

Danesholme Infant and Danesholme Junior Academies

School Dog Policy

Introduction

Children can benefit educationally and emotionally, increase their understanding of responsibility and develop empathy and nurturing skills, through contact with a suitable, calm dog. In addition to these benefits, children take great enjoyment from interaction with animals. Beau is well cared for and responsibly owned by the Executive Principal and her family.

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

This policy shows that we have thought carefully about school life with a dog and how, through careful management, there is a very low risk of harm.

The academy Trust has agreed that the school can have a dog and parents have been informed by letter that the school will have a dog.

Reasons to have a School Dog

Numerous research studies have shown the benefits of dogs in schools. Dogs have been working in schools increasing numbers over the last few years.

Evidence indicates that benefits include:

- Cognitive – companionship with a dog stimulates memory, problem-solving and game-playing. Reading to a dog can be very beneficial as dogs give unconditional acceptance and are non judgemental. Dogs make amazing listeners.
- Social – a dog provides a positive mutual topic for discussion, encourages responsibility, wellbeing and focused interaction with others. Attendance for some pupils has improved because of a school dog.
- Emotional – a school dog improves self-esteem, acceptance from others and lifts mood, often provoking laughter and fun. Dogs can also teach empathy, compassion and respect for other living things as well as relieving anxiety. This has been known to reduce the percentage of violent or aggressive behaviour in school.
- Physical – interaction with a furry friend reduces blood pressure, provides tactile stimulation, assists with pain management, gives motivation to move, walk and stimulates the senses
- Environmental – a dog in a school increases the sense of a family environment, with all of the above benefits continuing long after the school day is over.

Context

- Beau is owned by Nikki Lamond
- Veterinary costs will be cover by the owner
- Beau is a Kerry Blue Terrier - chosen for her friendliness and non-moulting coat.
- The risk assessment (attached) will be reviewed annually
- Visitors and new pupils will be informed of the dog on arrival.

Day to day Management

Beau will:

- Not be allowed in school if she is unwell
- Be kept on a lead when moving between classrooms or on a walk
- Be under the full control and supervision of an adult at all times
- Have had all injections and these will be maintained annually

School Pupils will:

- NOT have sole responsibility for, or be left alone with Beau
- Be reminded of what is appropriate behaviour around Beau every time they meet her
 - Always remain calm
 - Be gentle
 - Do not put your face near Beau's
 - Do not disturb a dog that is eating or sleeping
 - Always approach Beau standing up
 - Do not feed the dog without permission
 - Never tease the dog
- Learn about how dogs express their feelings through body language. Growling or baring of teeth means that the dog feels threatened or angry. If Beau is displaying any of these signs she will be removed from the situation immediately.

Health and Safety Principles

Children will always wash their hands or use alcohol gel after handling the dog.

Any dog foul will be cleared up immediately and disposed of appropriately by the adult in charge of Beau at the time. Children must never be allowed to do this.

Concerns

Our school does have a 'no dogs' policy, however Beau will be the school dog and will be in school for a specific purpose. She will be on a lead at all times when moving around the school property and will always be accompanied by an adult. Beau will also be fully insured to carry out her role thus allowing her to be on the school site.

Some children may have had upsetting experiences and thus have a fear of dogs (or another animal). Experience and research have shown that, with proper guidance and handling, children can learn to overcome their fear of animals and grow in respect and appreciation for them.

It is understandable that some of you may be concerned about possible allergic reactions to a school dog. This terrier breed is known to be hypo-allergenic and non-moulting. Beau will be subjected to a thorough cleanliness and grooming regime. We will ask parents who are concerned to make the school aware if their child has an allergy.

Any parent who does not wish their child to interact with the school dog is invited to write to Mrs Lamond to inform her of their wishes.

Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually.

The impact of having a school dog will be monitored by the SLT and the local Academy Council.

