



DOG Guidance

Bilton School

Review Date February 2025

Guidance owner-Shanta Sweeney

School Dog **Guidance**

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.

Is there a risk in bringing a dog into a school environment?

Yes, there is, 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 appendix 3).

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 dog guidance

The dog will be owned by Shanta Sweeney Head of Interventions and Prevention .

- 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, and the Head Teacher has been informed beforehand.
- The dog is a White Cavapoo who is also registered as an assistance dog for “Pets for Therapy “and chosen because it is an intelligent breed and bred for companionship. It will respond well to training and is known to be good with children, it sheds little hair and is very sociable and friendly.
- The Head Teacher, and Senior leadership team agree that a school dog will benefit the children and staff of Bilton School.
- Staff, parents and children have been informed via social media that a dog will be in school. The school 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, she 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 Shanta Sweeney .
 - Children must never be left alone with the dog and there must be always appropriate adult supervision.
 - 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 her.
 - 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 her 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, by an adult, and disposed of appropriately in designated bin.
- Parents will be consulted on allowing their pupils access to the dog.
 - All visitors will be informed about the dog and related protocols on arrival and office staff will relay visitor issues to the Head Teacher asap.
 - Appropriately trained staff will maintain records and anecdotal evidence of the work and impact of the school dog.
- The office will know the whereabouts of the dog and which staff are supervising at all times.
 - The dog will be included in the fire evacuation procedure under the supervision of Shanta Sweeney .

Actions

If someone reports having an issue with the dog, this information must be passed to the Head Teacher or any SLT member as soon as possible. All concerns will be responded to by the Head teacher.

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%. Behaviour problems occur in school and these can interfere with learning. Some schools are using dogs to improve behaviour problems by promoting positive behaviour in students. In a controlled study, students were found to have fewer disciplinary referrals in schools with a dog than schools without. Students' behaviour improved toward 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:

Case study: Mandy was a student with poor attendance and truancy. Mandy was encouraged back into school using caring for River, a dog, as an incentive. By telling Mandy that "if she didn't come to school to care for him, he wouldn't get walks, water or love," Mandy came to school almost every day for the rest of the year, only missing two days.

Education:

Reading programmes with dogs are doing wonders for some students. 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. "It might be less stressful for a child to read aloud to a dog than to a teacher or a peer. After all, a dog won't judge or correct you." Dogs are used to encourage struggling readers to practise reading aloud. With the presence of a "calm and well-trained dog," students find social support and peer interaction.

Dogs are incredibly calm and happy to have student 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. The dogs also provide confidence to children as they do not make fun of them when they read, but above all they make amazing listeners, providing the children with a sense of comfort and love. 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.

Social Development:

Dogs in school offer an opportunity for improving social development. They are especially useful for teaching student's 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, will be rewarded with spending time during lunch or break to interact with these dogs. Walking, grooming, playing and training are some of the responsibility's students will be allowed to undertake. It has been proved that working and playing with a dog improves children's social skills and self-esteem.

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 all the students they meet and are happy to provide plenty of hugs to the students, they are spending time with. Students who struggle with social interaction can find a reassuring friend in a dog.

Appendix 2 School Dog Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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

A) The legal owner of the dog will be Shanta Sweeney; she will bear the costs associated with owning the dog; e.g. Liability and health insurance.

Q Will the dog be a distraction?

A) The dog will be kept in Miss Sweeney (Shanta Sweeneys Intervention and prevention room) . The room is separate from the classrooms / playground area to ensure it only comes into contact with children who are happy to have contact and have parental permission for this, under strict supervision.

Q Is the dog from a reputable breeder?

A) Yes

A Statement Regarding Koffees temperament from Shanta Sweeney

Koffee is a white miniature Cavapoo she is tiny and only weighs 2.4kg , She is a quick learner and very intelligent. Loves being fussed over by Children and Adults

Koffee lives at home with 4 children aged 12, twins 10 and a toddler aged 2. Koffee was brought to be trained to help support my daughter who has ASD (Autism as she had a fear of other dogs , but once this fear had gone , she has been a massive support system for my daughter and helps her regulate her emotions .

Koffee will happily follows instructions when told. She loves other people and animals and regularly plays freely with other dogs off the lead.

Koffee is an dream , she is extremely calm natured , doesn't jump up , unless told she can , she follows instructions given by myself .

To sum up Koffees temperament, she loves to be in the company of people and receiving attention. She loves being exercised on and off the lead and he is a calm and well-behaved dog.

Shanta Sweeney Head of Interventions and Prevention.

Signed:

Owner, Shanta Sweeney

The dog will also attend meetings with staff to support further socialisation, following consultation with staff beforehand.

Q Has a risk assessment been undertaken?

A 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.

Q Who is responsible for training?

A Shanta Sweeney will be the legal owner of the dog and as a result, will be responsible for its training. **Shanta Sweeney.**

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

A) In the interest of health and hygiene our school dog will be toileted when taken out for short walks off the school site. Only staff members will do this and only staff will clear this away appropriately leaving no trace on the ground. Dog bags will be sealed and disposed in the designated bin. Hands must be washed immediately afterwards.

Our policy of no dogs in the playground is still applicable as we are unable to put effective control measures in place that guarantee temperament and safety when children come into unsupervised contact with unknown dogs.

Q How will the dog's welfare be considered?

