

John Spendluffe Technology

School Dog Risk Assessment

Includes:

- **Purpose and introduction**
- **Interaction with pupils and staff**
- **Pupils and staff interaction with the school dog**
- **Hygiene/Health**
- **Activities involving the school dog, including walking**

School Dog Risk Assessment Purpose

- Dogs teach children responsibility.** Having to remember to feed, provide water and show support for a dog can give children a sense of importance and satisfaction that they can't get from school or other chores. The relationship that develops can be life-changing for a child and a great support system as they themselves continue to grow and develop.
- Dogs teach children patience.** Dogs do not always do as they are told first time!
- Dogs teach children compassion.** Just like humans, dogs feel emotion and pain. They are prone to injuries and the infirmities of age during their relatively short lives.
- Dogs teach children about socialisation.** Like most of us, dogs are social animals who enjoy and need attention and affection. By learning how to interact with a dog, children can learn how to better socialise with other children. If they can learn the social cues of a dog, then interacting with humans who can talk will be a walk in the park (pun intended).
- Dogs are fun.** Last, but certainly not least, dogs are a lot of fun. They greet you with a wagging tail every day and can cheer you up even on your worst day.

Many people have studied dogs in attempts to decipher their behaviour, and the theories abound. However, you just have to witness the interactions between dogs and children to realise the potential for greatness. Dogs can sense when children with epilepsy are about to have a seizure, they can sense when a diabetic child's sugar is low, and they can help children with severe physical disabilities find happiness in life. With the proper supervision, a dog can enrich a child's life, they provide comfort and support to reduce stress, anger and anxiety.

Area: Interaction with pupils and staff				
Reason: To ensure the school dog interacts appropriately at all times				
Step 1 Identify the hazards	Step 2 Who might be harmed & how?	Step 3 What are you already doing?	Risk Rating Trivial / low / medium / high / stop	Step 4 Is anything further needed?
School dog biting a child or adult	Child or adult could be hurt if the school dog bites	The school dog is being trained not to bite. When the dog is approached in the correct way there is very limited danger. He lives with Mr Curtis and family. Mr Curtis handles him all the time to ensure that he is used to interaction with children	Low	Ensure that children and adults do not interact with the school dog without supervision. Ensure that all interaction with the school dog is completed in the agreed way
Jumping up / scratching	If the school dog becomes excited there is	The temperament of the dog and the	Medium	Ensure that children and

	a danger that he could jump up and knock a child over or leave a scratch mark	agreed training programme has involved not jumping up with praise/rewards being given when successful. Parents must explain to their child and ask them not to approach the dog if they do not want any contact		adults do not interact with the school dog without supervision. The school dog will be enclosed in Mr Curtis' office when people come to interact with him or under lead control by an authorised adult
Running loose	If the school dog was to run loose he could hurt children/adults or damage property	The school dog will be contained at all times either in an office (with a clear sign on the door) or on a lead	Low	Monitor that the equipment used to contain the school dog is appropriate and effective
Allergies	Students/staff/visitors with allergies	Students are asked to identify any allergies when they join, they are to behave in the same way as they would walking down a street; avoid interaction with the dog. Mr Curtis aware of specific students, if he needs to speak with them this won't be in his office or when he has the dog.	Low	Regular remind at the start of each year or when new student arrives. Always seek medical information from families/doctors regarding the allergy specifics.
Direct interaction with children/staff	If the school dog is allowed to interact when not in the correct frame of mind children/ staff could be scratched	No interaction is allowed without authorisation. Interaction will be cancelled if the school dog shows signs of incorrect behaviour. Rewards/praise will be given to reinforce the desired behaviour	Medium	Ensure that the dog is approached in the agreed manner
Barking	Loud noise could startle/scare people.	Share during assemblies types of behaviours dogs display in the normal day to day life, reassure that this is a natural response.	Low	Regular remind at the start of each year or when new student arrives.
Destruction of materials	If allowed the school dog may chew/destroy some school materials/resources	The school dog will be contained at all times. The school dog will have his own toys to play with and	Low	Monitor that the equipment used to contain the school dog is appropriate

		normal school resources will be removed		
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Area: Pupils and staff interaction with the school dog				
Reason: To ensure the school dog is effectively supported to interact appropriately at all times				
Step 1 Identify the hazards	Step 2 Who might be harmed & how?	Step 3 What are you already doing?	Risk Rating Trivial / low / medium / high / stop	Step 4 Is anything further needed?
Incorrect / inconsistent interaction with dog	If a child/adult interact with the school dog in the incorrect or inconsistent way this will affect the school dogs training and have a negative impact on future interaction	Agreed guidelines that must be followed at all times when interacting with the school dog. There cannot be any interaction with the school dog without authorisation	Medium	If there are any inconsistencies in approach with the school dog the adult/child will have the interaction stopped
Use of rewards / treats	Children and adults could be harmed if the school dog is over excited when receiving a reward/treat. Children/adult must clean their hands after handling treats	Sanitiser will be available to all. Treats will only be given to the school dog with authorisation	Low	Reminders to the children to wash hands / use sanitiser after handling treats. Treats to be locked away to ensure they can only be used after authorisation
Pupil/staff knowledge of interaction with a puppy / dog	If adults and children have limited knowledge of how to interact correctly this could result in harm to the school dog or themselves	The dog will always be supervised, students will be educated on the appropriate manner in which to interact with him	Medium	There will be an agreed format for how to interact with the school

Area: Activities involving the school dog, including walking
Reason: To ensure that the school dog has a meaningful and safe impact on the school community

Step 1 Identify the hazards	Step 2 Who might be harmed & how?	Step 3 What are you already doing?	Risk Rating Trivial / low / medium / high / stop	Step 4 Is anything further needed?
Worms / fleas	If the school dog is not treated for worms there is a danger that germs can be transferred to humans	The school dog will be treated monthly at a local vets to ensure he is correctly treated for worms and fleas	Low	Monitor that vet visits happen promptly and take actions suggested by the vet
Faeces	If a child/adult come into contact with the school dog's faeces some germs could be transferred	The school dog will only be walked under supervision. No child will be asked to pick up the dog's faeces, this will always be undertaken by the adult in supervision	Low	If a child finds faeces on the School field/playground they will report it to an adult
Visits to classroom	If the school dog visits a class and the children do not follow the correct procedure he may become over excited	The school dog will initially only make classroom visits with Mr Curtis. The children in classrooms will follow the agreed procedure or interaction will stop	Medium	Careful consideration will be given to when the school dog can visit classrooms and be under the control of the class teacher or teaching assistant
Being fed	If a child tries to interact when the school dog is eating he may respond aggressively	No child will be allowed in the school dog's contained area when he is eating. Children may prepare the food for the school dog (washing their hands afterwards). All feeding will be supervised, however it would be rare for feeding to occur during school hours	Low	Reminders to the children giving a treat to the school dog to not interact when he is eating
School events	If the school dog is overwhelmed he may become aggressive or boisterous	The school dog will only attend school events if they are appropriate and he will be under the control of a supervising adult	Low	Monitor the school dog's reaction to school events. If the school events are too overwhelming the school dog might not attend school on that day
Other dogs (on and off the site)	If the school dog is overwhelmed he may become aggressive or boisterous	At no time will the school dog be walked by a child and as a result if another dog is seen this will be dealt with by the supervising adult	Low	Monitor the school dog's reaction when out walking