



Respect Hope Trust Friendship Compassion Thankfulness
Compassion - Courage - Forgiveness - Thankfulness
St Osyth and Mistley Norman Church of England Primary Schools
'Love one another as I have loved you.'



School Dog Risk Assessment

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Reviewed and updated July 2021



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Rationale and Introduction



The value of pet therapy is widely accepted as a powerful aid to stimulation and communication in both children and adults. Studies have shown that the presence of companion animals can improve the well-being of children and lower rates of anxiety, simply by making the environment happier, calmer, more enjoyable and less forbidding.

The rationale for deciding to have a school dog at St Osyth Church of England Primary School and Mistley Norman Church of England Primary School and Nursery is specified by the following:

- For school to have a pet that is able to live as naturally as conditions allow
- For the animal to be properly cared for outside of the school day and for the animal's health and well-being to be paramount
- To have a pet that the children could interact with for the benefit and enhancement of the children's social and emotional development
- To build on the positive experiences we have had with our chickens and therapy dog sessions (St Osyth).

Purpose and Benefits

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 provide a great support system as they continue to grow and develop.

Dogs teach children patience and the value of it in learning

Dogs don't always do as they are told the first time! Teaching a dog a new command or encouraging one to act on a command it knows requires patience and calmness, but seeing the dog achieve this creates a great sense of success.

Dogs teach children compassion

Just like humans, dogs feel emotion and pain but are unable to express it in words. Having a dog to interact with builds empathy and thereby develops the child's sense of self.

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 each other. 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 a non-judgemental audience

For children who have emotional or social challenges a dog provides a listening ear, someone who will be attentive and calm, who won't comment or suggest and who will love them unconditionally regardless of circumstances. A dog is a quiet reading partner, confidant and friend.

Dogs are fun

Last, but certainly not least, dogs are a lot of fun. They greet you with a wagging tail and can cheer you up on even your worst day.



St Osyth Church of England Primary School and Mistley Norman Church of England Primary School and Nursery School Dog

Our St Osyth Church of England Primary School and Mistley Norman Church of England Primary School and Nursery School Dog 'The dog' lives with our Headteacher, Mr Carter-Tufnell. The dog is a very caring, gentle and well behaved dog who was selected for having the right breeding and temperament to be a therapy dog.

The dog's parents are Kennel Club registered Working Cocker Spaniel, this means that the dog is also a pedigree Kennel Club registered Working Cocker Spaniel. He is vaccinated and micro-chipped and attends the vet for regular check-ups. His health, well-being, training and insurance will be the responsibility of Mr Carter-Tufnell. It is accepted that interacting with animals is not appropriate for all children, but for many it has the potential to provide a wide range of positive benefits. Any parent who does not wish their child to interact with the dog has the opportunity to discuss concerns and to inform school of their wishes, which will always be respected. The risk assessment will be reviewed annually and the school's senior leadership team will evaluate and report on the impact of having a school dog, when requested by our Local School Board.

Interaction with Pupils and Staff

To ensure that the school dog interacts appropriately at all times and is effectively supported to do so

Hazard	Risk	Risk severity	Likelihood	Risk Rating	Controls
Dog getting over excited when interacting with children	Child bitten by dog	4	1	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school dog is trained not to mouth from a very young age and is trained not to bite When the dog is approached in the right way there is very limited danger The dog lives with Mr Carter-Tufnell who handles him all the time to ensure he is used to interaction with children Ensure that adults and children do not interact with the dog without supervision by Mr Carter-Tufnell or another suitable member of staff so authorised by Mr Carter-Tufnell Ensure that all interactions are undertaken in the agreed way * – only when the child is calm and quiet Children approach the dog quietly and let the dog come to them The dog is housed in his crate, in Mr Carter-Tufnell and Mrs



					Levett's office when left unsupervised
	Child scratched by dog	3	2	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The dog is trained not to jump up He will always be on a lead, under close control by Mr Carter-Tufnell when moving around the school and will wear a harness with grab handle on the back Children will not be interacting with the dog unsupervised and always in the agreed way* The dog will be based in Mr Carter-Tufnell and Mrs Levett's office, in his crate and will be on a lead under close control at all other times These conditions will be strictly adhered to whenever children are interacting with him A letter is sent home to parents asking them to sign and return if they are unwilling for their child to interact with the dog Parents will be asked to explain their wishes to the child The dog will undergo ongoing conditioning training to the school environment, as well as other dynamic, busy, noisy places to ensure that he is always calm This will ensure that reading or nurture interventions are always successful Regular visits to the vet and groomer will ensure that claws are kept trimmed short
	Child licked by dog	2	2	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The dog is trained not to lick The dog is trained not to jump up Children are encouraged to approach the dog in the agreed manner*, and not put their faces near the dog's face Children always wash hands after interaction with the dog
Dog running loose	Possible injury to child/adult, damage to property	1	2	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The dog will be based in Mr Carter-Tufnell and Mrs Levett's office, in his crate and will be



