



School Dog Risk Assessment - October 2019

Introduction:

The value of pet 'therapy' is widely accepted as a powerful aid to stimulation and communication. Studies have shown that the presence of companion dogs can improve the well-being of children and lower the rate of anxiety, simply by making the environment happier, more enjoyable and less forbidding.

When a dog is allowed on school premises, the dog's owner and handlers must ensure that the dog is not a nuisance and that it does not interfere with the school environment. If any parent/carer or student object to the dog's presence, then arrangements must be made to ensure that this dog is kept away from them. If necessary, the dog may need exclusion from specific areas.

It is a requirement of our dog that they are within the following recommended guidelines:

- All dogs should be regularly groomed and checked for signs of infection or other illness.
- Pets that are ill should be diagnosed and treated by a vet and should not be allowed in the school premises until their health is restored.
- All dogs should have received relevant inoculations.
- All dogs should be wormed regularly every six months.
- Claws should be kept trimmed to reduce the risk of scratches.
- Pets should have been exercised before being allowed to work with children.
- All pets should have their coats cleaned regularly.

The dog owner/handler has the responsibility to ensure that:

- Dogs are physically fit before visiting the school environment.
- Dogs are kept on a lead throughout the time they are in school.
- They remain with the dog at all times.
- The dog is discouraged from jumping, scratching and licking.
- The dog is of an acceptable hygienic standard, ie. not wet, muddy, etc.
- Natural relief for dogs is taken into account prior to visiting.

Background:

The Senior Leadership of Hilbre High School considered the options regarding the possibility of obtaining a dog as a school dog for the Resource Provision in July 2017. Over a period of time following this discussion, research into a possible source of a suitable puppy led to the final decision to introduce a puppy in December 2019.

The rationale behind this decision was as follows:

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

Prior to purchasing the puppy, the Resource Provision manager Mrs Heather Brindle, visited the home of the dog's parents to ensure that the temperament of the parents was suitable for interaction with children. The puppy would live with Mrs Brindle in her home and be introduced to the school environment and the children gradually. The veterinarian practice, Allport Vets in Bromborough,

will thoroughly check the puppy for any illnesses and is responsible for his vaccination programme.



There are no diseases that could be caught from the puppy as he is kept up to date with immunisations and his worming treatment is in line with European vet guidelines. Both the school and Allport Vets' Surgery keep a register of his annual health check.

It is accepted that interacting with dogs is not appropriate for all children but that for some it has the potential to provide many positive benefits. Any parent/carer who does not wish their child/ward to interact with the puppy is invited to write to inform Mrs Brindle of their wishes. This Risk Assessment will be reviewed annually and the school Senior Leadership Team will evaluate the impact of a school dog on a regular basis.

Hazard	Risk	Risk 1-5 *	Likelihood 1-5*	Risk Col 3X Col 4	Controls in place	Review date and signed
Dog getting over excited when interacting with children	Child knocked to ground	2	1	2	The dog will always be in the care of a responsible adult and will never be allowed to freely roam the school premises.	
	Child scratched by dog	3	2	2	Children are not left with the dog unsupervised. The dog will always be on a lead when she is out of her crate/the Resource Provision Office, except when she is undergoing structured training with her primary trainer/s.	
	Child bitten by dog	4	2	2	The dog will be trained not to jump up or mouth the children. Students have been, and continue to be, taught the impact of their actions. Education of this nature is continually given to children. Students will be taught what to do to prevent the dog from chasing them (ie. stand still, cross arms). The dog will undergo formal training from the age of 12 weeks with an experienced local trainer. Some students will be involved in training (with parental permissions) and along with the schools' primary handlers, continue to reinforce positive training strategies in a controlled area throughout the week. The dog will also undergo conditioning to the school classroom environment, this area of training will allow future reading or nurture intervention to involve the school dog in a calming/therapeutic manner. Risk of scratching and mouthing will reduce and the Risk Assessment will be reviewed as the dog progresses through her weekly training programme. ALL staff have been introduced to the dog and the expectations (does and don't) of having a school dog. The dog will attend the vets' regularly to make sure her claws are kept short and that she is in good health.	
The dog gets loose from his crate or from his lead	As above	1	2		The dog's crate is big enough for her to be happy and safe during the school day and the children are taught not to tease her. If the dog does get loose from her crate, the teacher on duty will call for a designated staff member who will come and put the dog back in her pen.	March 2016



					<p>There are four members of staff who will be called upon in the event of the dog getting loose or if she needs attention at any other time, they are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mrs Heather Brindle (Resource Provision Manager) 2. Mr Joe Duffy (Teaching Assistant) 3. Miss Libby Hesketh (Teaching Assistant) 4. Mr Steve Rooney (Assistant Headteacher)
Dog hair causing allergies	Children have allergic reactions	1	1	1	<p>Parents/carers have been asked to inform the school of any known allergies prior to introduction of the dog to school. A list of any children who should not interact with the dog will be kept on the school recording system.</p> <p>Children will have the opportunity to interact with the dog as they wish and those with allergies will be able to opt out of interaction.</p> <p>Children have been taught to wash their hands after active participation with the dog.</p>
Children getting germs from the dog	Children/staff will contract diseases that can be carried by dogs	1	1	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 manner. The dog will be trained to toilet in an area of the school that our student's don't have access to on a regular basis; if required, the area will then be disinfected with an appropriate dog disinfectant.</p> <p>All immunisations (including rabies vaccination) are kept up to date in accordance with European Pet Passport scheme and the Resource Provision Manager keeps a register of this.</p> <p>Flea treatment is carried out at 6 weekly intervals.</p> <p>Worming treatment is carried out in line with European Vet guidelines, at 6 monthly intervals.</p> <p>The dog will not go in the school dining hall at meal times; she will not be permitted into the food preparation area of the kitchen.</p>
Financial cost of the dog's upkeep	School unable to afford ongoing cost of the dog's day to day upkeep or medical bills	1	1	1	<p>The dog is the responsibility of Mrs Brindle and she is financially responsible for all her care and day to day costs.</p> <p>The dog is the responsibility of Mrs Heather Brindle outside of school hours.</p> <p>Training cost will be paid for by the school as part of the funds raised previously and the high level of obedience training that will need to be carried out.</p> <p>As the dog will be used for 'therapy' work within the school, the school will accommodate costs towards training and assessment of the dog to meet these criteria.</p>



Claim is made against school re: behaviour of the dog	School not adequately covered financially		Mrs Heather Brindle, via Pet Plan Insurance, insures the dog. Liability Insurance will be purchased by the school. The certificate is kept in school office and is renewed annually in April.	
---	---	--	---	--

KEY:

- 1- Low risk
- 2-
- 3 Medium risk of injury
- 4
- 5- High risk of injury

Policy endorsed by the Governing Body on

DRAFT



DRAFT

DRAFT