



School Dog Risk Assessment

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 the rate of anxiety, simply by making the environment happier, more enjoyable and less forbidding. The team at Berkeley Primary School have been considering using dogs for school therapy for some time and the decision was made in March 2021 to go ahead with this.

The rationale behind this decision was as follows:

- For the school to use regular dogs from 3 members of staff that children can form positive interactions with and also be of benefit to the children's social and emotional development.
- For the dogs to be properly cared for outside of the school day.
- It is accepted that interacting with animals is not appropriate for all children but for some it has the potential to provide many positive benefits. Any parent who does not want their child to interact with the animals are invited to write to the school and inform them of their wishes. There are no diseases associated with the dogs as vets will be responsible for vaccinations, including rabies and completing regular health checks and necessary treatment. The dogs will also be fully insured.

The risk assessment below is a working document and will be checked annually by key staff and the governing body.

Hazard	Risk	Risk 1 – 5*	Controls in Place	Review date and Signature
Dog getting over excited when interacting with children.	Child knocked to the ground.	1	The dog will always be in the care of a responsible adult and will never be allowed to roam freely around the school premises.	
	Child scratched by dog.	3	Children will not be left unsupervised with the dog. The dog will always be on a lead or carried	

	Child bitten by dog.	4	<p>when they are not in their crate.</p> <p>Dogs must have a good temperament and be used to being around children</p> <p>Dogs must be at least 1 year old</p> <p>Pupils have been and will continue to be taught about the consequences of their actions. Education of this nature is continually given to children, and often to the whole school through assemblies and PSHE sessions.</p> <p>Pupils will be taught what to do to prevent the dog from chasing them.</p> <p>The dog will also undergo conditioning to the school classroom environment, this training will future therapy or reading sessions to involve the school dog can be done in a calming/therapeutic manner.</p> <p>All staff will have been introduced to the dog and expectations of having a school dog.</p> <p>They will attend the vets regularly to ensure they are in good health and that their claws are kept short.</p>	
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<p>The dog gets loose from their crate or lead.</p>	<p>As above</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>The dog's crate is big enough for them to be happy and safe during the school day and the children are taught not to tease them.</p> <p>If this should occur, staff will ensure they handle this situation swiftly.</p>	
<p>The dog causing allergies.</p>	<p>Children or staff have allergic reactions</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Parents have been asked to inform the school of any known allergies before the introduction of the dog to the school. A list of any children/staff who should not interact with the dog will kept on the school SIMs system.</p> <p>The 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 will be taught to wash their hands after active participation with the dog.</p>	
<p>Children getting germs from the dog.</p>	<p>Children or staff will contract diseases that can be carried by dogs.</p>	<p>1</p>	<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 way. They will be trained to toilet in an area of the grounds that children have limited access to. The area will be disinfected as required.</p> <p>All immunisations are kept up to date in accordance with the European Pet Passport Scheme and a record will be kept of this.</p>	

			<p>Flea treatment is carried out at 6 week intervals.</p> <p>The dog will not be allowed in the school dining hall at meal times; and never in the food preparation area.</p> <p>All staff and pupils are required to wash their hands after contact with dogs</p>	
Financial cost of the dog's upkeep.	School unable to afford the ongoing cost of the day to day upkeep or medical bills.	1	The dog is ultimately the responsibility of their owner both in a well-being and financial aspect.	
Claim is made against school about the dog.	School not adequately covered financially.		RPA Insurance will cover any claim. Certificate will be kept in office and renewed annually.	
Children misbehaving	Dog is put in a stressful situation		<p>Children are told in advance what to expect and how to behave.</p> <p>School staff are present at all time during the visit.</p> <p>School staff are ready to remove children who misbehave or upset dogs.</p>	

Can pets at home spread the new coronavirus (2019-nCoV)?

At present, there is **no evidence that companion animals / pets such as dogs or cats can be infected with the new coronavirus.** However, it is always a good idea to **wash your hands with soap and water after contact with pets.** This protects you against various common bacteria such as E. coli and Salmonella that can pass between pets and humans.

