



St Saviour's Catholic Primary and Nursery School

Risk Assessment for our School Dogs

September 2023

Background:

The Governors of St Saviour's, alongside the Headteacher at the time, introduced Waffle to the school in June 2018. The current Headteacher who was appointed to start in September 2023 has brought with her to school, her two dogs Maggie and Mollie, who have had the role of School Dog in her previous setting.

The rationale behind the decision was:

1. To have dogs that the children could interact with and for it to be of benefit to the children's social and emotional development
2. To have dogs that can specifically assist the growing number of children that we have with autism and personal, social and emotional needs
3. To improve a variety of aspects of our children through the use of school dogs; for example, improved self-esteem, improved understanding of responsibility, respect and care, further development of empathy and the ability to nurture others

These particular breeds have been chosen for a reason. It was decided that a Labrador would be the chosen breed for their reputation of being superb working dogs, very friendly family pets, intelligent and highly trainable. A Cockapoo was chosen as a commonly used support dog for its gentle-natured, ideal temperament and its hypoallergenic fur. As it does not shed, if there are children with allergies, they will still be able to access at least one of the dogs if they (or their parents) choose.

This risk assessment will be reviewed annually and the impact of a school dog will be evaluated by the school SLT.

Hazard	Risk	High/medium/low	Controls to reduce risk
Dog getting over excited when interacting with children.	<p>Child knocked to the ground.</p> <p>Child scratched by the dog.</p> <p>Child bitten by the dog.</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>Low</p> <p>Low</p>	<p>The dogs are aged 3, 5 and 6 so are over the excitable puppy stage. They know commands and so can wait/stay and know not to jump.</p> <p>When the dogs are on the playground or in the classrooms, adults will always be present.</p> <p>Children will be taught how to treat animals throughout our whole school assemblies.</p> <p>Children will be taught what to do to prevent the dogs from chasing them.</p> <p>The dogs will attend the vet regularly to ensure their claws are kept short and will also be walked on concrete/tarmac to ensure they are kept trimmed.</p> <p>The School Dogs will be involved in training through 'The Dog Mentor' programme for dogs in schools. This training is booked for Spring Term 2024.</p>
Dog hair causing allergies.	Children have allergic reactions	Low	<p>We currently do not have any children in school who have allergies to dogs. Parents can inform the school if any known new allergies arise.</p> <p>Children will be taught and constantly reminding to wash their hands after contact with the dogs.</p>

Children getting germs from the dog.	Children/staff will contract diseases that can be carried by dogs.	Low	<p>All immunisations are kept up to date through vet treatment plans.</p> <p>Flea treatment is carried out at monthly intervals.</p> <p>Worming treatment is carried out at 3-month intervals.</p> <p>All of these guidelines are in line with the European Vet Guidelines.</p>
Dog excrement or urine.	Children/staff will contract diseases that can be carried by dogs.	Low	<p>Dogs are wormed regularly.</p> <p>Any excrement will be cleaned up immediately and thoroughly disposed of responsibly and hygienically by the adult with responsibilities for the dogs at that time.</p> <p>Hand washing facilities are in every classroom as well as in bathrooms and the staffroom.</p> <p>Poo bags and gloves will be easily accessible for staff.</p> <p>The dogs will be taken to the enclosed area in the school playground at times throughout the day by an adult to defecate.</p>
Noise: barking from dogs.	Pupils who cannot cope with noise.	Low	<p>As the dogs have been in school from an early age; they are acclimatised to a noisy environment and the risk of barking is greatly minimised.</p>
Claim is made against the school re: behaviour of the dogs/injury.	School not adequately covered.	Low	<p>The dogs are insured including additional public liability insurance cover. This is reviewed annually.</p>