



RISK ASSESSMENT DOG IN SCHOOL



The aim of introducing a school therapy dog;

To have a dog that the children can learn how to care for, interact safely and will benefit their social and emotional development.

Please read this risk assessment in conjunction with our School Dog Policy.

Risk Assessment for:	A Dog in School	Date:	29 th February 2024
Assessor:	Leah Plant	Review Date:	Annually or if there are any changes (see below)

What are the Hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	Risk Rating	Current Control Measures	Risk Rating with Control Measures in place	Are risks adequately controlled for work task to go ahead, or will further control measures be required? (Detail any additional measures)	Action required by Whom	Date action required by
School Dog biting an adult or child. Claim made against the school if the dog bites.	Children Adults	Low	- Breed has been chosen specifically for temperament. - Visits to breeders to assess temperament and that of parents conducted - Full training and socialisation programme implemented. - Dog is well socialised with children - School insurance with RPA including public liability - Personal pet insurance also in place - Safety briefings with children and adults on how to safely interact with the dog. - Dog always approached in the specified way to minimise risk. - Dog will always be kept on a lead	Low	- Full therapy dog training with provider taking place with assessments. - Additional puppy training completed. - Children will not interact with the dog without supervision. - Ensure all interaction with the school dog is as per the policy. - Additional safety visits from the dogs trust		

Allergic reaction to pet hair	Children Adults	Low	- The breed is hypoallergenic and does not shed hair. - Up to date health care plans for children with known allergies - Dog will be groomed daily and receive regular grooming sessions from a professional. - Parents have been informed to let us know of any allergies and these children will not interact with the dog unless consent given by parents – spreadsheet kept in admin shared.	Low	- Individual children with known allergies – parents made aware. - Signage on front door asking visitors to inform us of any allergies.		
School Dog jumping up/scratching	Children Adults	Low	- Full training and socialisation programme implemented. - Children will not interact with the dog without adult supervision. - Dog will always be kept on a lead outside of the office/crate. - Safety briefings with children and adults on how to safely interact with the dog. - Dog always approached in the specified way to minimise risk. - Regular grooming sessions	Low	- Full therapy dog training with provider taking place. - Additional puppy training completed. - Children will not interact with the dog without supervision. - Ensure all interaction with the school dog is as per the policy. - Additional safety visits from the dogs trust		
Dog getting over excited when interacting with children	Children Adults	Low	- Full training and socialisation programme implemented. - Children will not interact with the dog without adult supervision. - Dog will always be kept on a lead - Safety briefings with children and adults on how to safely interact with the dog. - Dog always approached in the specified way to minimise risk.	Low	- Full therapy dog training with provider taking place with assessments. - Additional puppy training completed. - Children will not interact with the dog without supervision. - Ensure all interaction with the school dog is as per the policy. - Additional safety visits from the dogs trust		
Keeping safe when walking the dog	Children	Low	- Dog will always be kept on a lead outside of the office/crate. - Children will not interact with the dog without adult supervision	Low	Full therapy dog training with provider taking place with assessments.		

			- Children may walk the dog in small groups with a member of staff. - The member of staff will pick up any excrement and remind children to wash hands when back in school. - The dog will be on a short lead whilst walking around school.		- Additional puppy training completed. - Children will not interact with the dog without supervision. - Ensure all interaction with the school dog is as per the policy. - Additional safety visits from the dogs trust		
Visits to classroom	Children Adults If the school dog visits a classroom, they may become overexcited.	Low	- Full training and socialisation programme implemented. - Children will not interact with the dog without adult supervision. - Dog will always be kept on a lead outside of the office/crate. - Safety briefings with children and adults on how to safely interact with the dog. - Dog always approached in the specified way to minimise risk.	Low	- Careful consideration will be given to when the dog can visit classrooms. - Agreed guidelines/procedure discussed with children and staff regularly.		
Hygiene/illness	Children Adults If the dog is unwell then they might interact in a different way.	Low	- Should the dog defecate on the school site a member of staff will clear it up immediately and dispose of it in a safe manner. The area will be sanitised. - All immunisations and vet checks for the dog will be kept up to date. - The dog will not attend school if she is ill and will have a flexible timetable.	Low	- The dog will be always supervised so excrement can be cleared up immediately. - Disposal of doggy bags in the general waste bin in the carpark away from children. - Dog is trained to use the toilet outside and bark if needs to go.		
Children are scared of the dog.	Children Adults	Low	- Parents have been asked to inform school if their child does not want to be in close contact with the dog. List is kept by office staff. - Parents will be offered a programme of support for the child to overcome fear.	Low	Signage to inform all visitors that there is a therapy dog in school.		
Fire alarm/lock down	The dog may become agitated/scared.	Low	School dog will be signed in with Mrs Plant each day.	Low	Regular exposure to the fire alarm sound.		

