



Durrington Multi Academy Trust

The Laurels Primary School School Dog Policy September 2020

School Dog Policy 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?

The Headteacher and Governors believe the benefit outweighs the risk. A detailed risk assessment has been completed and any person handling the dog or responsible for it on school grounds will ensure all elements are followed.

A specific insurance policy is in place, this policy is separate to DMAT's buildings and liability insurance. It is the responsibility of Tom Edwards as the owner of the Dog to maintain this policy at all times. If the policy lapses for any reason the Dog must not be brought on to site. The trust inclusive of The Laurels Primary school will not be liable for any injuries accidents or damage caused, all claims will be directed to the policy maintained by Tom Edwards. Details of this policy are set out in the risk assessment and updated annually. As the legal owner of the Dog Tom Edwards is accountable and will be prosecutable for any damages or injuries caused by the dog, the Trust do not accept legal liability for the actions of the Dog as we are not owners.

Temperament, suitability and historic behaviour have been deemed suitable by Tom Edwards. As the owner he is responsible for the training of handlers and supervising as necessary. If the Dog displays any negative behavioural traits such as aggression, anxiety, nervousness, growling, curling of lips, arching of the back, hesitation or any other behaviour that would indicate the Dog is not relaxed and comfortable the Dog will need to be removed from site. Dependant on severity of the behaviour the Dog will either not be allowed back to site or additional control measures must be put in place and agreed by the Headteacher and the Governors.

Dogs are not allowed anywhere on the school site at any time unless specifically authorised by the Headteacher. This includes drop off and collection times. This policy outlines measures put in place to allow the School Dog to be present.

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School Policy

- The Dog will be owned by Mr Edwards.
- 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 Headteacher has been informed beforehand.
- The Dog is a Labrador, chosen because it is an intelligent breed that will respond well to training and which is known to be good with children, and is very sociable and friendly.
- The Chair of Governors and the Governing Board agree that a School Dog will benefit the children and staff.
- Staff, parents and children have been informed by letter that a Dog will be in school. Mr Edwards and the Headteacher have 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 he 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 responsible adult.
- Children must never be left alone with the Dog and there must be appropriate adult supervision at all times.
- 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 the 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 Zak is sitting or lying down before touching or stroking him.
- 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. Additionally, this will be reported to the Headteacher who will need to decide if it safe and suitable for the visits to continue, as a minimum additional control measures will need adding to the risk assessment as the underlying risk would have significantly increased.
- Children should not eat close to the Dog.
- Children should be careful to stroke Zak on his body, chest, back and not by his face or top of head.
- Children should always wash their hands after handling the Dog.

- Any dog foul should be cleaned immediately and disposed of appropriately. The Dog will be taken off site to toilet with waste disposed of in a dog waste bin located close to the school.
- 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 Headteacher as soon as possible.
- 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 Mr Edwards or Miss Bull.

Actions If someone reports having an issue with the Dog

This information must be passed to the Headteacher or an Assistant Headteacher as soon as possible. All concerns will be responded to by the Headteacher.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body has a responsibility to ensure that the school has a written policy for Dogs in School. The Headteacher 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 School Dog. This will include highlighting that not all dogs are well trained and that caution must be used around unknown dogs outside school.

This policy will be reviewed annually alongside the risk assessment. Any changes will be communicated to staff, pupils and parents as necessary.

September 2020

To be reviewed in September 2021

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