Policy dated September 2021 – to be reviewed September 2022

Risk Assessment

Activity: Dog on school premises

| Hazard and Risk | Who could be harmed | What precautions are in place | What else can we do |
|---|-----------------------|--|--|
| Animal Health, diseases and parasites | Pupils/Staff/Visitors | Dog to have necessary vaccinations before coming into school Dog to have regular veterinary checks Dog to be bathed weekly Dog to live with family and owner when not in school Dog will not be allowed to come into contact with wild rodents due to possibility of disease transmission | |
| Dog excrement & urine - illness and falls/slips | Pupils/Staff/Visitors | Dog will be wormed. Dog will be vaccinated and kept free of fleas, ticks. Any excrement or urine will be cleaned up immediately and thoroughly disposed of responsibly and hygienically by the owner or adult with responsibility at the time of the incident Hand washing facilities close to where the dog will be. A bag containing poo bags/plastic bags, gloves will be carried by the member of the staff walking the dog. | Dog will be exercised out of school time twice a day. |
| Infection | Pupils/Staff/Visitors | The dog will be wormed 6 monthly, be administered flea control treatment 3 monthly and will be vaccinated annually. She will have 6 monthly check up with the vet. She will not be brought into school if She is ill. | Hand sanitiser will be kept in the spaces the dog will spend most of her time. |
| Hygiene | Pupils/Staff/Visitors | Adequate provision for hand washing Do not allow children to touch any part of their face with their hands before hands are washed Younger pupils should be seen washing their hands All wounds on exposed skin are suitably covered Soiled bedding/puppy pads disposed of in sealed plastic bags with normal refuse Food stuff stored carefully to prevent contamination and infestation Dog to be bathed weekly | |

| Hazard and Risk | Who could be harmed | What precautions are in place | What else can we do |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|---|---|
| Allergic reaction to dog | Pupils/Staff/Visitors | <p>Parents will be notified by letter and on the website that there will be a dog on site so if they have a child who is allergic to let the school know. If this occurs, we will ensure that the child does not come into close contact with the dog.</p> <p>Dog kept clean and groomed.</p> <p>Dog is a Kerry Blue Terrier which is a non moulting dog and hypo allergenic dog so this mean there is a very low chance of an allergic reaction to it.</p> <p>Dog bed/cage kept in the office where flow of children is minimal and controlled.</p> <p>Office kept well ventilated.</p> <p>Dog bed and blankets to be kept clean and to a high standard.</p> <p>First Aid available.</p> | <p>Teachers to be made aware of when the dog may be in the playground areas to ensure that children with allergies do not encounter the dog by chance.</p> |
| Control of the dog | Pupils/Staff/Visitors | <p>The dog will be kept on a lead at all times and under the full control and supervision of the staff that are allocated to her</p> <p>Pupils will never be left alone with the dog and there will be appropriate adult supervision at all times</p> <p>Pupils will be reminded of what is appropriate behaviour around dogs</p> <p>Pupils will be told not to put their face near the dog and will always approach it standing up</p> <p>Children will be told never to go near or disturb the dog while it is sleeping or eating</p> <p>Pupils must not be allowed to play too roughly with the dog</p> <p>Any interactions within a classroom environment, will be supervised, handled and managed by one of the handlers only. This provides consistency and increases confidence, whilst reducing risk.</p> | <p>Consideration will be given to the number of pupils who will be patting/stroking the dog. A large number of pupils could cause the dog to become nervous and agitated. Ongoing monitoring of the situation is vital. Since dogs cannot speak, the only way they can be understood is 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 displays any of these warning signs she should be immediately removed from the environment.</p> |
| Bites, cuts and scratches | Pupils/Staff/Visitors | <p>Staff/children known to have allergies/ phobias have restricted access to suit their needs.</p> <p>There will be no unsupervised contact with pupils.</p> <p>Dog closely supervised and kept under control in the school office.</p> <p>Pupils and staff will be made aware of the procedures of meeting and handling the dog.</p> | |

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| | | <p>First Aid available.</p> <p>Supervising adult to ensure dog not over petted to avoid any incidents. If dog appears anxious or over-stimulated, to be removed to peaceful surroundings</p> | |
| Dangers to the dog | | <p>Tidy the classroom floor before the dog enters</p> <p>Risks include moving of chairs, stepping on the dog, small objects being carried, chewed or destroyed, electric cabling, food, items being knocked over, pupils being knocked over, trips or falls.</p> | |
| Noise, barking | Pupils who can't cope with noise – e.g. autistic children | The dog is being introduced to the children from an early age so will be acclimatised to a noisy environment and therefore reduce the chance of it barking. | |
| Fire drill & evacuation of dog | Dog – locked in building | Keys to all offices that the dog may be in are held by several members of staff. | Dog will be under supervision of a member of staff at all times. |
| A third party could sue the school for injury caused by the dog | | The school will ensure that the animal is covered under their insurance policy and take out comprehensive cover | |