



School Dog Policy

Autumn term 2020



Review frequency:	At least annually	Review date:	Autumn term 2021
Governing committee responsible:	Curriculum committee		
Governor review approval:	Autumn term 2020	Website:	Yes
Staff responsible:	Bursar	Date produced:	Summer term 2017

Background

The objective of having a School Dog at Clarborough Primary School is to assist with:

- increasing social and emotional skills and self-esteem;
- increasing literacy skills – children begin to enjoy reading and want to read aloud
- increasing confidence around dogs and in general;
- helping to calm behaviour down – both in classrooms and in a 1:1 situation;
- teaching of responsibility and respect;
- teaching empathy and non-violence;
- motivating children.

Governing Body approval to have a School Dog was gained in November 2016 after consultation with NCC Health & Safety, NCC Risk & Insurance, the RSPCA and The Kennel Club. The Kennel Club Bark and Read standards of practice are followed by our school with welfare standards significantly higher than their requirements. Our School dog trained with the charity Dogs Helping Kids (DHK) for her first three years, completing 5 assessments of increasing difficulty with them, until the charity closed its doors during the COVID-19 pandemic (at the end of August 2020). She is now supported by Canines Supporting Children and her handler is guided by a Canine Consultant who was the former Director of Primary Education & Welfare for DHK.

We recognise that interacting with a dog may not be appropriate for all children. All families are asked (upon admission) whether they would like their child to interact with the dog, whether they are nervous or have had bad experiences and whether they are allergic. The handler then takes this into account and ensures that these children do not have direct contact with the dog unless they and their family would like this to happen. A list of these children is kept in her office.

Full risk assessments have been undertaken and our school dog is insured independently by her handler to interact with the pupils in our school. The insurance certificate is available to view in the Bursar's office. During the COVID-19 pandemic there have been additional risk assessments that are reviewed on an ongoing basis.

Context

Our school dog:

- Is owned by her handler - the school Bursar.
- Has been introduced to school as a puppy and has 'grown' up with the Bursar in school.
- 'Lives' in the Bursar's office, where she has her bed, water, etc.
- Is always kept on a lead when moving around school, unless undertaking specific training.
- Has a dedicated area to relieve herself in an area that children do not access to.
- Has all associated costs, including veterinary bills met by the Bursar.

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 she is ill
- Receives regular inoculations.
- Is wormed and receives flea & tick treatment at the interval recommended by the Vet.
- Has her claws trimmed to reduce the risk of scratches.
- Is exercised before being allowed to work with children.

Management day to day

It is a requirement of the handler to ensure that:

- The dog is physically fit before visiting the school environment;
- The dog is kept on a lead when moving through the school or school ground during school hours. The dog may be taken off the lead whilst in its penned area and during direct training with the handler;
- The handler remains with the dog at all times when it is not in its crate, her office, or penned area;
- The dog is discouraged from jumping and scratching;
- The dog is of an acceptable hygienic standard when interacting, i.e. not muddy, wet etc.
- Natural relief for the dog is taken in the designated area only, where pupils do not access (round the back of the shed by the bins). Waste will be disposed of by the handler, in bags deposited in a designated bin.

Pupils will:

- Never have sole responsibility for, or be left alone with the dog;
- Directly 'work' or interact with the dog in a group of not more than 3 children;
- Be reminded of what is appropriate behaviour around the dog as part of an education programme run by the Bursar. Appropriate behaviours are:
 - Always remain calm around the dog
 - Don't make sudden movements and be gentle
 - Always approach the dog standing up
 - Do not approach the dog when it is sleeping or eating
 - Don't put your face near the dog
 - Don't stare into the dog's eyes as this can be interpreted as a threat
 - Do not eat close to the dog
- Learn about how dogs express their feelings through their body language.
- Be informed of the following health and safety principles:
 - Always wash their hands and/or use anti-bac gel before and after handling the dog
 - Any dog 'mess' will be cleaned up immediately by the Bursar only.

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 the full investigation and reassessment.
6. A full investigation into the circumstances will be led by the Head Teacher.
7. The suitability of the dog will be re-assessed by the Head Teacher, Governing Body and if appropriate our Canine Consultant – Gail Laurence.

