



DOG POLICY

Date Approved by Board	February 2024
Next Review Due	August 2024

- **Introduction**

Children, young people, and vulnerable adults can benefit educationally, emotionally, increase their understanding of responsibility, and develop empathy and nurturing skills through contact with a dog. In addition to these benefits, children, young people, and vulnerable adults take great enjoyment from interaction with a dog.

- **Is there a risk in bringing a dog into a school environment?**

Of course, though there are a variety of accidents which can happen within the school environment which far exceed the number of injuries or incidents caused by a dog. Therefore, it is another risk that needs to be managed.

- **School Policy**

The dog will be owned by Nicola Marsh. The dog is a Dachshund, named Rita, chosen for its very mild temperament and non-moulting coat. She will be responsible for the dog's regular visits to the vets, injections, and inoculations.

The Senior Leadership Team have agreed that the school can have a dog.

Staff have been informed, through staff briefing, that the school will have a dog, at the Sandy Lane base. Parents have been informed that a dog will be at that base.

The risk assessment (**Appendix A**) will be reviewed annually.

In the event of an emergency evacuation the adult supporting the dog will accompany her to the Fire Evacuation point.

Staff, visitors and learners known to have allergic reactions to dogs must remain at a manageable distance. Parents must inform the school of any allergies on admission.

If the dog is unwell, she will not be allowed into school.

The dog will normally be kept on a lead and harness until fully trained when moving between classrooms or on a walk and will be under the full control and supervision of an adult.

Learners must never be left alone with the dog and there must always be appropriate adult supervision when the dog is present with learners.

Learners should be reminded of what is appropriate behaviour around the dog.

Learners should remain calm around the dog. They should not make sudden movements and must never stare into a dog's eyes as this could be threatening for the dog.

Learners should not put their face near a dog and should always approach it standing up.

Learners should never go near or disturb the dog when she is sleeping or eating. Learners must not be allowed to play too roughly with the dog.

If the dog is surrounded by many learners, the dog could become nervous and agitated. Therefore, the adult in charge of the dog must ensure that she monitors the situation.

Dogs express their feelings through their body language. Growling or baring of teeth indicate that the dog is feeling angry or threatened. Flattened ears, tail lowered or between their legs, hiding behind their owner, whining, or growling are signs that the dog is frightened or nervous. If the dog is displaying any of these warning signs she should be immediately removed from that situation or environment.

Children, young people, and vulnerable adults should not feed or eat close to the dog.

Children, young people, and vulnerable adults should always wash their hands after handling a dog. The school will provide anti-bacterial hand gel.

Any dog foul will be cleaned immediately and disposed of appropriately by an adult.

- **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Governing Body has a responsibility to ensure that the school has a written policy for dogs in School.

The Headteacher is responsible for implementing this policy.

Staff, children, young people, and vulnerable adults are required to abide by this policy.

The Health and Safety Officer is responsible for providing information, advice, and guidance as and when required.

Appendix A 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, young people, and vulnerable adults and lower the rate of anxiety, simply by making the environment happier, more enjoyable, and less forbidding.

The rationale behind this decision was as follows:

- For the school to have a pet that was able to live as naturally as conditions would allow.
- For the animal to be properly cared for outside of the school day.
- To have a pet that the children, young people, and vulnerable adults could interact with and also be of benefit to the children, young people, and vulnerable adults’ social and emotional development.

It is accepted that interacting with animals is not appropriate for all children, young people, and vulnerable adults but for some it has the potential to provide many positive benefits. Any parent who does not want their child to interact with Rita is invited to write to Nicola Marsh and inform her of their wishes.

There are no diseases associated with the dog as her vet will be responsible for vaccinations, including rabies and completing regular health checks and necessary treatment. A copy of Rita’s health records/passport will be updated and kept in school. Rita will also be 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
Dog getting over excited when interacting with children, young people, and vulnerable adults.	Learner 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.	July 2024
	Learner scratched by dog.	3	Children, young people, and vulnerable adults will not be left unsupervised with the dog.	
	Learner bitten by dog.	3	The dog will always be on a lead or carried when she is not in the school office while the children, young people, and vulnerable adults are in school. Learners have been and will continue to be taught about the consequences of their actions. Education of this nature is continually given to children, young people, and vulnerable adults, and often to the whole school through assemblies and PSHE sessions.	

			<p>Learners will be taught what to do to prevent the dog from chasing them.</p> <p>All staff will have been introduced to the dog and expectations of having a dog in school.</p> <p>The dog will attend the vets regularly to ensure she is in good health and that her claws are kept short.</p>	
The dog causing allergies.	Children, young people, and vulnerable adults or staff have allergic reactions	1	<p>Parents have been asked to inform the school of any known allergies before the introduction of the dog to the school.</p> <p>A list of any children, young people, and vulnerable adults/staff who should not interact with the dog will be kept in school.</p> <p>The children, young people, and vulnerable adults 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, young people, and vulnerable adults will be taught to wash their hands after active participation with the dog</p>	July 2024
Children, young people, and vulnerable adults getting germs from the dog.	Children, young people, and vulnerable adults or staff will contract diseases that can be carried by dogs.	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 way.</p> <p>She will be trained to toilet in an area of the grounds that children, young people, and vulnerable adults 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 regular intervals.</p> <p>The dog will not be allowed in the food preparation area.</p>	July 2024
Financial cost of the	School unable to	1	The dog is the responsibility of Nicola Marsh both in terms of both well-being	July 2024

dog's upkeep.	afford ongoing cost of the dog's day to day upkeep or medical bills		and financial. The dog will be insured by APTCOO for Public Liability Insurance. All vets' costs are covered by Nicola Marsh	
Dog becoming anxious or tired	Dog becomes irritable or distressed	1	Safe space in offices outlined above for "quiet time". Dog not to be disturbed when in this space. When dog is sleeping it will not be woken unless an emergency, which will be prompted by identified members of staff	July 2024
Fire alarm	Dog being left in building	1	Key member of staff will be responsible for removing dog from the building in each area. Dog will be 'signed in' as a member of staff so Fire Marshalls know when she is on site.	July 2024
Claim is made against school regarding behaviour of the dog	School not adequately covered financially	1	Insurance is the responsibility of the owner of the dog and will cover any claim. Certificate will be kept in the school office and renewed yearly.	July 2024

KEY:

1 - 2 = Low risk

3 - 4 = Medium risk of injury

5 = High risk of injury

