

School Dog Risk Assessment

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 students and lower the rate of anxiety, simply by making the environment happier, more enjoyable and less forbidding. The team at Nene Park Academy have been considering obtaining a dog as a school therapy pet for some time and the decision was made in February 2021 to go ahead with the project.

The rationale behind this decision was as follows:

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

It is accepted that interacting with animals is not appropriate for all children but for some it has the potential to provide many positive benefits. Any parent who does not want their child to interact with the dog is invited to write to Miss Oxley and inform her of their wishes. There are no diseases associated with the puppy as the vets will be responsible for vaccinations, including rabies and completing regular health checks and necessary treatment. The dog will also be insured.

The risk assessment below is a working document and will be checked annually by key staff and the governing body.

Hazard Risk	Risk	Risk 1 – 5*	Controls in Place	Review date & Signature
Dog getting over excited when interacting with students.	Student knocked to the ground.	1	The dog will primarily be office based until 6 months old before interacting with students. All interactions will be carefully monitored.	
	Student scratched by dog	3		
	Student bitten by dog.	3	The dog will always be in the care of a responsible adult and will never be allowed to roam freely around the school premises.	

			<p>The dog will always be on a lead or carried when she is not in his crate/hub office, except when she is undergoing structured training with her primary trainer.</p> <p>Students have been and will continue to be taught about the consequences of their actions. Education of this nature is continually given to students and will be highlighted during tutor time.</p> <p>Students will be taught what to do to prevent the dog from chasing them.</p> <p>The dog will undergo formal training from the age of 10 weeks with an experienced trainer. The training provider will be First Class Dog Training and he has previously trained school dogs. The 1-1 training will start week commencing 12th April.</p> <p>During the time whereby the puppy is undergoing training, students will have a more interaction with the students and all interactions will be done in a controlled manner with a supervising adult. Initially, small groups of students (no more than 3) to be interacting with Luna at one time.</p> <p>The dog will also undergo conditioning to the school classroom environment, this training will ensure therapy or reading</p>	
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			<p>sessions to involve the school dog can be done in a calming/therapeutic manner.</p> <p>Risk of scratching and biting will reduce and the risk assessment will be reviewed as he progresses through her weekly training.</p> <p>All staff will have been introduced to the dog and expectations of having a school dog.</p> <p>She will attend the vets regularly to ensure she is in good health and that her claws are kept short.</p>	
The dog gets loose from his crate or lead.	As above	1	The dog's crate/safe space is big enough for her to be happy and safe during the school day and the children are taught not to tease her. The dog will be allowed to be off the lead in the hub office with a stair gate at the door.	
The dog causing allergies.	Children or staff have allergic reactions	1	<p>Parents have been asked to inform the school of any known allergies before the introduction of the dog to the school.</p> <p>A list of any children/staff who should not interact with the dog will kept on the school SIMs system.</p> <p>The 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>	

			Children will be taught to wash their hands after active participation with the dog.	
Children getting germs from the dog	Children or staff will contract diseases that can be carried by dogs.	1	Should the dog defecate on the school site a member of staff will clear this up immediately and dispose of it in a safe way. The area will be disinfected as required. All immunisations are kept up to date in accordance with the European Pet Passport Scheme and a record will be kept of this. Flea treatment is carried out at 6 week intervals. The dog will not be allowed in the school dining hall at meal times; and never in the food preparation area.	
Financial cost of the dog's upkeep	School unable to afford the ongoing cost of the dogs day to day upkeep or medical bills	1	The dog is ultimately the responsibility of Miss Oxley both in a well-being and financial aspect. The dog will be insured by the school during the day, and Miss Oxley outside of school hours. All vet costs will be covered by Miss Oxley. Miss Oxley will be responsible for the costs of puppy training.	
Claim is made against school about the dog	School not adequately covered financially.		Insurance will cover any claim. Certificate will be kept in office and renewed annually. Public Liability Insurance started on 12 th April 2021.	

What is in place for the Well Being dog after school?

- Regular exercise & fresh air
- Free time off the lead
- Regular grooming
- The dog, Luna, stays with Miss Oxley's family every evening, where she is a family pet.
- Regular appointments and check up with the vets
- Luna is allowed some 'downtime' throughout the day to allow her to rest & sleep