



HIGH WELL SCHOOL

Preparing for Positive Futures

School Dog Policy

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Date Shared with Staff: 22.06.21

Date of Review: June 2022

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1. 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.

Luna, the dog is a Labradoodle, chosen because it is an intelligent breed that will respond well to training and which is known to be good with children, which sheds little hair and is very sociable and friendly.

The dog is owned by Mrs Vicky Whitaker, member of staff at High Well School.

2. 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 dog. This will include highlighting that not all dogs are well trained and that caution must be used around unknown dogs outside school.

3. 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 1).

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

4. Reasons to have a dog in school

- Improve academic achievement
- Increase literacy skills
- Calming behaviours
- Increase social skills as well as self-esteem
- Increase confidence
- Teach responsibility and respect to all life
- Help prevent school refusing
- Motivate children who are often less attentive

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 controlled study, students were found to have fewer disciplinary referrals in school 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.

Social Development

Dogs in school offer an opportunity for improving social development. They are especially useful for teaching students' 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.

5. Using the dog 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 the dog. 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.

6. High Well School Rules for having a dog on site:

- 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 given prior permission.
- Staff, parents and children have been informed by letter that a dog will be in school. A risk assessment has been produced and this will be reviewed termly.
- 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.
- No physical contact on the corridor will be allowed e.g. touching, petting or playing.
- Children will not be left alone with the dog and there must be appropriate adult supervision at all times.
- Children will be reminded of what is appropriate behaviour around the dog. Children should remain calm around the dog.
- Children should never go near or disturb a dog that is sleeping or eating.
- Children must not be allowed to play roughly with the dog.
- Children should not eat close to the dog.
- Children should always wash their hands before and after handling the dog
- Parents will be consulted on allowing their children access to the dog via an opt-out agreement.
- All visitors will be informed about the dog and related protocols on arrival and office staff will relay visitor issues to the Headteacher
- Appropriately trained staff will maintain records and anecdotal evidence of the work and impact of the school dog. This includes, Vicky Ward.
- 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 Vicky Whitaker, Louise Quinn and Vicky Ward.

7. Actions / Reporting Issues

If someone reports having an issue with the dog, this information must be passed to the Headteacher, Louise Quinn or Assistant Head, Adrian Coates, Vicky Whitaker as soon as possible.

All concerns will be responded to by the Headteacher.



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Appendix 1 - School Dog Risk Assessment

Hazard	Who is at risk	Control Measures	Risk Rating Low, medium or high	What further action is needed?	Tick if all in place √
Running loose	Pupil, adult and Luna or damage to property	Luna will be contained at all times either in HT office or ELSA room, in a cage or on a lead	Low	Monitor Luna and the equipment being used is effective.	√
Eating human food	Luna	Staff and students must never leave food unsupervised when Luna is in the same room.	High	Luna has allergies to some human food and therefore should never be given or have access to anything other than her own treats/food.	√
Stealing masks and antibacterial wipes.	Luna	Keep masks and wipes out of reach of Luna.	Medium	Make sure anyone around Luna is aware. Take mask/wipe from Luna while giving the command “leave it”	√
Destruction of materials	Pupil, adult, Luna and damage to materials or resources.	Luna will only have her own toys to play with.	Low	Luna is drawn to pulling paper off tables and will seek out Bluetac to eat. Monitor Luna and the equipment being used is appropriate and effective.	√

Hazard	Who is at risk	Control Measures	Risk Rating Low, medium or high	What further action is needed?	Tick if all in place √
If adults and pupils have limited knowledge of interaction with Luna	Pupils or adults	Agreed guidelines that must be followed at all times when interacting with Luna	Medium	If there are any inconsistencies in the approach with Luna then pupil or adult interaction will stop. See Do's and Don't sheet.	√
Worms / Fleas	Pupil or adults	Luna will follow a flea and worming programme agreed by the vet.	Low	Monitor that vet visits happen promptly and take any actions suggested by the vet.	√
Faeces	Pupil or adult	Luna will only be walked under supervision by an appropriate adult	Low	Luna will not be toileted on the playground, but in a separate identified area and cleaned up immediately.	√
Allergies	Pupil or adult	Pupils will not have contact with Luna if school have received a negative response form from parents/carers. If a pupil has an allergy then no tasks will be carried out near the pupil.	Low		√

Appendix 2

DO's & DON'T's

Do - Wash hands before and after touching Luna

Do - Tell Luna to “get down” when jumping up.

Do - Praise Luna when she has followed a command by saying “yes! good girl”.

Don't - shout at Luna when giving her a command.

Do - use a firm voice when giving commands.

Don't - Touch Luna when she is on the corridor.

Don't - play rough with Luna as she will become over excited and may scratch and bite.

Don't - let Luna lick or bite you!

Do - give Luna treats on the floor DO NOT let her eat them out of your hand.

Don't - allow ANY student to hold Luna's lead while walking.

Don't - allow any student to pick Luna up.

Appendix 3

LIST OF COMMANDS THAT LUNA UNDERSTANDS

Luna's name should be said first, then the command.

“SIT” - Along with hand signal.

“STAY” - While sitting.

“LEAVE IT” - When she is chewing something she shouldn't.

“DOWN” - When she jumps up.

“QUIET”(with finger to lips) - When Luna barks.

“STEADY”(with a short tug and release of the lead) - When she pulls on the lead. If the lead is taught this encourages her to pull more.

“COME”/ ”LOOK” - to get Luna's attention.

For Luna's development and positive behaviour around school it is important that everyone adheres to these rules and commands.