Generic Risk Assessment for School Dog

Hazard	Risk	Risk (prior to controls) 1-5*	Like- lihood 1-5*	Controls put in place	Risk after control
Dog getting over excited when interacting with children	Child knocked to ground	1	2	The breed of dog that has been chosen by Mrs Cooper is one that has a calm, sensitive and reliable temperament. They are known to be very good with children and other animals. The breed has been chosen after seeking advice from Tracey Berridge BSc (hons), MSc, M.A.P.D.T., who is a dog behaviourist with over 25 years' experience and is the founder of the Dogs Helping Kids charity, www.dogshelpingkids.co.uk . . As well as Sian Ryan of Developing Dogs who also has an MSc in Clinical Animal Behaviour.	1
	Child scratched by dog	3	2	The dog will always be in the care of a responsible adult and will not be allowed to freely roam the school premises during times when there is a risk that pupils will be present.	1
	Child bitten by dog	4	2	<p>Children will never be left with the dog unsupervised. Children actively involved with the dog will be from year 1 upwards, as younger children may be more prone to act unpredictably and therefore pose a greater risk. Initially these interactions will only take place with older children who are known to behave sensibly.</p> <p>The dog will always be on a lead when out of the office, except when it is undergoing structured training with its handler.</p> <p>The dog has been trained through positive reinforcement, to not mouth anybody. She will also be discouraged from placing her paws on children, apart from during structured training sessions in response to a cue.</p> <p>Pupils will be taught the impact of their actions. Education of this nature will be continually given to the children and often to the whole school during assemblies or PSHE sessions.</p> <p>Pupils will be taught what to do to prevent the dog from chasing them, for instance: stand still and cross their arms.</p> <p>The dog has undergone ongoing formal positive reinforcement training. This started with puppy socialisation classes with Sian Ryan (of the BBC show 'Me and My Dog'), through her dog training classes at Developing Dogs near Ely as soon as she had her inoculations.</p>	1

Dog getting over excited when interacting with children cont...				<p>The dog has undergone three years of continual assessment by Tracey Berridge BSc (hons), MSc, M.A.P.D.T. Tracey is a dog behaviourist with over 25 years' experience and was the founder of the Dogs Helping Kids charity.</p> <p>Tracey has already assessed the dog and feels that she has the potential to be an Educational Assistance Dog and has a suitable temperament. Mrs Cooper has attended the Advanced Puppy training, has passed an entry test, welfare assessments and three further assessments with the charity.</p> <p>The dog has undertaken conditioning to the school environment. This training has taught the dog to be able to provide assistance during reading intervention and emotional literacy sessions, together with being trained to spend time in the classroom environment (under constant supervision and only if all children in that class are happy for the dog to be there).</p> <p>Risk of scratching and mouthing has reduced as the dog matures.</p> <p>All staff will be introduced to the dog and the expectations (does and don'ts) of having an Educational Assistance Dog.</p> <p>The dog will attend the vets' regularly to make sure its claws are kept short (as comfortable for the dog) and that it is in good health.</p>	
Dog getting loose from its designated area or from its lead	As above	1	2	<p>The dog will primarily spend its time in the office with pupils. When in school there will be a sign placed on the office door to indicate that she is in and a sign will be shown in the reception area of the school. The sign on the office door, tells people to knock and wait for the door to be opened. They are regularly reminded not to enter the room on the days that the dog is in, unless the door is opened for them.</p> <p>Should the dog ever get loose there will be two members of staff who can be called upon to help at any time.</p>	1
Allergic reaction	Children have allergic reactions	1	1	<p>Parents will be asked to inform the school of any known allergies prior to the introduction of the dog to school. A list of any children who should not interact with the dog will be kept on the school system and in the folder containing all of the Educational Assistance Dog paperwork.</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 if they wish to do so.</p>	1

