Water Orton Primary School

School Dog Risk Assessment

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'Be The Best You Can Be'

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 Water Orton have been considering adopting a dog as a school therapy pet for some time and the decision was made in Spring 2022 to go ahead with the project when Mr Taylor and his family suggested the use of 'Rosie' for this project.

The rationale behind this decision was as follows:

- For the school to have a pet that was able to live as a normal family dog and spend some time in the school environment
- For the animal to be properly cared for outside of the school day.
- To have a pet that the children could interact with and also be of benefit to the children's social and emotional development.

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 'Rosie is invited to write to Mrs Smith and inform her of their wishes. For those children who will in future have close contact with Rosie for extended periods of time, permission will be sought from parents.

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

Hazard	Risk	Risk 1 – 5*	Controls in Place	Review date
Dog getting over excited when interacting with children.	Child knocked to the ground. Child scratched by dog. Child bitten by dog.	1 3 4	The dog will always be in the care of a responsible adult and will never be allowed to roam freely around the school premises. Children will not be left unsupervised with the dog. The dog will always be on a lead in open areas. when she is not in her crate, except when she is undergoing structured training with his primary trainer or a trainer from 'Ability Dogs' 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. Pupils will be taught what to do to prevent the dog from chasing them.	Autumn 2027

			The dog will undergo formal training with an experienced ability dog trainer. 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. Risk of scratching and biting will reduce and the risk assessment will be reviewed as she progresses through her weekly training. All staff will have been introduced to the dog and expectations of having a school dog. She will attend the vets regularly to ensure she is in good health and that her claws are kept short.	
The dog is causing allergies	Pupils and staff	1	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. 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. Children will be taught to wash their hands after active participation with the dog.	Autumn 2027
Children or staff getting germs from the dog	Children or staff will contract diseases that can be carried by dogs.	1	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. She will be trained to toilet in an area of the grounds that children have limited access to. The area will be disinfected as required. All immunisations are kept up to date in accordance with the European Pet Passport Scheme and a record will be kept of this. Flea treatment is carried out at 6 week intervals. The dog will not be allowed in the school dining hall at meal times; and never in the food preparation area.	Autumn 2027
Financial cost of the dog	School unable to afford the ongoing cost of the Rosie's day to day upkeep or medical bills.	1	The dog is ultimately the responsibility of Mr Taylor both in a well-being and financial aspect as she is a family pet.	Autumn 2027
Claim is made against school about the dog.	School not adequately covered financially.	1	Insurance will cover any claim. Certificate will be kept in office and renewed annually.	Autumn 2027