



School Dog Policy and Risk Assessment

Purpose and rationale

At Box Hill School there are a number of parents with dogs who occasionally bring dogs onto the school site. The school acknowledges that well-behaved pets such as dogs can contribute to feelings of wellbeing and the school seeks to enable parents to bring dogs on site in a safe and secure manner.

The purpose of this document is to provide policy and guidance for those who wish to bring a dog to school occasionally.

Children can benefit educationally and emotionally, increase their understanding of responsibility and develop empathy and nurturing skills through contact with pets. In addition to these benefits, children take great enjoyment from interaction with dogs and puppies. As dogs are one of the most popular pets, it is more than likely that children will have some exposure to a dog while still at school.

Additionally, dogs are often brought into schools from outside agencies e.g. Guide Dogs for the Blind, as well as animal rescue charities such as the Dogs Trust and occasionally by pupils, parents or teachers.

Due regard has been given to Health and Safety at Work and other risk legislation.

For parents who bring a dog onto site

- 1. The dog must always be on a lead.**
- 2. Only the owner or handler should pick up all dogs mess.**
- 3. Dogs that are ill must not be brought into contact with students.**
- 4. Dogs with young puppies must not be brought into contact with students as there is the risk of the mother becoming overprotective, which may cause her to react out of character.**
- 5. Young children must never be left alone with dogs and there must be appropriate adult supervision at all times.**
- 6. Dogs may be brought onto the rear playing fields if the parent is watching sport, but not onto the pitches themselves.**
- 7. The school asks parents not to walk their dogs on site generally, but only when coming to site for school pick up or school events.**

8. Allergic reactions cannot be discounted from handling dogs, or just from being near them. Children known to have allergic reactions to dogs must have their access restricted.

The school believes that;

1. **Dogs teach responsibility.** Having to remember to feed, provide water and show support for a dog can give children a sense of importance and satisfaction even if just observed within the house. The relationship that can develop 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 easier.
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.

However, in the event of an incident, the school would review the permission for the dog to be on site and reserves the right to withdraw permission.

September 2023

Review September 2024

CLO