



FORM OV 4 (CSF4255)

RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

(Focus on the things over which you have control)

Establishment: Westfield Primary School & Nursery

Risk assessment for School Dog 'Milo'

Last reviewed September 2021

Background

The value of pet therapy is widely accepted as a powerful aid to communication and motivation. Research has shown that companion dogs can improve the well-being of children reducing their anxiety levels by making the school environment happier and a more enjoyable place to be. Dogs are a great comfort to children who are upset in any way and in need of calm, consolation, comfort, breathing space or a distraction before being able to tell an adult what has upset them. Children can benefit educationally and emotionally; a dog can motivate and encourage their participation, increase their understanding of responsibility, develop empathy and nurturing skills and improve their behaviour and self-esteem. Children cannot fail in any way in their relationship with a dog; they do not judge or condemn and offer unconditional affection. Children will learn the principles of good pet ownership and be taught how to handle dogs safely and responsibly; they will take great enjoyment from interaction with the dog.

The Leadership Team of Westfield Primary considered the options regarding the possibility of obtaining a dog as a school pet in the Autumn term 2016. Over a period of several months following this discussion, research into a possible source of a suitable puppy led to the final decision to introduce a puppy in September 2017.

The rationale to make the decision to have a school dog was as follows:

- For the school to have a dog that is able to live as naturally as conditions allow
- For the dog to be properly cared for
- To have a dog that the children could learn how to care for, interact safely around and also benefit their social and emotional development

Prior to purchasing the puppy, the Head Teacher, Mrs Suzanne Stace, visited the home of the puppy and the dog's parents with a registered dog trainer to ensure that the temperament of the puppy and its parents was suitable for interaction with children. The puppy will live with Mrs Stace in her home at her own expense and be introduced to the school environment and the children gradually. A Vets' practice local to the breeder's home thoroughly checked the puppy for any illnesses and was responsible for his initial vaccination programme. There are no diseases that could be caught from the puppy as he is kept up-to-date with immunisations including rabies, and worming treatment is in line with European vet guidelines. A register of his annual health check is kept both by Mrs Stace and the vets' surgery.

It is accepted that interacting with animals is not appropriate for all children but that for some it has the potential to provide many positive benefits. Any parent who does not wish their child to interact with the puppy is invited to write to inform Mrs Stace of their wishes. This risk assessment will be reviewed annually and the impact of a school dog will be evaluated by the Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team.

Significant Hazards and Associated Risks Those hazards which may result in serious harm or affect several people	Those who might be harmed Persons at risk from the significant hazards identified	Residual Risk Rating (H / M / L)	Control Measures(CM's): Controls, including relevant sources of guidance (e.g. Generic Risk Assessment, CSF Offsite Visits Manual, Guidance from Provider, etc.). Specific CM's not included in the generic RA (e.g. briefings, actions by leaders / participants, qualifications / experience of supervisors)	Review date
Dog getting over excited when interacting with children.	Child/staff knocked to ground	L	The dog will always be in the care of a responsible adult and will never be allowed to freely roam the school premises unsupervised. Children are not left with the dog unsupervised.	Completed December 2017 By S Stace Reviewed September 2018 April 2019 September 2019 April 2020 September 2020 March 2021 September 2021 Next review March 2022
	Child/staff scratched by Dog	L	During the School day the dog will always be on a lead when he is out of the Head's office. The dog will be trained not to jump up or bite the children.	
	Child/staff bitten by Dog	M	Pupils have been, and continue to be, taught how to read dog behaviour and the impact of their actions. Education of this nature is continually given to children when in contact with the dog with a supervised adult and children have also attended specific workshops from outside professionals, including the Blue Cross / Dog Trust Pupils will be taught what to do to prevent the dog from chasing them. (i.e. stand still with arms by their side – 'tall like a tree')	

			<p>The Head teacher and dog had formal training from the age of 16 weeks with an experienced local dog trainer.</p> <p>All staff will have been introduced to the dog and the expectations (do's and don'ts) of having a school dog.</p>	
<p>Keeping safe when Dog walking / Mile run</p>			<p>A member of staff will always have school dog on the lead and have responsibility to ensure that they have control of him</p> <p>From KS 1 children in small groups of 4 will walk the school dog at lunchtime with a member of staff to the Sports centre and back. The member of staff always holds the lead. Children are reminded how to keep safe crossing the road and are supervised at all times by the member of staff.</p> <p>The member of staff will pick up any dog poo and remind children of the importance of staff member washing hands on return to school.</p> <p>Children will be given the choice if they would like to stroke the school dog and or feed the dog a treat and are shown how to do this safely with a flat hand. They are reminded on return to school to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer.</p> <p>Mile run – The school dog will be taken out on the lead to run the daily mile with a member of staff and is supervised at all times. The children are reminded of how to behave safely around the school dog.</p>	
<p>The dog being a tripping hazard</p>	<p>Child/ staff/parent/ visitor</p>	<p>L</p>	<p>All members of school community to be vigilant to look where they are walking to avoid tripping over the dog.</p> <p>The dog to be on a short lead when walking around school with a member of staff.</p>	

<p>The dog gets loose from Head's office, his crate or from his lead.</p>	<p>Child/staff knocked to ground</p> <p>Child/staff scratched by Dog</p> <p>Child/staff bitten by Dog</p>	<p>L</p> <p>L</p> <p>M</p>	<p>There is a stair gate at the Head's office door for when the door is open and the dog is in the room off of the lead. In addition to this there is a crate in the room and a fenced garden area to separate from the meeting table if someone requests not to have contact with the dog or he will be removed from the room if required and remain with a member of staff.</p> <p>The dog's crate is big enough for him to be happy and safe in if he were needed to be restrained in there for a short period of the school day although this would only be used in extreme circumstances.</p> <p>In the unlikely event of the dog getting loose from the Head's office a member of staff will return the dog back in Headteacher's room.</p>	<p>Completed December 2017 By S Stace</p> <p>Reviewed September 2018 April 2019 September 2019 April 2020 September 2020 March 2021 September 2021 Next review March 2022</p>
<p>Dog hair causing allergies</p>	<p>Children have allergic reactions</p>	<p>L/M</p>	<p>The school dog is a Cockapoo which is a low/non-moulting breed to reduce the chance of an allergic reaction. Parents have been asked to inform the school of any known allergies prior to introduction of the dog to school. A list of any children who should not interact with the dog will be kept by the Office staff.</p> <p>Parents / Staff have been asked to highlight any allergies and a list of those who should not interact with the dog will be kept by the Head Teacher / Teachers and Office staff.</p> <p>Fully supervised, children will have the opportunity to interact with the dog and those with allergies will be able to opt out of interaction.</p> <p>Children have been taught to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer after active participation with the dog. Wounds on exposed skin will be covered.</p>	<p>Completed December 2017 By S Stace Reviewed September 2018 April 2019 September 2019 April 2020 September 2020 March 2021 September 2021 Next review March 2022</p>
<p>Children getting germs from the dog.</p>	<p>Children/staff will contract diseases that can be carried by dogs</p>	<p>L</p>	<p>Should the dog defecate on the school site a member of staff will clear this up immediately and dispose of it in a safe manner. Poo bags will be carried by staff member walking the dog and available in Head's office if required.</p>	<p>Completed December 2017 By S Stace</p>

			<p>Flea treatment is carried out at monthly intervals. Worming treatment is carried out in line with European Vet guidelines, at 3 monthly intervals.</p> <p>If the dog is sick he will not come into school until he is better.</p> <p>The dog will go through the back of the school and dining hall at meal times (to access the school hall) ; he will never go into a food preparation area and/ or the kitchen .</p>	<p>Reviewed September 2018 April 2019 September 2019 April 2020 September 2020 March 2021 September 2021 Next review March 2022</p>
Financial cost of the dog's upkeep	School unable to afford ongoing cost of the dog's day-to-day upkeep or medical bills	L	<p>The dog is the responsibility of the Head teacher, Mrs Stace. She is financially responsible for all his care and day-to-day costs.</p> <p>The dog is the responsibility of Mrs Stace outside of school hours.</p> <p>Initial dog training costs were partly paid for by the school.</p>	
Claim is made against school re: behaviour of the dog	School not adequately covered financially	L	<p>Mrs Stace insures the dog.</p> <p>The school holds liability insurance and is renewed annually. The certificates are kept in school office.</p>	Records in office
Fire Alarm	Who has responsibility to remove dog from the building		Dog signed in as a member of staff so fire marshalls know when he is onsite.	
Noise / Barking	Pupils who can't cope with noise e.g. autistic children	L	Cockapoos are bred to be sociable dogs and are often used as therapy dogs as they are known to be good with children. Dog was introduced to the children from an early age so is acclimatised to a noisy environment, therefore reducing the chance of him barking.	
Dog Phobia	Distress caused by close proximity to dog	L	<p>Parents have been asked to inform the school if their child is scared to be in close contact with the dog.</p> <p>Parents will be offered a programme of support for child to help overcome aversion.</p> <p>Parents also offered the option of their child having no close contact. A list of any children who should not interact with the dog will be kept by the Office staff.</p> <p>Visitors advised dog is in the Head's office and removed if requested.</p> <p>Notice in school entrance and noted on school website</p>	

REVIEWS:		
DATE OF REVIEW: <i>Record actual date of review</i>	COMMENTS: <i>Record any comments reviewer wishes to make. Including recommendations for future reviews.</i>	DATES OF REVIEW:
DATE OF REVIEW: 22.3.21	REVIEWED BY: S Stace Head teacher	COMMENTS: Risk assessment -Reviewed September 2018 April 2019 September 2019 April 2020 September 2020 March 2021 September 2021 Next review March 2022

Notes for guidance:

- Focus on *significant* hazards and associated risks over which Group Leaders / Group Members have control
- Control Measures should be simple and easy to understand
- Include reference to external guidance from providers / LA as part of Control Measures (CM's), where relevant. Also, CM's not included in the Generic Risk Assessment, briefings, actions by leaders and participants, qualifications / experience of supervisors
- Consider the Venue, the Activity, the nature of the Group (including leaders) in the Risk Assessment – "VAGRA"
- Compile Risk Assessments with contributions from as many people concerned as practicable, including participants
- Ideally, each Risk Assessment should be no longer than one side of A4
- Ensure, as far as is appropriate, that understanding of the Risk Assessments is shared across all members of the group
- Include Additional CM's if generic CM's are insufficient, existing CM's cannot be met or circumstances change
- Review the Risk Assessments after any incident and as a matter of routine on an annual basis

Definitions:

- **Hazard** Anything with the potential to cause harm
- **Risk** The likelihood that someone may be harmed by the hazard
- **Significant** A hazard is significant when either it may cause *serious* harm to an individual or it may harm *several* people
- **Control** Arrangements in place to reduce / manage the risk
- **Measures**

Reducing the Risks:

- ✓ Experienced and competent leaders
- ✓ Improve briefings
- ✓ Apply stricter supervision ratios
- ✓ Separate people from the risk
- ✓ Reduce the period of exposure to the risk

- ✓ Provide PPE
- ✓ Use alternative method
- ✓ Increase training and qualification of leaders
- ✓ Specify higher competence level of participants
- ✓ Discontinue the activity

Use your Risk Assessment process to inform your planning

“Clearer objectives lead to safer activities”