

School Dog Risk Assessment – February 2021

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 animals can improve the well-being of children and lower their rate of anxiety, simply by making the environment happier, more enjoyable and less forbidding.

To minimise the risk to children in school, animals are not allowed on school premises. The definition of animals includes all pets including insects, fish and birds. The only exceptions to this rule are assistant animals (dogs for the blind etc.) and cats and dogs that have permanent residences on the school grounds, which belong to the Pets As Therapy scheme.

Pets As Therapy is a national charity founded in 1983 by Lesley Scott-Ordish. It aims to enhance health and wellbeing in the community through the visits of trusted volunteers with their behaviourally assessed animals. It provides a visiting service in hospitals, hospices, nursing and care homes, special needs schools and a variety of other venues all across the UK.

The therapeutic visits:

- Enhance lives in our communities by providing companionship and friendship to help tackle loneliness.
- Improve the lives of people suffering from debilitating mental and physical health conditions and illnesses such as Autism, Dementia and Stroke by including animal assisted interventions as part of a holistic approach to treatment.
- Improve literacy in children by developing their confidence, interest and enjoyment in reading through our read2dogs scheme.

Registered Pets as Therapy dogs carry public liability insurance.

When guide dogs and Pets As Therapy animals are allowed on school premises, the animal's owner and handlers must ensure that the animal is not a nuisance and that it does not interfere with the school environment. If any parent or pupil objects to the animal's presence, then arrangements must be made to ensure that this animal is kept away from their child. If necessary, the animal may need exclusion from specific areas.

The intention is to introduce the puppy to the school environment regularly and early on in their development. This is part of the training course advice given by Barkbusters and its to ensure that the puppy is socialised in the environments and there set expectations. The puppy must also be insured through the school insurance and within their own.

Specific Risk Assessment

Focus: Puppy Training

Reason: To ensure the school dog interacts appropriately at all times.

Hazard and who will it affect?	Control Measure	Risk Rating	Further Action
<p>School dog biting a child or adult - Child or adult could be hurt if the school dog bites.</p>	<p>The school dog has been trained not to bite. When the dog is approached in the correct way there is very limited danger. Both dogs have been assessed against the Pets As Therapy Guidelines which also provides insurance.</p> <p>Most puppy mouthing is normal behaviour.</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Ensure that children and adults do not interact with the school dog without supervision. Ensure that all interaction with the school dog is completed in the agreed way.</p> <p>The puppy will not have direct contact with children, they will be kept in a designated area.</p> <p>The trainer has instigated using a 'BAH' sound when the Puppy is unwantedly mouthing this has been successful.</p> <p>The puppy will be provided with lots of safe toys for them to chew and change them regularly to keep it interesting.</p>
<p>Jumping up/scratching - If a school dog becomes excited there is a danger that they could jump up and knock a child over or leave a scratch mark.</p>	<p>The temperament of the dogs is assessed by Pets As Therapy. If a dog does jump up on assessment they do not pass. No interaction will be made with any children unless the school has written permission from parents/guardians.</p> <p>The pupils will not have short distance contact with the puppy until she has passed her certificate.</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Ensure that children and adults do not interact with the school dog without supervision. The school dog will be enclosed in an office on a lead when people come to interact with an authorised adult.</p> <p>Training focuses on positive encouragement to ensure the puppy learns not to jump but to sit when she is greeted.</p>
<p>Running loose - If the school dog was to run loose he could hurt children/ adults or damage property.</p>	<p>The school dog will be contained at all times either in an office (with a clear sign on the door), or with the door open with a safety gate to enclose the area.</p> <p>The dogs will be placed on a short lead when travelling through the school grounds.</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Monitor that the equipment used to contain the school dog is appropriate and effective.</p> <p>A cage will be used when the handler is out of the office.</p>

<p>Direct interaction with children/staff -If the school dog is allowed to interact when not in the correct frame of mind children/ staff could be scratched.</p>	<p>No interaction is allowed without authorisation. Interaction will be cancelled if the school dog shows signs of a change in behaviour or willingness.</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Ensure that the school dog is approached in the agreed manner. Ensure that pupils are supervised at all times. Carry out initial visits with the dogs to allow them to get used to the school environment.</p> <p>The puppy will not have any direct contact with children unless approved and in the presence of their parents.</p>
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Focus: Pupils and staff interaction with the school dog

Reason: To ensure the school dog is effectively supported to interact appropriately at all times.

Hazard and who will it affect?	Control Measure	Risk Rating	Further Action
<p>Incorrect/inconsistent interaction with the school dog - If a child/adult interact with the school dog in the incorrect or inconsistent way this will affect the school dog's mental and physical wellbeing and have a negative impact on future interaction.</p>	<p>Agreed guidelines that must be followed at all times when interacting with the school dog. There cannot be any interaction with the school dog without authorisation.</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>If there are any inconsistencies in approach with the school dog the adult/child will have the interaction stopped. Pupils will be educated how to interact with the school dog's in positive and respectful way. Education of this nature is continually given to children, through values lessons these are often delivered as a whole school during assemblies or in PSHE lessons.</p> <p>The puppy will not have any direct contact with children unless approved and in the presence of their parents.</p>
<p>Pupil/staff knowledge of interaction with a puppy/dog -If adults and children have limited knowledge of how to interact correctly this could result in harm to the school dog or themselves.</p>	<p>Share with pupils the Dogs' Trust's information on conduct 'Be Dog Smart'. Set out the expectations and clearly outline the dog's likes and dislikes.</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>There will be an agreed format for how to interact with the school dog. Pupils will be taught what to do to prevent the dog from chasing them. (i.e. stand still, cross arms) https://www.learnwithdogstrust.org.uk/be-dog-smart/</p>

Focus: Hygiene/Health

Reason: To ensure that pupils, staff and the school dog do not have an increased risk of illness as a result of the school dog being in school.

