



School Dogs Risk Assessment

Includes:

- Purpose and introduction
- Interaction with pupils and staff
- Pupils and staff interaction with the school dog
- Hygiene/Health
- Activities involving the school dog, including walking

School Dog Risk Assessment

Purpose	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Dogs teach children responsibility. Having to remember to feed, provide water and show support for a dog can give children a sense of importance and satisfaction that they can't get from school or other chores. The relationship that develops can be life-changing for a child and a great support system as they themselves continue to grow and develop.2. Dogs teach children patience. Dogs do not always do as they are told first time!3. Dogs teach children compassion. Just like humans, dogs feel emotion and pain. They are prone to injuries and the infirmities of age during their relatively short lives.4. Dogs teach children about socialisation. Like most of us, dogs are social animals who enjoy and need attention and affection. By learning how to interact with a dog, children can learn how to better socialise with other children. If they can learn the social cues of a dog, then interacting with humans who can talk will be a walk in the park (pun intended).5. Dogs are fun. Last, but certainly not least, dogs are a lot of fun. They greet you with a wagging tail every day and can cheer you up even on your worst day. <p>Many people have studied dogs in attempts to decipher their behaviour, and the theories abound. However, you just have to witness the interactions between dogs and children to realise the potential for greatness. Dogs can sense when children with epilepsy are about to have a seizure, they can sense when a diabetic child's sugar is low, and they can help children with severe physical disabilities find happiness in life. With the proper training and supervision, a dog can enrich a child's life. After all, dogs are basically four-legged children who never grow up!</p>
Introduction	<p>Middi is a cocker spaniel. Middi has Pet Insurance which include third-party liability cover. He visits the vet for check-ups. His regular vet visits will offer advice on his food intake to ensure he remains a health weight, provide monthly worm and flea preventatives and complete general health checks.</p> <p>Middi is fully vaccinated in line with veterinary guidance and records are kept and reviewed annually.</p> <p>A named responsible adult (Laura) is accountable for Middi's welfare, supervision and adherence to this risk assessment at all times.</p> <p>The cocker spaniel breed is suitable for working with children in a school environment.</p> <p>In addition to the 5 key reasons for a school dog joining us outlined in the purpose, we also believe he will improve the children's abilities within the school's core values and help to improve and secure higher attendance levels.</p> <p>Middi comes to school 3 days a week – usually Monday, Thursday and Friday with Laura (class teacher and owner).</p> <p>Middi will have access to a quiet, designated rest area where he will not be disturbed.</p>

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Area: Interaction with pupils and staff				
Reason: To ensure the school dog interacts appropriately at all times				
Step 1 Identify the Hazards	Step 2 Who might be harmed & how?	Step 3 What are you already doing?	Risk Rating	Action required
School dog biting a child or adult	Child or adult could be injured; safeguarding concern	Dog trained and supervised at all times. Interactions controlled and risk assessed. When the dog is approached in the correct way there is very limited danger. Middi has been in school since he was 9 weeks old and very used to interaction with children. Staff are trained to recognise early warning signs of stress in dogs (e.g. growling, lip licking, withdrawal) and will remove the dog immediately.	Low	Ensure that children and adults do not interact with the school dog without supervision Ensure that all interaction with the school dog is completed in the agreed way On-going reminders during assemblies and in class of how to interact with the school dog
Jumping up/scratching	If a dog becomes excited there is a danger that they could jump up and knock a child over or leave a scratch mark	The agreed training programme has involved not jumping up with praise/rewards being given when successful. Children identified as vulnerable (e.g. SEND, younger pupils) will have additional supervision or restricted access where appropriate.	Medium	Ensure that children and adults do not interact with the school dog without supervision The school dog will be kept in the office or in in the courtyard outside the office (which is not part of the children's playground). When people come to interact with him or under lead control by an authorised adult.
Direct interaction with children/staff	If a dog is allowed to interact when not in the correct frame of mind children/ staff could be scratched	No interaction is allowed without authorisation Interaction will be cancelled if the school dog shows signs of incorrect behaviour Rewards/praise will be given to reinforce the desired behaviour A maximum number of children interacting at any one time will be set to avoid overstimulation.	Medium	Ensure that the school dog is approached in the agreed manner.

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Destruction of materials	If allowed a dog may chew/destroy some school materials/resources	The school dog will be under close control at all times The school dog will have his own toys to play with and when in school, will have a small den to ensure normal school resources, electrical wires, small objects and hazardous materials will be kept out of reach.	Low	Monitor that the equipment used to contain the school dog is appropriate and effective.
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Area: Interaction with pupils and staff

