

Anns Grove Primary-Dogs in schools risk assessment

The value of pet therapy is widely accepted as a powerful aid to stimulation and communication. Studies have shown the presence of companion animals can improve the wellbeing of children (and staff) and lower the rate of anxiety, simply by making the environment happier, more enjoyable and less overwhelming.

The rationale behind this decision is as follows:

- For the school to have a pet that was able to live as naturally as conditions would allow
- For the animal to be properly cared for outside the school day.
- To have a pet that the children could interact with, and 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 that does not want their child to interact with the dog is invited to write to Miss Farrar and inform her of their wishes. Parents of children who will be working with the dog in small groups will be required to complete an 'Animal Assisted Therapy' form.

There are no diseases associated with the dog as her vet administers required vaccinations, regular health checks and necessary treatment. A copy of the dog's health records will be updated and kept in school. The dog will also be covered by public liability insurance.

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

HAZARD	WHO IS AFFECTED/AT RISK	RISK RATING (LOW, MEDIUM, HIGH)	ACTIONS/CONTROL MEASURES	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
Bites, scratches or illness/injuries caused by the dog	Staff, pupils and handlers	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The dog will always be in the care of a designated handler. • A designated handler is a member of staff who has read the policy and risk assessment fully and has received appropriate training. • The dog will never be left unattended. • The dog will never be allowed to roam freely around the school premises. • The dog will always be kept on a lead when moving between classrooms or on a walk with the handler. • Room where the dog has rest sessions has a child proof lock or gate • Children will never be left unsupervised with the dog. • The dog will undertake 'Pets as Therapy' training. Evidence to be recorded by school. • School dog is regularly treated for fleas and worms and vaccinations are up to date. • Dog will have regular trips to groomers to ensure claws are kept short. • Dogs are groomed before the visit • All staff and pupils are required to wash their hands after contact with dogs • Handlers clear up dog urine and faeces promptly and dispose of this safely – pupils are told to stay away • Dogs are not taken anywhere near food preparation areas • First aid kit is held in the office and handler also has a kit. 	AF/JC/KJ AF for health records and organisation of training AF to ensure regular grooming visits for maintenance of dog nails. JC to complete records of training undertaken

HAZARD	WHO IS AFFECTED/AT RISK	RISK RATING (LOW, MEDIUM, HIGH)	ACTIONS/CONTROL MEASURES	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
Allergies	Staff and pupils	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We seek parental permission for children to interact with dogs Alternative activities are provided in a separate room for those with allergies All parents/carers and members of the school community will be informed via the website, newsletters and letter home that there will be a dog on site and asked to notify of any allergies or phobias. A list of staff and pupils who should not interact with the dog should be kept in school. Class teachers will have a list of pupils who have an allergy to the dog and this information will be shared with those that need it. Children will be taught hygiene rules and importance of handwashing in the pre-briefing session. Areas used by the dog and handler will be kept well ventilated. First aid kit is held in the main office and handler also has a kit. 	<p>Business Manager for phobia list.</p> <p>Parental permissions obtained by the session leader/dog handler.</p> <p>Pre-brief sessions run by dog handler.</p>
Phobias	Staff and pupils	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We tell parents and children about the visit in advance All parents/carers and members of the school community will be informed via the website, newsletters and letter home that there will be a dog on site and asked to notify of any allergies or phobias. Contact with dogs is optional Alternative activities are provided in a separate room for those with a phobia 	AF/JC/Office team

HAZARD	WHO IS AFFECTED/AT RISK	RISK RATING (LOW, MEDIUM, HIGH)	ACTIONS/CONTROL MEASURES	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
Activities and games involving the dog	Staff, pupils, dogs and handlers	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handler(s) remain with dogs at all times • Nominated handlers are JC/KJ only • Dog on short lead at all times in school/long lead for activities 	AF/JC/KJ
Potential trip hazards			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handler(s) speak to school staff in advance and make sure the area and activity is safe 	
Noise/barking			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We check with the handler(s) and set a limit for the number of children who can interact with a dog at once 	
Fire drill and evacuation			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handler(s) clean up urine and faeces straightaway • School staff remove children who misbehave or upset dogs • If repeated barking occurs dog should be removed to calm space by the handler and proposed activities reviewed. • Ear defenders available for those pupils who require them • We set a time limit on activities as recommended by handlers, so dogs do not get tired • If the dog appears anxious or over-stimulated- she will be removed to her calm space in Miss Farrar's office. • Miss Farrar or Mrs Christopher/Mrs Jenkinson will be responsible for leading the dog from the building to the assembly point. 	
Children misbehaving/interacting inappropriately with the dog	Pupils, dogs and handlers	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children are told in advance what to expect and how to behave • Children will have a pre-brief session including rules for petting the dog/dog body language. • School staff are present at all time during the visit • School staff are ready to remove children who misbehave or upset dogs 	AF/JC/KJ

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HAZARD	WHO IS AFFECTED/AT RISK	RISK RATING (LOW, MEDIUM, HIGH)	ACTIONS/CONTROL MEASURES	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
Damage caused to school materials, equipment and the school site	Dogs	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dogs remain on a lead at all times • Dogs are kept in secured rooms, with closed doors/gate • Handlers use dog toys in AF's office when needed • Areas/classrooms are cleared as much as possible before dogs visit 	AF/JC/KJ
Financial cost of the dog's upkeep/financial liability	School budget/School governors and leadership team	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The dog will be insured by the school and be covered for School Liability Insurance. • All veterinary fees are covered by Tesco Pet Insurance- private insurance paid for by the headteacher. • Regular cost of grooming, flea and worming treatments met by the headteacher. • Records kept of treatments and vaccinations 	Headteacher/Business Manager for PL insurance Ann Farrar vets fees and costs.