Hazard and who will it affect?	Control Measure	Risk Rating	Further Action
<p>Worms/fleas -If the school dog is not treated for worms there is a danger that</p>	<p>The school dog will be treated regularly to ensure they are correctly treated for worms and fleas.</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>The school dog will have had a yearly health check by the vet, and be groomed regularly to monitor. If they do appear to have worms or fleas, they are to be treated by the vet.</p>

germs can be transferred to humans.			The puppy will have regular checks and be wormed at 2,4,6,8 and 12 weeks. It would have completed its course of vaccinations before attending the school site.
Faeces -If a child/adult come into contact with the school dog's faeces some germs could be transferred.	The dog will be trained to toilet in an area of the school that our pupils' don't have access to on a regular bases, if required the area will then be disinfected with an appropriate animal disinfectant. The school dog will be walked before they undertake a visit. No child will be asked to pick up the dog's faeces, this will always be undertaken by the adult in supervision.	Low	If a child finds faeces on the school field/playground they will report it to an adult. An area will be designated as the dog toileting area, if the puppy goes outside this area it will be picked up immediately and disinfected if required.
Allergies -If a child is allergic to dogs they could become unwell.	Children can only be in contact with the school dog once the school has written permission from parents/guardians. If a child has an allergy the school dog will not carry out tasks near the child.	Medium	The office that the dog will be situated will be vacuumed after every visit. Parents 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. The puppy breed is known to be hypoallergenic, however parents will still be informed, and staff made aware of any pupils who have a dog allergy.
Cleaning hands after interacting with the school dog -If hands are not cleaned children/adults could become unwell.	All adults and children will clean their hands after interaction with the school Dog.	Low	Ensure children and adults clean their hands Adults to be offered hand sanitiser once they have physically interacted with the puppy.
Contact with food preparation areas	The school dog will be in a contained area or on a lead at all times around school. The School dog will never enter the school kitchen.	Low	

- If the school dog enters a food preparation area this could be unhygienic.			
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Specific Risk Assessment			
Focus: Dog Interaction with pupils and staff once passed the Pets as therapy test			
Reason: To ensure the school dog interacts appropriately at all times.			
Hazard and who will it affect?	Control Measure	Risk Rating	Further Action
School dog biting a child or adult - Child or adult could be hurt if the school dog bites.	The school dog has been trained not to bite. When the dog is approached in the correct way there is very limited danger. Both dogs have been assessed against the Pets As Therapy Guidelines which also provides insurance.	Low	Ensure that children and adults do not interact with the school dog without supervision. Ensure that all interaction with the school dog is completed in the agreed way.
Jumping up/scratching - If a school dog becomes excited there is a danger that they could jump up and knock a child over or leave a scratch mark.	The temperament of the dogs is assessed by Pets As Therapy. If a dog does jump up on assessment they do not pass. No interaction will be made with any children unless the school has written permission from parents/guardians.	Medium	Ensure that children and adults do not interact with the school dog without supervision. The school dog will be enclosed in an office on a lead when people come to interact with an authorised adult.
Running loose - If the school dog was to run loose he could hurt children/ adults or damage property.	The school dog will be contained at all times either in an office (with a clear sign on the door), or with the door open with a safety gate to enclose the area. The dogs will be placed on a short lead when travelling through the school grounds.	Low	Monitor that the equipment used to contain the school dog is appropriate and effective.
Direct interaction with children/staff -If the school dog is allowed to interact when not in the correct	No interaction is allowed without authorisation. Interaction will be cancelled if the school dog shows signs of a change in behaviour or willingness.	Medium	Ensure that the school dog is approached in the agreed manner. Ensure that pupils are supervised at all times. Carry out initial visits with the dogs to allow them to get used to the school environment.

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Pupil/staff knowledge of interaction with a puppy/dog -If adults and children have limited knowledge of how to interact correctly this could result in harm to the school dog or themselves.	Share with pupils the Dogs' Trust's information on conduct 'Be Dog Smart'. Set out the expectations and clearly outline the dog's likes and dislikes.	Medium	There will be an agreed format for how to interact with the school dog. Pupils will be taught what to do to prevent the dog from chasing them. (i.e. stand still, cross arms) https://www.learnwithdogstrust.org.uk/be-dog-smart/

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Faeces	The dog will be trained to toilet in an area of the school that our pupils' don't have access to	Low	If a child finds faeces on the school field/playground they will report it to an adult.

<p>-If a child/adult come into contact with the school dog's faeces some germs could be transferred.</p>	<p>on a regular bases, if required the area will then be disinfected with an appropriate animal disinfectant. The school dog will be walked before they undertake a visit. No child will be asked to pick up the dog's faeces, this will always be undertaken by the adult in supervision.</p>		
<p>Allergies -If a child is allergic to dogs they could become unwell.</p>	<p>Children can only be in contact with the school dog once the school has written permission from parents/guardians. If a child has an allergy the school dog will not carry out tasks near the child.</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>The office that the dog will be situated will be vacuumed after every visit. Parents 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>Cleaning hands after interacting with the school dog -If hands are not cleaned children/adults could become unwell.</p>	<p>All adults and children will clean their hands after interaction with the school Dog.</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Ensure children and adults clean their hands</p>
<p>Contact with food preparation areas - If the school dog enters a food preparation area this could be unhygienic.</p>	<p>The school dog will be in a contained area or on a lead at all times around school. The School dog will never enter the school kitchen.</p>	<p>Low</p>	