	School dog may be left in the building during an evacuation.		• Fire marshals will be aware of the dogs presence. • The supervising adult will be responsible for getting the school dog to safety.		• School dog to take part in any drills.		
Financial upkeep of the dog	School unable to afford day-to-day cost/medical bills for the dog.	Low	• The dog is the responsibility of Mrs Plant and she is responsible for all of the care and day-to-day costs of the dog including food, equipment and care. • The dog is always the responsibility of Mrs Plant. • Pet Insurance liability insurance is covered under the schools existing RDA policy. • Private pet insurance to cover any vet bills will be provided and paid for by Mrs Plant.	Low			
Running loose	Children Adults	Low	• School dog will be supervised by an adult at all times. • The school dog will be contained at all times either in a room (with signage) or on a lead. • A safe space will be used if the dog has to be left alone in the office.	Low	• Ensure that staff and children know the procedure to follow if they see the dog unsupervised.		
Destruction of property	The school dog may chew/destroy school materials/resources.	Low	• School dog will be supervised by an adult at all times. • School dogs will be provided with their own chew toys.	Low	• Full therapy dog training with provider taking place with assessments. • Additional puppy training completed. • Focus in training on distraction techniques.		
Being Fed	Children Adults If children try to interact with the dog when they are eating they may respond aggressively	Low	• No child will be allowed in the dog's contained area whilst they are eating. • Children will not interact with the dog whilst they are eating.	Low	• No mealtimes at school		

Use of rewards/treats	Children Adults Could be harmed if the dog is overexcited when food/treats is nearby.	Low	- Treats will only be given to the dog with authorisation and supervision by Mrs Plant. - Children will be shown how to give the dog treats safely - Children and staff wash their hands after interaction with the dog.	Low	- Full therapy dog training with provider taking place with assessments. - Additional puppy training completed. - Focus in training on taking treats nicely with the command 'gently'.		
School events	Children Adults If the dog gets overwhelmed, they may become boisterous.	Low	- The dog will only attend school events if they are appropriate. - They will be under the control of a supervising adult at all times.	Low	- Monitor the dogs reaction to school events - If the school events are too overwhelming, the dog will not attend school. - Promote early socialisation and exposure to events when the dog is still a puppy.		
Other dogs (on and off site)	If the dog encounters another dog, they may become boisterous and excited.	Low	- No other dogs will be allowed on the premises. - The dog will not be walked off the school site with children.	Low	Promote socialisation with other dogs.		

Review Date	Reviewed By	Amendment
29/05/24	L Plant	Training updates
June 2025	L Plant	No changes
June 2026	L Plant	No changes

Risk Ratings	Example impact (Including but not limited to)
High	Likely to happen and likely to result in the fatality of one or more individuals. Potential for a frequently occurring serious and life threatening injury.
Medium	Unlikely to happen but if it did it would certainly result in at least minor illness, injury or equipment damage. Could occasionally result in a serious injury, illness or equipment damage. Although rarely, could result in death or serious and life threatening injuries.
Low	Unlikely to occur but if it does it is likely to result in minor illness, injury or equipment damage and could, but is unlikely to, result in a significant injury, illness or equipment damage with over 3 days absence