				Children will be taught to wash their hands and/or use anti-bac gel both before and after active participation with the dog. Younger children will be supervised when doing this. There will also be wipes available for use if preferred.	
Children getting germs from Jeske	Children/staff will contract diseases that can be carried by dogs	1	1	<p>Should the dog defecate on the school site Mrs Cooper will clear this up immediately and dispose of it in a safe manner (in a designated bin).. The dog will be trained to toilet in an area of the school that our pupil's do not have access to on a regular basis. If required, the area will then be disinfected with an appropriate animal disinfectant.</p> <p>All immunisations will be kept up to date in accordance with the European Vet guidelines,</p> <p>The dog will be regularly checked for worms and treated as necessary in line with European Vet guidelines. She will also be regularly checked for fleas and ticks.</p> <p>The dog will not go in the school dining hall at meal times, nor will it enter the school kitchen or areas where food is being prepared.</p>	1
Financial cost of Jeske's upkeep	School unable to afford ongoing cost of Jeske's day to day upkeep or medical bills	1	1	<p>The dog will be the responsibility of Mrs Cooper and she will be financially responsible for all its care and day to day costs. The dog will also be the responsibility of Mrs Cooper outside of school hours.</p> <p>The training costs for activities involving the pupils will also be paid for by Mrs Cooper together with the cost of her liability insurance. Mrs Cooper may (with SLT support) undertake fundraising activities to help supplement these costs. All positive reinforcement training will also be funded by Mrs Cooper.</p>	1
Claim is made against school	School not adequately covered financially	1	1	The school is covered for its liability should a claim arise under the school premises insurance. In addition Mrs Cooper purchases annual Therapy dog liability insurance which covers any claims up to £5 million as recommended by Dogs Helping Kids.	1

COVID-19 Risk Assessment (in addition to the generic RA) for School Dog

Hazard	Risk	Risk (prior to controls) 1-5*	Like- lihood 1-5*	Controls put in place	Risk after control
COVID-19 infection contracted from school dog	Staff member or pupil contracts COVID-19 after transmission from school dog	1	1	<p>Although research is ongoing, there is as yet no indication that dogs can transmit COVID-19. There are some confirmed cases of dogs having the virus – although none documented in UK, and no known confirmed cases of infected dogs being able to then transmit the virus to another animal or human. https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-people-with-animals.</p> <p>However we appreciate that the situation is ever changing so will review this on a daily basis and ensure that if there are any confirmed cases that interaction with the school dog will cease immediately until the pandemic is over.</p> <p>In the interim, interaction with the school dog will only happen if the handler has specific permission from the pupil's parent.</p> <p>Children will have to wash or anti-bac both before and after their session with the school dog and all surfaces will be cleaned. Mrs Cooper and the dog will only work with one bubble each week.</p> <p>If staff specifically request to pet the school dog, then they too must clean their hands before and after doing so and must only pet the dog with the permission of the bursar. She is not to be petted when walking around the school at any time.</p>	1
Irritation/allergic reaction caused by additional cleaning products being used in response to COVID-19 control	Dog is affected by the additional cleaning products that are being used.	1	1	<p>The dog can be walked around the corridors but will not enter any of the classrooms in school whilst class 'bubbles' are in place – as this would pop the bubbles. The main cleaning products are used in the classrooms, so the dog should not be exposed to these. The handler will also be responsible for cleaning the surfaces in her office (where the dog resides) using products that are effective but do not irritate the dogs skin or eyes.</p>	1

Handler or dog shows COVID-19 symptoms	Possible spreading of the virus to others	2	2	Mrs Cooper will follow the current DfE guidance at all times. Should she or the dog become infected then they will arrange a test and self-isolate until the results of the test are known.	2
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Emergency plan in case of incident or accident	<p>Plan for children and staff</p> <p>Any accident or injury to any child or adult in school will be dealt with in accordance with the schools existing Health and Safety policy and procedures.</p>
Emergency plan in case of incident or accident	<p>Plan for the dog</p> <p>Any accident or injury that results in an injury or trauma to the dog will be dealt with according to the dog's immediate needs. Mrs Cooper will have the final say with regards to any action required and the dog would be taken to its registered veterinary practice by Mrs Cooper.</p>

Key to risk: 1: low risk 3: Medium risk of injury 5: High risk of injury