A) The dog will be walked regularly and given free time outside. Parents will be able to give permission in advance to allow their child to be able to walk with a member of staff and the dog during that time. This will also be used as a behaviour reward, in line with our behaviour policy. The dog will be kept in The Intervention and Prevention Classroom and 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. We will work carefully to ensure the dog's welfare is always considered.

Q How will this be managed where Staff/children & Visitors have allergies?

A) Staff/children & Visitors 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. She is given a high quality food and regularly groomed to reduce any possible allergens.

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

A) Access to the dog is carefully managed and supervised and children do not need to have close contact with it unless permission for this has been given. 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.



DOG IN SCHOOL - RISK ASSESSMENT

<p>Scope: To ensure that students can benefit from the presence of a dog in educational setting, while being protected from potential sources of harm, as far as is reasonably practicable.</p>	<p>Date of assessment: 11/03/24</p>	<p>Rev: 001</p>
--	--	------------------------

Operation / Activity		
<p>Department: Safeguarding</p> <p>Line Manager(s): Sam Godfrey</p> <p>Review Date: 11/03/24</p> <p>Written By: Shanta Sweeney</p>		

Hazard	Who May be Harmed and How?	Likelihood	Severity	Risk Rating	Existing Controls	Likelihood	Severity	Risk Rating	Further Controls Required (What else do we need to do?)
Cuts/skin puncture wounds	<p>Students Staff Visitors</p> <p>Any of the above persons may be scratched or bitten if the dog gets overexcited or overstimulated (E.g., tries to jump up/bite).</p>	M	H	H	<p>Dog will always be in the care of a responsible adult who will have received handling training.</p> <p>Students must not be left with the dog unsupervised at any time.</p> <p>The dog must always be kept on a lead when taken out of its pen.</p>	L	M	L	



					<p>Students to be warned about the potential consequences of their actions around the dog E.g., Not to overstimulate or upset the dog and how to remain calm around it.</p> <p>Staff given permission to handle the dog will be given strict instructions to follow.</p> <p>The dog will attend the vet regularly to make sure it is in good health.</p>				
Dog gets loose from pen or lead.	<p>Students Staff Visitors</p> <p>The dog may enter an area that cannot be sufficiently controlled, leading to potential disruption and exposure to vulnerable persons.</p>	M	M	M	<p>The dog must be kept in the classroom and all visitors to be alerted to it's presence by clear signage on the door.</p> <p>Students are not permitted to be with the dog unsupervised.</p> <p>Staff and Students must be instructed not to taunt or tease the dog through the window.</p> <p>If the dog gets loose, the designated handler will call for support from appropriately trained individuals to put the dog back on its lead.</p>	L	L	L	
Allergies	<p>Staff Students Visitors</p> <p>Any of the above parties may suffer an allergic reaction to dog hair.</p>	M	M	M	<p>Staff, parents of students & visitors to be asked to inform the school of any known allergies prior to the introduction of the dog to the school.</p> <p>Any persons with allergies will have the opportunity to opt out.</p> <p>Children will be taught/instructed to wash their hands after any activity with the dog.</p>	L	L	L	
Disease/infection	<p>Staff Students</p>	M	H	H	<p>Should the dog defecate on the school site the handler will clear it up and seal</p>	L	L	L	



	<p>Visitors</p> <p>The dog may carry diseases that have the potential to be transmitted to persons on site</p>			<p>the waste in a dog waste bag immediately and dispose of it in a specially designated bin.</p> <p>Dog waste bags are to be always kept on handlers. Hands must be washed immediately afterwards.</p> <p>All immunisations are kept up to date.</p> <p>Flea treatments are carried out at monthly intervals.</p> <p>Worm treatments are carried out at 3 monthly intervals.</p> <p>The dog must not enter food preparation areas or the school canteen while on site.</p> <p>Records of vaccinations and other treatments are to be available at random audit intervals as required.</p>				
--	--	--	--	---	--	--	--	--

Who is affected? (<u>Underline</u>)							
Staff	Contractors	Suppliers	Visitors	Young Persons			
Lone Workers	Disabled	New/Exp mothers	Children	Intruders			
Specific assessment required (<u>Underline</u>)				PPE required (<u>Underline</u>)			
COSHH	Noise	Manual Handling	PPE	Head protection	Protective footwear	High visibility clothing	Gloves
Fire	Vibration	Young Persons		Eye protection	Hearing protection	Respiratory protection	Overalls
		YES	NO	Other (state):			



Written safe system of work required (method statement)		No	
--	--	-----------	--

Risk Rating				
Severity	High	Medium	High	High
	Medium	Low	Medium	High
	Low	Low	Low	Medium
		Low	Medium	High
Likelihood				

Risk Assessment Review Log

Only use this log to confirm that there have been no changes to the current assessment; otherwise an updated risk assessment is required to be completed.

Initial Review Date	11/3/2024		
Assessor's Signature	Richard Howell	Date:	11/3/24
Signature of Responsible Manager	S. Godfrey	Date:	11/3/2024



Next Review Date	12 months from initial review		
Assessor's Signature		Date:	
Signature of Responsible Manager		Date:	

Next Review Date	24 months from initial review		
Assessor's Signature		Date:	
Signature of Responsible Manager		Date:	

Next Review Date	36 months from initial review		
Assessor's Signature		Date:	
Signature of Responsible Manager		Date:	



Stowe Valley
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST