

School dog risk assessment

Introduction :

The value of pet therapy is widely accepted as a powerful aid to stimulation and communication. Studies have shown that the presence of companion animals can improve the well-being of children and lower rate of anxiety, simply by making the environment happier, more enjoyable and less forbidding. The team at Diggle have been considering obtaining a dog as a school therapy pet for some time and with the success of Betsy the reading therapy dog the decision was made in April 2019 to go ahead with the project.

The rationale behind this decision was as follows:

- For the school to have a pet that would live as naturally as conditions would allow.
- For the animal to be properly cared for outside of the school day.
- To have a pet that the children could interact with and also be of benefit to the children's social and emotional development

It is accepted that not all children or staff will want to interact with the dog, but for some it has the potential to provide many positive benefits. Any parent who does not wish to interact with Chene is invited to write to Mrs Newton and inform her of their wishes. There are no disease issues associated with the puppy as animal health trust and Mr Ryan will be responsible for all vaccinations, worming and health checks. Any treatment necessary will be administered. Chene will also be insured. The risk assessment below is a working document and will be checked annually by key staff and the working body.

Hazard	Risk	Risk 1-5	Controls in place	Review date and signature
Dog getting over excited when interacting with children.	Child knocked to the ground.	1	The dog will always be in the care of a responsible adult and will not be allowed to roam freely around school.	
	Child scratched by dog.	3	Children will not be left unsupervised with the dog and the dog will always be on a lead or carried.	
	Child bitten by dog	4	When Chene is not in her crate she will always be with a responsible adult. Pupils will have been and will continue to be taught about the consequences of their actions. This education will be given primarily through Forest Schools.	

			<p>Pupils will be taught how to behave to prevent the dog from chasing them.</p> <p>Chene will undergo formal training from the age of 8 weeks with Mr Ryan, who as an experienced ability dog trainer.</p> <p>Chene will also undergo conditioning to the school classroom environment. This training will ensure her use in the future as a therapy/reading dog.</p> <p>Risk of scratching and biting will reduce as Chene receives training and matures.</p> <p>All staff must be introduced to the dog and know the expectations of the dog.</p> <p>She will be groomed regularly, kept in good health and her claws kept short.</p>	
The dog gets loose from her crate or lead.	As above	1	The dog crate must be big enough for her to be happy and safe when left and the children are taught strictly not to tease her.	
The dog causing allergies.	Children or staff have allergic reactions.	1	<p>All parents are requested to inform school of any known allergies to dogs.</p> <p>A list of any children/staff who should not interact with the dog will be kept (on the schools Sims system)</p> <p>Children will be given the opportunity to interact with the dog as they wish and those with allergies may opt out of interaction.</p> <p>Children must wash their hands after active participation with Chene.</p>	
Children getting germs from the dog.	Children or staff will contract diseases that can be carried by dogs.	1	<p>Should the dog defecate on the school site a member of staff will clean it up immediately and dispose of it in a safe way.</p> <p>Chene will be trained to toilet in an area of the grounds that children have limited or no</p>	

			<p>access to. This area will be disinfected as required.</p> <p>All immunisations and worming will be kept up to date in accordance with the European pet passport scheme and a record kept of this.</p> <p>Flea and worming treatment will be carried out at 12 week intervals.</p> <p>The dog will not be allowed in the school dining hall at meal times and never in any food preparation area.</p>	
Financial cost of the upkeep of the dog	School unable to afford the ongoing cost of Chene's day to day upkeep or medical bills.	1	The dog is ultimately the responsibility of Mr Ryan, both in a well-being and financial aspect. School's only obligation is the insurance for Chene.	
Claim is made against school about the dog.	School not adequately covered financially.	0	Insurance will cover any claim. Certificate will be kept in the office and renewed annually.	