

Penryn College
School Dog Policy

Introduction

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.

There are risks bringing a dog in to the school, though there are a variety of accidents, which can happen within the school environment which far exceed the number of injuries or incidents caused by a dog. Therefore, it is just another risk that needs to be managed. A thorough risk assessment has been carried out and this is included in this document (see Penryn College School Dog Risk Assessment).

Dogs are not allowed anywhere on the school site at any time unless specifically authorised by the Head Teacher. This includes drop off and collection times. This policy outlines measures put in place to allow the school dog to be present.

School Policy

The dog will be owned by Mrs Marsh.

- The Governors have the right to refuse entry to the dog.
- Only the school dog is allowed on the premises. All other dogs must not come on site unless they are a known therapy or assistance dog, or it has been agreed through the SLT as part of an educational visit and the Head Teacher has been informed beforehand.
- The dog is a cockapoo, chosen because they are a loyal, intelligent and friendly breed that respond well to training and are sociable and friendly. A cockapoo also has the added advantage of being a hypoallergenic breed which will minimise the risks posed by allergies. The dog has been sourced from an experienced and recognised dog breeder. Her dogs are praised for their excellent temperament and have been raised around children without incident.
- The Chair of Governors and the governing board agree that a school dog will benefit the children and staff of Penryn College.
- Staff, parents and children have been informed by the website that a dog will be in school and children of classes that the dog will be working with have been further informed via a letter.
- Mrs Marsh has produced a risk assessment, 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.
- If the dog is ill he will not be allowed into school.
- The dog will be kept on a lead when moving between classrooms or on a walk and will be under the full control and supervision of a trained 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 him.
- 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.
- 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 his body, chest, back and not by his face or top of head.
- 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 pupils access to the dog.
- Appropriately trained staff will maintain records and anecdotal evidence of the work and impact of the school dog.
- The dog will be included in the fire evacuation procedure under the supervision of Mrs Marsh.

Actions

If someone reports having an issue with the dog, this information must be passed to a member of SLT as soon as possible.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body has a responsibility to ensure that the school has a written policy for dogs in School.

The Head teacher is responsible for implementing this policy.

Teachers, staff, pupils, 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.

Appendix 1

Reasons to have a dog in school

In summary, academic research has shown that dogs working and helping in the school environment can achieve the following:-

- 1) Improve academic achievement
- 2) Increase literacy skills
- 3) Calming behaviours
- 4) Increase social skills and self-esteem
- 5) Increase confidence
- 6) Teach responsibility and respect to all life
- 7) Help prevent truancy
- 8) Motivate children who are often less attentive

The following information has been taken from a range of sources to provide further detail about the benefits of having a dog in school:

Behaviour:

In some schools, dogs are making a difference in the behaviour of pupils. Researchers report that students can identify with animals, and with empathy for the dog, can better understand how classmates may feel. It was found that violent behaviour in participating students declined by 55%, and general aggression went down 62%. Students' behaviour improved towards teachers, and students also showed more confidence and responsibility. Additionally, parents reported that children seemed more interested in school as a result of having a dog at school.

Attendance:

Dogs can be used to encourage pupils with low attendance to improve their engagement with school. This can be done through interventions such as meet and greet at the start of each day.

Education:

Dogs can be incredibly calm and happy to have students read to them or join a group of children in the library whilst they are having a book reading session. Dogs give unconditional acceptance, as they are non-judgmental, which is especially crucial to struggling, emerging readers. Children who might be embarrassed to read aloud to the class or even adults are likely to be less scared to read to a dog. Dogs are used to encourage students who find reading difficult to practise reading aloud. Research has proved that students who read to dogs show an increase in reading levels, word recognition, a higher desire to read and write, and an increase in intra and interpersonal skills among the students they mix with. In a recent study involving a reading programme with dogs, pupils' word reading improved by 7 words per minute over a 6 monthly period compared to those that did not incorporate a reading dog.

Social Development:

Dogs in school offer an opportunity for improving social development. They are especially useful for teaching students social skills and responsibility. Specifically, schools are using dogs to help older students build self-esteem; learn about positive and negative reinforcement, responsibility, and boundaries. Older students use dogs to help communicate, teach kindness, and empower students.

With a dog in school, students have the opportunity to learn how to care for the animal. This includes walking and grooming. Researchers report that involving students in the daily care of classroom dogs is a positive experience, promoting their own daily care. The students also learn about responsibility, caring, and sharing when helping each other take care of a dog at school.

