Water Orton Primary

School Dog Policy

Rationale and Aim

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

This policy outlines the manner on which the school will ensure the safety of staff, pupils, parents and visitors with regard to the school dog and the well-being of the school dog.

It also outlines the school's stance on other dogs on the school site.

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

Yes, there is. It is a risk that needs to be managed. A thorough risk assessment has been carried out.

Policy

- Dogs (other than the school dog and assistance dogs) are not allowed on the school site at any time.
- Assistance dogs are permitted. Please speak to the headteacher and site manager should you need to access the school site with an assistance dog so that support can be provided.
- School dogs are owned by a member. During the school day they will be based in staff areas such as the offices. Students will not be allowed access to dogs unless consent is given by parent/guardian and it is for a specific pastoral intervention.
- Dogs are chosen because of their intelligence, response to training and like of children. They should be very sociable and friendly. They should also have specific puppy training.
- Staff, parents and children will be informed by newsletter and parent mail that a dog will be in school. A risk assessment has been produced and this will be reviewed annually.
- Staff, visitors and children known to have allergic reactions to dogs must not go near the dog. All visitors will be informed on arrival that there is a dog in school. The school will ensure that the dog is kept separate from these children. (See Risk Assessment).
- If the dog is ill they will not be allowed into school.
- The dog will be kept on a lead when moving around the school site or on a walk and will be under the full control and supervision of a named adult.
- Children must never be left alone with the dog and there must be appropriate adult supervision at all times.
- Children should be reminded of what is appropriate behaviour around the dog. Children 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. Children should not put their face near a dog and should always approach it standing up.
- Children should never go near or disturb the dog that is sleeping or eating.
- Children must not be allowed to play roughly with the dog. Everyone must wait until the dog is sitting or lying down before touching or stroking them. Hands must be washed after coming in contact with the dog.
- If the dog is surrounded by a large number of children, the dog could become nervous and agitated. Therefore, the adult in charge of the dog must ensure that s/he monitors the situation. Groups of no more than 3-5 at any given time so that he doesn't feel overwhelmed. The dog will not go on playground at playtimes.
- Dogs express their feelings through their body language. Growling or bearing 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 he should be immediately removed from that particular situation or environment.

- Children should not eat close to the dog.
- Children should be careful to stroke the dog on their body, chest, back and not by the face or top of head. Children will be reminded of this directly before interacting with the dog.
- Children should always wash their hands after handling a dog.
- Any dog foul should be cleaned immediately and disposed of appropriately.
- Parents will be consulted on allowing their children access to the dog and will sign permission forms if they wish for this intervention to occur.
- All visitors will be informed about the dog and related protocols on arrival and office staff will relay visitor issues to the Headteacher ASAP.
- The dog will be included in the fire evacuation procedure under the supervision of the adult he is with at the time of an evacuation.
- If someone reports having an issue with the dog, this information must be passed to the Head Teacher or site manager as soon as possible. All concerns will be responded to by the Head Teacher.
- The Governing Body has a responsibility to ensure that the school has a written policy for dogs in School.
- The Headteacher along with the site manager is responsible for implementing this policy.
- Teachers, staff, students, parents and visitors are required to abide by this policy.
- The curriculum will support learning about dogs and how best to behave around our dog. This will include highlighting that not all dogs are well trained and that caution must be used around unknown dogs outside school.

  Please see the additional information on our school website:

  Benefits of having a dog in school
  Frequently Asked Questions
  Risk Assessment

3. Monitoring and Evaluation

The effectiveness of this policy will be regularly monitored.

4. Implementation and Review

This policy will be circulated to all school staff and published on the school website for parent/carer information. The policy will be reviewed annually.

To be reviewed annually

Last review Sept 2026

Next review due Sept 2027