

Aboyne Lodge School Dog Risk Assessment

January 2022

Introduction

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

Background

The senior leadership team considered the options regarding the possibility of obtaining a dog as a school pet in October 2017. Over a period of time following this discussion research into a possible source of a suitable puppy led to the final decision to introduce a puppy in April 2018.

The rationale behind this decision was as follows:

1. For the school to have a pet that was able to live as naturally as conditions would allow.
2. For the animal to be properly cared for outside of the school day.
3. To have a pet that the children could interact with and also be of benefit to the children's social and emotional development.

Prior to purchasing the puppy, the SENCo will visit the home of the dog's parents to ensure that the temperament of the parents was suitable for interaction with children. The puppy will live with Mrs Clinton in her home and will be introduced to the school environment and the children gradually.

A local veterinarian practice will thoroughly check the puppy for any illnesses and is responsible for her vaccination programme. There are no diseases that could be caught from the puppy as she will be kept up to date with immunisations and her worming and flea treatment is in line with European vet guidelines. Both the school and vets' surgery will keep a register of her annual health check.

It is accepted that interacting with animals is not appropriate for all children but that for some it has the potential to provide many positive benefits. Any parent who does not wish their child to interact with the puppy is invited to inform the school of their wishes.

This risk assessment will be reviewed annually and the school senior leadership team will evaluate the impact of a school dog on a regular bases.

Hazard	Risk	Risk 1-5 *	Likelihood 1-5*	Risk Col 3X Col 4	Controls in place	Review date & signed
Dog getting over excited when interacting with children.	Child knocked to ground	1	2	2	The dog will always be in the care of a responsible adult and will never be allowed to freely roam the school premises. Children are not left with the dog unsupervised. The dog will always be on a lead when she is out of her pen/ the office, except when she is undergoing structured training with his primary trainer/s. The dog will be trained not to jump up or mouth the	
	Child scratched by Dog	1	2	2		

	Child bitten by Dog	5	1	5	<p>children.</p> <p>Pupils have been, and continue to be, taught the impact of their actions. Education of this nature is continually given to children, and often to whole school during assemblies, form time and PSHE lessons.</p> <p>Pupils will be taught what to do to prevent the dog from chasing them. (i.e. stand still, cross arms)</p> <p>The dog will undergo formal training from the age of 10 weeks with an experienced local trainer. Some pupils will be involved in training (with parental permissions) and along with the schools' primary handlers, continue to reinforce positive training strategies in a controlled area throughout the week.</p> <p>The dog will also undergo conditioning to the school classroom environment, this area of training will allow future reading or nurture intervention to involve the school dog in a calming/therapeutic manner.</p> <p>Risk of scratching and mouthing will reduce and the risk assessment will be reviewed as the dog progresses through her weekly training programme.</p> <p>ALL staff have been introduced to the dog and the expectations (does and don't) of having a school dog.</p> <p>The dog will attend the vets' regularly to make sure her claws are kept short and that she is in good health.</p>	
The dog gets loose from his pen or from his lead.	As above	1	2	2	<p>The dog's crate/space is big enough for her to be happy and safe during the school day and the children are taught not to tease her.</p> <p>If the dog does get loose from her pen the teacher on duty will call for a designated staff member who will come and put the dog back in her pen.</p> <p>There are five members of staff who will be called upon in the event of the dog getting loose or if she needs attention at any other time, they are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr Keith Smithard (Head Teacher). 2. Mrs Ruth Clinton (SENCo). 3. Mrs Mandy Thomas (SEN teaching assistant) 4. Ms Jennie Lilley (School Secretary) 5. Mrs Deryn Grisenthwaite (Y4 Teacher) 	
Dog hair causing allergies	Children have allergic reactions	1	1	1	<p>Parents have been asked to inform the school of any known allergies prior to introduction of the dog to school. A list of any children who should not interact with the dog will be kept on the school recording system</p> <p>Children will have the opportunity to interact with the dog as they wish and those with allergies will be able to opt out of interaction.</p> <p>Children have been taught to wash their hands after active participation with the dog.</p>	
Children getting germs from the dog.	Children /staff will contract diseases that can be carried by dogs	1	1	1	<p>Should the dog defecate on the school site a member of staff will clear this up immediately and dispose of it in a safe manner. The dog will be trained to toilet in an area of the school that our pupils don't have access to on a regular basis, if required the area will then be disinfected with an appropriate animal disinfectant.</p> <p>All immunisations are kept up to date and the Head Teacher keeps a register of this.</p>	

					<p>Flea treatment is carried out at 6 weekly intervals.</p> <p>Worming treatment is carried out in line with European Vet guidelines, at 6 monthly intervals</p> <p>The dog will not go in the school dining hall at meal times; he will not be permitted into the food preparation area of the kitchen.</p>	
Financial cost of the dog's upkeep	School unable to afford ongoing cost of the dog's day to day upkeep or medical bills	1	1	1	<p>The dog is the responsibility of Mrs Clinton. she is financially responsible for her care and day to day costs.</p> <p>The dog is the responsibility of Mrs Ruth Clinton outside of school hours.</p> <p>Training costs will be paid for by the school as a high level of obedience training will need to be carried out</p> <p>As the dog will be used for 'therapy' work within the school, the school will accommodate costs towards training and assessment of the dog to meet these criteria.</p> <p>The school will cover the cost of equipment needed to support the dog and its training in school.</p> <p>Veterinary costs will be paid by the owner, with the exception of non-essential veterinary costs required by the school.</p>	
Claim is made against school re: behaviour of the dog.	School not adequately covered financially	1	1	1	<p>Mrs Clinton, via Bought by Many Insurance, insures the dog.</p> <p>The certificate is kept in school office and is renewed annually in April.</p>	

KEY:

1- Low risk

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3 -Medium risk of injury

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5-High risk of injury