As a reward:

Dogs will be gentle and loving, but at the same time full of fun and enjoyment for the students. Those students who have performed incredibly well during the week or those who have made progress in a certain subject, or those who have achieved tasks set for them, may be rewarded with spending time to interact with the school dog. Support Dogs can work with students on a one-one basis and will especially help those students who have been bullied, abused, going through upsetting/difficult times or even scared/phobic of dogs. The dog will bring much joy and help to the students they meet.

Appendix 2

School Dog Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Who is the legal owner of the dog and who pays for its costs?

The legal owner of the dog will be Mrs Marsh; she will bear the costs associated with owning the dog; the school budget will support insurance and staff training costs where appropriate.

Is the dog from a reputable breeder?

Yes. The dog is from a home where both parents were seen and has been specifically chosen for its temperament and characteristics of the breed e.g. hypoallergenic.

Will the dog be a distraction?

The dog will be kept in the ARB office, giving him space as well as removing him from the busy classroom environment. The children will be made aware of the dog's area. The classroom will be suitably arranged to ensure that children wish to avoid contact with the dog will be able to do so. The dog will also have a dog crate which will be his designated safe space.

The dog will also have a space to spend time in classrooms and around the school, where he can interact safely with the children. The dog will also attend meetings with staff to support further socialisation, following consultation with staff beforehand.

Has a risk assessment been undertaken?

Yes, we have carefully considered having a dog in school and sought advice from many sources, including other schools that successfully have a school dog.

Who is responsible for training?

Mrs Marsh will be the legal owner of the dog and as a result, will be responsible for its training. The dog has undergone a character assessment and the school have records of this on his file.

How will the dog be toileted to ensure hygiene for all?

In the interest of health and hygiene our school dog will be toileted when taken out for short walks in the grounds. Only staff members will clear this away appropriately leaving no trace on the ground, cleaning the area with disinfectant if needed.

How will the dog's welfare be considered?

The dog will be walked regularly and given free time outside. The dog will be kept with Mrs Marsh and other trained staff that have been named on the risk assessment. The dog will only have planned and supervised contact with children and visitors. The dog will be carefully trained over a period of time and will have unlimited access to food and water. The dogs welfare, along with the safety of children and staff, will always be a top priority. The dog will receive annual injections as part of regular visits to the vets to maintain his health and records of this will be kept in school on his file.

How will this be managed where children have allergies?

Children will not need to touch the dog, which will relieve the possibility of allergic reactions. We already manage a number of allergies at school and this will be no different for children and adults that

are allergic to dogs. Individual needs will always be met and we are happy to work with parents to put additional control measures in place for individual allergies. He will be given a high quality food and regularly groomed to reduce any possibility of allergens and his hair type reduces the amount of dander that is produced, making it lower-allergen.

My child is frightened of dogs; how will you manage this?

Access to the dog is carefully managed and supervised and children do not need to have close contact with him if they don't wish to. We hope to work closely with parents of children who are fearful of dogs to alleviate their fear and to teach them how to manage this.

Appendix 3

Risk Assessment

	Hazard Observed	Who may be harmed?	Risk rating before controls Consequence x Likelihood =	Control Measures / Notes	Risk rating after controls Consequence x Likelihood =	Control measures by initials :
1	Dog bite	Staff Students	2 x 3 = 6	<p>The dog will always be in the care of one of the named responsible adults (SMM / BG / FW / AB / SJ / VC / DW) and will never be allowed to freely roam the school premises.</p> <p>Children are not left with the dog unsupervised.</p> <p>The dog will always be on a lead when he is out of his crate/the ARB office, except when he is undergoing structured training with his primary trainer (SMM).</p> <p>The dog will be trained not to jump up or bite the children.</p> <p>Pupils have been, and continue to be, taught the impact of their actions. Education of this nature is given to children before they come into contact and continual reminders thereafter.</p> <p>Pupils will be taught what to do to prevent over stimulating or upsetting the dog and how to remain calm around him.</p> <p>Pupils will be reminded not to touch the dog's mouth, head and rear end and to stand, turn and pointing their palm to the floor say "off" if he attempts to jump up or mouth.</p> <p>All staff given permission to handle the dog will be given strict instructions to follow and the appropriate training.</p> <p>All vaccinations kept up to date</p>	1 x 3 = 3	SMM
2	Child knocked to ground	Students	2 x 2 = 4	<p>The dog will always be in the care of one of the named responsible adults (SMM / BG / FW / AB / SJ / VC / DW) and will never be allowed to freely roam the school premises.</p> <p>Children are not left with the dog unsupervised.</p> <p>The dog will always be on a lead when he is out of his crate/the SEN office, except when he is undergoing structured training with his primary trainer (SMM).</p>	1 x 2 = 2	SMM

