



HILBRE HIGH SCHOOL HUMANITIES COLLEGE

SCHOOL DOG POLICY

Author:
Name of Committee approved:
Date ratified at Full Governors:
Date to be reviewed:

Jane Doyle
Full
13th November 2019
October 2020

Policy Consultation and Review

This policy is available on our school website and is available, on request, from the school office.

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body on a yearly basis.

Signature:



Mark Bellamy, Headteacher

Date: 13th November 2019

Signature:



Mike Cockburn, Chair of Governors

Date: 13th November 2019

Background

The Senior Leadership Team, Resource Provision Manager and members of staff at Hilbre High School, have considered the possibility of having a school dog for the Resource Provision from December 2019 to July 2020. The research regarding a school dog has found there to be considerable benefits and advantages to both students and the wider community. The findings were that schools who have a school dog could assist in:

- Teaching responsibility and respect;
- Teaching empathy, non-violence and in some cases how to love and have patience;
- Motivating children who are not that attentive;
- Increasing social skills and self-esteem;
- Increasing confidence around dogs in general;
- Improvement in attendance rates;
- Helping to calm behaviour - both in classrooms and in a 1:1 situation;
- Increasing literacy skills - children begin to enjoy reading and want to read aloud;
- Encouraging participation of all children in regular exercise.

With these ideas in mind, the Governors agreed to the concept of having a school dog, funded in part by fund raising activities.

It is recognised that animals are not generally allowed in either the school building or grounds, unless a full risk assessment has been undertaken, that takes into account the behaviour and characteristics of the animal(s). This is the reason why dogs belonging to parents and carers are not allowed on the school site. A full risk assessment will be undertaken for the school dog/puppy and this risk assessment would be reviewed once the puppy was introduced to school, and then again on a regular basis.

It is accepted that interacting with a dog may not be appropriate for all students in the Resource Provision, but that for the majority it has the potential to provide many positive benefits. Any parents or carer who would not wish for their child/ward to interact with the dog/puppy would be asked to inform the school of their wishes. The school would then ensure the wishes were taken into account and that these children would not have any contact with the dog at any time, with a list of names kept in the school office.

Context

The dog will:

- Be jointly owned by the school and Mrs Brindle;
- Be introduced to the school as a puppy and will 'grow' up with Mrs Brindle in school;
- Whilst at school the dog will 'live' in the Resource Provision office, where it will have its bed, water, etc;
- Always be kept on a lead when moving around school;
- Have a dedicated area to relieve itself in an area that students cannot access. When 'accidents' or relief occur elsewhere, it will be cleared immediately by a member of staff;
- Costs associated with the dog will be shared between the school and Mrs Brindle;

- Visitors and students will be informed of times when the dog is present;
- Parents and carers will be asked whether they wish their child/ward to have contact with the dog. A list of students who do not wish to interact with the dog will be kept by Mrs Brindle and the office.

Purchase Price	£1,450 (School)
Puppy Training	£75 - £100 (School)
Insurance	£35 - £70 (Mrs Brindle)
Neutering	£145 (School)
Food and grooming	£700 (Mrs Brindle)
School bed, crate, lead, and bowls	£200 (Mrs Brindle)
Initial Vaccinations	£60 - £100 (School)

The role of the school dog

First 6 months:

- During this time, the dog will be socialised by Mrs Brindle and will learn basic commands through positive reinforcement training;
- At the same time, Mrs Brindle or other suitable members of staff will run programmes for the students in the Resource Provision, teaching suitable interaction with the school puppy and dogs in general. In addition, Dogs Trust will deliver a workshop on how to care for a dog and how to interact safely with the dog;
- Those students that have been given permission by their parents/carers, may, as the dog gets older, have basic interaction with the dog, albeit constantly supervised. This may form part of a reward system, or if an entire class has permission to spend time with the dog, the dog will be constantly supervised.

6 to 12 months:

- Mrs Brindle may run a lunch club where a handful of students will be allowed to walk with her and the dog (although the dog may need to relieve itself prior to walking). She would ensure that all children who would like to do this are given a 'fair' opportunity to do so;
- The dog would continue its command training with Mrs Brindle, ensuring the continued suitability for the school dog role.

12 to 24 months:

- Begin interactive work with students, listening to readers, etc;
- Continued assessment and involvement with students in a small group scenario.

It will be a requirement that the dog:

- Is regularly groomed and checked for signs of infection or other illness;
- Is diagnosed and treated by a vet if it is ill;
- Receives regular inoculations;
- Is wormed at the interval recommended by the vet;
- Has its claws trimmed to reduce the risk of scratches;
- Be exercised before being allowed to work with students.

Management day to day

It will be a requirement of the handler/owner to ensure that:

- The dog is physically fit before visiting the school environment;
- The dog is kept on a lead when moving through or around the school during normal school hours. The dog may be off the lead when penned in a suitable area and during direct training;
- The dog is supervised at all times;
- The dog is discouraged from jumping, scratching and licking;
- The dog is of an acceptable hygienic standard, ie. not muddy, wet, etc;
- Natural relief for the dog is taken in the designated area only, where students do not access. Waste will be disposed of by the handler, in bags deposited in a designated bin.

Students will:

- Never have sole responsibility for, or be left alone with the dog;
- Be reminded of what is appropriate behaviour around the dog as part of an education programme run by Mrs Brindle. Appropriate behaviours are:
 1. Always remain calm around the dog;
 2. Don't make sudden movements and be gentle;
 3. Always approach the dog standing up;
 4. Do not approach the dog when it is sleeping or eating;
 5. Don't put your face near the dog;
 6. Don't stare into the dogs eyes as this can be interpreted as a threat;
 7. Do not eat close to the dog and never feed the dog.
- Learn about how dogs express their feelings through their body language. Growling or baring of teeth indicate that the dog is feeling threatened or angry. Flattened ears, tail lowered or between their legs, hiding behind their owner, whining or growling being signs that the dog is frightened or nervous. If the dog ever displays these warning signs it will be immediately removed from that particular situation or environment;
- Be informed of the following health and safety principles:
 1. Always wash their hands after handling the dog;
 2. Any dog 'mess' will be cleaned up immediately by Mrs Brindle (or other suitable adult). This must never be done by children.

Should a bite (even playful) ever occur:

1. Parents or carers will be contacted immediately;
2. The wound will be cleaned and covered with a sterile, non-sticky dressing;
3. The child/adult will be released for medical attention;
4. All staff will be informed;
5. The dog will be removed from direct contact with any child pending the outcome of a full investigation and reassessment;
6. A full investigation into the circumstances will be led by the Head of School;
7. The suitability of the dog will be re-assessed by the Head of School, Governing Body and, if appropriate, a suitable outside agency.

