dogs will be kept in office areas. All are separate from the classrooms/playground areas to ensure they only come into contact with children who are happy to have contact under strict supervision.

Q Has a risk assessment been undertaken?

A Yes, we have carefully considered having dogs in School and sought advice from many sources, including other Schools that successfully have a School dog.

Q Who is responsible for training?

A As the legal owners/keepers of the dogs, staff owners will be responsible for the dogs' behaviour and training.

Q How will the dogs be toileted to ensure hygiene for all?

A In the interest of health and hygiene our School dog will be toileted when taken out for short walks off site by its owner. The dog's owner will clear this away appropriately leaving no trace on the ground, cleaning the area with disinfectant if needed.

Our policy of no dogs (other than those above) on-site remains applicable as we are unable to put effective control measures in place that guarantee temperament and safety when children come into unsupervised contact with unknown dogs.

Q How will this be managed where children have allergies?

A. Children will not need to come near the dog nor touch the dog, which will relieve the possibility of allergic reactions. Children that do touch the dog will be reminded to wash their hands. We already manage a number of allergies at School and this will be no different for children and adults that are allergic to dogs. Individual needs will

always be met and we are happy to work with parents to put additional control measures in place for individual allergies.

Q My child is frightened of dogs; how will you manage this?

A. Access to the dog is carefully managed and supervised, and those children known to have a fear of dogs or display signs of such a fear, do not need to have any contact..

Appendix 3 - School Dog/s Risk Assessment

Hazard	Risk	Risk Category 1 Low to 5 High	Likelihood 1 Low to 5 High	Controls in place
Dog getting over excited when interacting with children	Child scratched by dog	3	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The dogs will always be in the care of a responsible adult who will have received handling training. Children are not left with the dogs unsupervised. The dogs will always be on a lead when s/he is out of his pen / the Head's office / Main office. Pupils have been, and continue to be, taught the impact of their actions. Education of this nature is continually given to children, and often to whole School during assemblies, class time and PSHE lessons. Pupils will be taught what to do to prevent over stimulating or upsetting the dog and how to remain calm around him. The dogs will receive ongoing training, socialising and conditioning within the School environment Pupils and adults will be reminded not to touch any dog's mouth, head and rear end and to stand, turn and say "Whoops / Oh dear" if he attempts to jump up or mouth. ALL staff given permission to handle dogs will be given strict instructions to follow and appropriate training. Dogs will attend vets regularly to make sure they are in good health.
	Child bitten by dog	4	2	
The dog gets loose from his pen or from his lead	Child scratched, or bitten by dog	1	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The dogs will remain in offices for much of the time. They will be inside their cages unless the door is shut. Staff will be alerted with signage and pupils only allowed in with supervision. Office staff will ensure the reception window at the hatch is always left closed. If a dog gets loose the office staff or designated handler will call for support. The dog will be put back on the lead and returned to the appropriate place. Dogs will always be on leads when out of the offices or when trained adults are in strict supervision.

Hazard	Risk	Risk Category 1 Low to 5 High	Likelihood 1 Low to 5 High	Controls in place
Dog hair causing allergies	Children have allergic reactions	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents have been asked to inform the School of any known allergies at the point of the child's admission to School and are regularly reminded to update the School of any changes to their child's allergens or tolerance. • Children will have the opportunity to interact with dogs as they wish and those with allergies would be able to opt out of interaction. • Children will be taught to wash their hands after interaction. • Dogs kept in specified areas, which are cleaned each evening/morning.
Children getting germs from the dog	Children/staff will contract diseases that can be carried by dogs	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should the dog defecate on the School site, a member of staff will clear this up immediately and dispose of it in a safe manner. • All immunisations (including rabies vaccination) are kept up to date in accordance with European Pet Passport scheme and the office will keep a register of this. • Flea treatment is carried out at monthly intervals. Worming treatment is carried out compliant with European Vet guidelines, at 3 monthly intervals. • The dogs will not go in the School dining hall at any time; they will not be permitted into the food preparation area of the kitchen
Claim is made against School re: behaviour of the dog	School not adequately covered financially	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The School has public liability insurance and the dog owners carry appropriate pet insurance. The policy covers the dogs in School.