				<p>The dog will be trained not to jump up.</p> <p>Pupils have been, and continue to be, taught the impact of their actions. Education of this nature is given to children before they come into contact and continual reminders thereafter.</p> <p>Pupils will be taught what to do to prevent over stimulating or upsetting the dog and how to remain calm around him.</p> <p>Pupils will be reminded not to touch the dog's mouth, head and rear end and to stand, turn and pointing their palm to the floor say "off" if he attempts to jump up or mouth.</p>		
3	Dog scratch	Students Staff	2 x 2 = 4	<p>The dog will have his claws kept short and is also walked on concrete/tarmac to keep them trimmed.</p> <p>Blanket/cushion placed on legs of children if dog is supporting pupil with bare legs and they are sat down/wheelchair user</p> <p>The dog will always be in the care of one of the named responsible adults (SMM / BG / FW / AB / SJ / VC / DW) and will never be allowed to freely roam the school premises.</p> <p>Children are not left with the dog unsupervised.</p> <p>The dog will always be on a lead when he is out of his crate/the SEN office, except when he is undergoing structured training with his primary trainer (SMM).</p> <p>The dog will be trained not to jump up.</p>	2 x 1 = 2	SMM
4	Dog becomes loose in school grounds	Students Staff Dog	2 x 2 = 4	<p>The dog will be trained to walk on a lead when he is out of his crate/the ARB office, except when he is undergoing structured training with his primary trainer (SMM).</p> <p>The children will be made aware of the dog's space in the classroom. If he is roaming free in the classroom (i.e. before/after school hours) signage will be placed on the door alerting people and alerting children that they will only be allowed in under supervision.</p> <p>Children and staff will be taught not to tease or wind up the dog.</p> <p>If the dog gets loose from the lead one of the designated members of staff will come and reattach the lead.</p> <p>If the dog is loose at any time, the members of staff to be called upon are: SMM / BG / FW / AB / SJ / VC / DW</p>	1 x 2 = 2	SMM
5	Allergy caused by dog hair	Students Staff	2 x 3 = 6	<p>Children will have the opportunity to opt out of any interaction with the dog.</p>	1 x 3 = 3	SMM

				<p>Children will be taught to wash their hands thoroughly after interaction with the dog.</p> <p>Staff, students and parents will be informed that there is a dog on site and requested to share any dog allergy with the school. A record of people with dog allergies will be kept detailing who should avoid interactions with the dog.</p> <p>Consent sought from parents/carers before child has a planned interaction with the dog.</p>		
6	Germs/diseases from the dog	Students Staff	2 x 2 = 4	<p>Should the dog defecate anywhere on the school site a member of staff will clear this up immediately and dispose of it in a safe manner. The area will then be disinfected with an appropriate animal disinfectant. All immunisations are kept up to date in accordance and a copy provided to school.</p> <p>Flea treatment is carried out at 6 weekly intervals. Worming treatment is carried out in line with European Vet guidelines, at least 6 monthly intervals</p> <p>The dog will not go in the school canteen and will never go into the kitchen or food preparation classrooms. Pupils will be encouraged to wash hands after interacting with the dog.</p>	1 x 1 = 1	SMM
7	Negative impact on wellbeing of the dog	dog	2 x 2 = 4	<p>The dog will always be in the care of one of the named responsible adults (SMM / BG / FW / AB / SJ / VC / DW) who are aware of the signs that may indicate the dog is becoming distressed e.g. ears flat / tail between legs, whining/growling noises.</p> <p>The dog will have regular rest/toileting/exercise breaks.</p> <p>Pupils have been, and continue to be, taught the impact of their actions. Education of this nature is given to children before they come into contact and continual reminders thereafter. Pupils will be taught what to do to prevent over stimulating or upsetting the dog and how to remain calm around him.</p>	1 x 1	SMM