					<p>on a lead under close control at all other times</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be a clear sign on the door so everyone knows when he is there • The dog's crate is big enough for him to be happy and safe there when contained • The children will be taught not to tease the dog at any time • There are named members of staff who can be called upon in the event of the dog getting loose, in order to place him back in his crate These are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mr Carter-Tufnell ○ Mrs Levett ○ Miss Collins ○ Mr White • All staff introduced to the dog and the expectations, risk assessments and procedures • Pupils will be taught what to do to prevent the dog from chasing them (stand still, cross arms etc) • They will also be taught how to approach the dog in the correct way • All equipment – leads, harness, crate etc will be regularly inspected to ensure it is appropriate and effective
Destruction of materials	If allowed to chew dog may damage school materials/resources	1	1	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The dog is contained or under close control at all times • The dog will have his own toys to play with and normal school resources will be kept out of reach. • All equipment relating to the dog will be regularly checked to ensure it is appropriate and effective
Incorrect / inconsistent interaction with the dog	If adult/child interacts in the incorrect way this will affect the dog's training and have a negative impact on future interaction	2	2	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there are any inconsistencies in approach with the school dog, the interaction will be stopped • If the dog shows any signs of incorrect behaviour interaction will be immediately stopped
Use of rewards/treats	Children could be harmed if the dog is	1	1	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treats will only be given to the dog with authorisation and in



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	over excited when receiving treats. Children must wash hands after handling treats.				<p>the presence of Mr Carter-Tufnell or a member of staff he has so authorised.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treats will be stored securely to ensure this • Reminders to be given to children about hand washing after any contact with the dog
Pupil / staff knowledge of how to interact correctly with the dog	If adults and children have limited knowledge of how to interact correctly with the dog, this could result in harm to the dog or child/adult	2	2	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an agreed code of conduct around the dog *



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Hygiene and Health



Hazard	Risk	Risk severity	Likelihood	Risk Rating	Controls
Worms/fleas	If school dog is not treated for worms there is a risk that germs can be transferred to humans	3	1	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr Carter-Tufnell is responsible for taking the dog to the vet for regular check-ups The dog will receive flea prevention treatment monthly and worming treatment 6 monthly in line with European Veterinary Guidelines
Diseases	If the dog is unwell its welfare will suffer and interaction with the children could become hazardous	3	1	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The dog's health and well-being are the responsibility of Mr Carter-Tufnell If the dog is unwell then he will not be brought in to school
Allergies	If a child/adult is allergic to dogs they could become unwell	3	2	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children will not be in contact with the dog if a negative response has been given by a parent If a child or adult has an allergy, they will not interact with the dog, or undertake tasks in the same room Allergy information is collated at the point children start school
Food	Dog can become unwell if given food items intended for humans				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr Carter-Tufnell will ensure that nothing is given to the dog without permission Children will be closely supervised when interacting with the dog Children will not be permitted to interact with the dog unless supervised by an approved adult



Faeces	If a child/adult comes into contact with the school dog's faeces, germs could be transferred	2	1	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 There will be an exercise/toilet area set aside/Fenced off for The dog to ensure no one can come into contact except The dog's carer's
Contact with food preparation areas	If the dog enters a food preparation area, this could be unhygienic	2	1	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school dog will be in a contained area, or on a lead at all times in school He will never enter the school kitchen or any other area that is being used for food preparation He will not interact with children or staff during food service times
Cleaning hands after interacting with the school dog	If hands are not clean, there is a risk of illness	2	1	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly remind children and adults to wash hands after interacting with the dog
Allergies to food	Humans may be allergic to the ingredients used in The dog's treats	3	1	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ingredients of any product that The dog's is fed and can come in contact with humans to be kept onsite Children will be closely supervised when interacting with The dog and if any reactions to be immediately reported.



Activities involving the School Dog

Hazard	Risk	Risk severity	Likelihood	Risk Rating	Controls
Walking the dog on and off site	Children could be harmed during a walk off site if they are not focussed. Children might be harmed if they do not interact correctly when the school dog is on a walk	2	1	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the school dog is taken off site, this will only be undertaken by Mr Carter-Tufnell or a member of staff that he designates. No child will take the lead when the school dog goes for a walk unless authorised to do so by one of the nominated adults
Being fed	If a child tries to interact with the school dog when he is being fed he may respond aggressively	3	0	Negligible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school dog will be fed outside of school hours, 8.30am and 3.05pm by Mr Carter-Tufnell
School Events	If the school dog is overwhelmed, he may become boisterous	2	1	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school dog will undergo conditioning training before being allowed into school This will prepare him for noisy, busy, and dynamic environments The dog's reactions to school events will be monitored If the events are too overwhelming the dog will not attend
Other dogs	If the school dog is overwhelmed or sees other dogs he may become boisterous.	2	1	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No other dogs will be permitted on school premises, unless authorised by a senior leader, for example, a sight dog. The school dog will be given regular opportunities to socialise with other dogs The school dog will be based in an area of school from which the outside environment outside school



					premises is not visible at the height of the dog's eyes.
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Equal Opportunities

All young people will be treated equally, regardless of race, creed or gender. The policy will be applied regardless of culture, faith or belief.

* How to approach the school dog

- Always ask Mr Carter-Tufnell, or the delegated member of staff, if it is okay to stroke the dog; don't approach the dog or say 'hello' until you've been given permission to do so
- Mr Carter-Tufnell, or the delegated member of staff, will ensure that the dog is happy and relaxed before any interaction
- Put out your hand and let the dog sniff it – don't move your hand towards the dog; let them come to you
- If the dog seems happy, stroke them on the shoulder or chest. Aiming for the face isn't a great idea as the dog could see this as an invasive place to be touched by a person they don't know.
- After a stroke or two, stop and see what the dog does – if they 'ask' you to continue by nudging or leaning into you, carry on fussing if you feel comfortable
- However much you'd like to, don't hug the dog – while hugging is a sign of affection for humans, holding a dog close to you can make them anxious
- If the dog turns or moves away from you, they're telling you they'd rather you didn't stroke them just now, so it's time to stop
- Always be calm, quiet and move slowly around pets