Reason: To ensure the school dog interacts appropriately at all times

Step 1 Identify the Hazards	Step 2 Who might be harmed & how?	Step 3 What are you already doing?	Risk Rating	Action required
Incorrect/inconsistent interaction with the school dog	If a child/adult interact with a dog in the incorrect or inconsistent way this could affect a dog's training and have a negative impact on future interaction	Agreed guidelines that must be followed at all times when interacting with the school dog	Medium	If there are any inconsistencies in approach with the school dog the adult/child will have the interaction stopped
Use of rewards/treats	Children and adults could be harmed if a dog is over excited when receiving a reward/treat	Adults and children are reminded to wash their hands. Treats will only be given to the school dog with authorisation Only staff will store and manage treats to prevent accidental ingestion or overfeeding.	Low	Reminders to the children to wash hands / use alcohol gel after handling treats Treats to be put away to ensure they can only be used after authorisation
Pupil/staff knowledge of interaction with a puppy/dog	If adults and children have limited knowledge of how to interact correctly this could result in harm to a dog or themselves	There is an agreed format for how to interact with the school dog, which is shared with children in assembly. New staff and supply staff will receive a briefing on school dog procedures.	Medium	Invite 'The Dog's Trust' to visit each year group to conduct a 'Be Dog Smart' course with all of the children dog

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Worms/fleas	If a dog is not treated for worms there is a danger that germs can be transferred to humans	The school dog will be treated monthly for worms and fleas	Low	Monitor that vet visits happen promptly and take actions suggested by the vet
Faeces	If a child/adult come into contact with dog faeces some germs could be transferred	The school dog will only be walked under supervision No child will be asked to pick up the dog's faeces, this will always be undertaken by the adult in supervision	Low	If a child finds faeces (of any sort) on the school field/playground they will report it to an adult
Allergies	Children or staff with allergies may experience mild to severe reactions	No children will be expected to be in close, targeted contact with the school dog if parents have denied permission. Dog kept away from identified pupils Handwashing enforced after contact	Low	Maintain up-to-date allergy list Share information with all staff Adjust access as required for individuals
Zoonotic diseases (infection transmission)	Children and staff could become unwell through contact with bacteria, parasites, or saliva	Dog health is regularly monitored by a vet No licking of faces or open wounds permitted All adults and children wash hands after interaction Any scratches are cleaned immediately	Low	Reinforce handwashing routines Remind children not to allow licking Monitor for any signs of illness in dog or pupils
Children's access to school dog's resource	If a child has access dog treats/food and eats some they could become unwell	All of the school dog's resources will be put away No child will be allowed to enter the school dog's area without authorisation	Low	Remind children not to enter area

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Contact with food preparation areas	If a dog enters a food preparation area this could be unhygienic	The school dog will be under close control or in a contained area or on a lead at all times around school He will never enter the school kitchen	Trivial	
Cleaning hands after interacting with the school dog	If hands are not cleaned children/adults could become unwell	All adults and children will clean their hands after interaction with the school dog	Low	Remind children and adults to clean their hands

Area: Interaction with pupils and staff

Reason: To ensure the school dog interacts appropriately at all times

Step 1 Identify the Hazards	Step 2 Who might be harmed & how?	Step 3 What are you already doing?	Risk Rating	Action required
Walking the dog on and off site	Children could be harmed during a walk offsite if they are not focussed Children might be harmed if they do not interact correctly when a dog is on a walk	It would be rare for the school dog to be taken off site, but if that should happen, normal risk assessed procedure will take place No children will take the lead when the school dog goes for a walk unless authorised to do so by accompanying adult No children will be allowed to interact with the school dog when he is on a walk unless permission is given	Medium	Careful consideration needs to be given to the amount of time the school dog is allowed to walk around school during play/lunchtimes
Visits to classroom	If the school dog visits a class and the children do not follow the correct procedure he may become over excited	The school dog will initially only make classroom visits with an assigned adult The children in classrooms will follow the agreed procedure or interaction will stop	Medium	Careful consideration will be given to when the school dog can visit classrooms and be under the control of the class teacher or teaching assistant

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Being fed	If a child tries to interact when a dog is eating they may respond aggressively	No child will be allowed in the school dog's contained area when he is eating All feeding will be supervised	Low	Reminders to the children feeding the school dog to not interact when he is eating Children may be trained to prepare the food for the school dog (washing their hands afterwards)
School events	If a dog is overwhelmed they may become aggressive or boisterous	The school dog will only attend school events if they are appropriate and he will be under the control of a supervising adult	Low	Monitor the school dog's reaction to school events. If the school events are too overwhelming the school dog might not attend school on that day
Dog becoming stressed, anxious or overwhelmed	Dog may react unpredictably (e.g. growl, snap), which could cause harm to pupils or staff	Dog has a designated quiet/rest area Dog is supervised at all times Dog removed from situations if showing signs of stress Children are not allowed to disturb the dog when resting	Medium	Ensure all staff recognise signs of stress Limit number of interactions per session Monitor dog's behaviour and adjust timetable if needed
Other dogs (on and off site)	If a dog encounters another dog they may become boisterous	No other dogs will be allowed on the school premises	Low	Monitor the school dog reaction when out walking
Unsupervised access to the school dog	Children could be scratched or bitten if interacting without supervision	Dog is always under supervision of a named adult Dog kept in controlled areas (office/courtyard) Children are not allowed to access dog area without permission	Low	Reinforce rules with pupils Ensure doors/gates are secure Remind staff of supervision expectations
Dog becoming ill or injured whilst on site	Dog welfare compromised; distressed dog could behave unpredictably around children	Dog monitored daily by owner Emergency contact details (owner/vet) available Dog removed from school if unwell	Low	Ensure all staff know reporting procedure Act immediately if concerns arise Keep emergency contact details accessible