



Risk Assessment - Dog Wellbeing Intervention

School: The Harbour Provision & Spring Meadow Primary School	Risk Assessment Date: Autumn 2024 Date to be reviewed: Autumn 2025
Staff Involved: Mr Higgon-Williams	Head of Provision's signature: Head Teacher's signature:

Risk Benefit.

The five freedoms that apply to any living creature in our care.

- 1: Freedom from thirst, hunger and malnutrition: give ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigour.
- 2: Freedom from discomfort: provide a suitable environment, including shelter and a comfortable resting area.
- 3: Freedom from pain, injury and disease: ensure prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment.
- 4: Freedom to express normal behaviour: provide sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animal's own kind.
- 5: Freedom from fear and distress: ensure conditions avoid mental suffering.

Having pets encourages children to have shared ownership over the care and attention given to another living creature, which teaches them how to respect and treat animals and in turn this passes over to interactions with humans. It engages them to respond to something other than their own needs as the creature is dependent upon them for food, warmth, exercise, safety etc. This is often something the children may have not been exposed to thinking about before.

Children often talk, with pets, or about the pets promoting communication and language skills, children will also often draw pictures, paintings of the pets in the setting.

Children sometimes use pets as alter egos who they can play and talk with using their imaginative skills, which can solve problems or issues they may be experiencing. Staff may take the children to the pet shop to purchase supplies for the animals further enhancing their real life experiences and adding ownership and responsibility of looking after the animal.

Stroking pets helps release positive chemicals in the brain which in turn makes the child feel relaxed and happy. However some children are fearful of pets as they might be worried about them biting, scratching or other unpredictable behaviours. Observing their peers interacting with pets can help children overcome their anxieties and find strategies to cope with situations they feel less confident about. Dogs are sensitive creatures and educators should think carefully about having animals in The Harbour Provision or Spring Meadow primary as a tool.



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Designated Responsible Person for the Dog	Responsibility: Mr. Higgon-Williams (Dog Owner)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Mr. Higgon-Williams will be the designated primary handler and caretaker for the dog during its time at The Harbour and Spring Meadow primary school.● He is responsible for overseeing all aspects of the dog's well-being, including feeding, grooming, health check-ups, and behavioural monitoring.● Mr. Higgon-Williams will ensure that the dog's vaccinations, flea treatments, and deworming schedules are up-to-date, maintaining accurate records of these treatments.● In the event of any health concerns or incidents involving the dog, Mr. Higgon-Williams will be the point of contact for immediate response and coordination with veterinary services.● Regular communication between Mr. Higgon-Williams and school staff will be maintained to address any changes in the dog's behaviour, health, or overall well-being.
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Hazard	Risk	Mitigation	Severity (L, M, H) Likelihood (L, M, H)
Dog Selection and Training:	Unpredictable behaviour, aggression, or fear in the dog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select a dog with a calm temperament, good with children. Ensure the dog is well-socialised. Regular health check-ups and vaccinations for the dog. 	<p>Low</p> <p>Low</p>
Introduction of Dog to Children:	Allergic reactions, fear, or anxiety in children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain consent from parents/carers for children to participate in the intervention. Identify and document any allergies or phobias among children. Provide informational sessions to children about the dog's presence and behaviour. 	<p>Low</p> <p>Low</p>
Staff-to-Children Ratio and Interaction Limits:	<p>Dog becoming overwhelmed by the amount of children</p> <p>Children becoming over excited and too boisterous around the animal</p>	<p>Staff-to-Children Ratio:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of adults present during dog interactions will be proportionate to the assessed level of need of the participating children. A higher staff-to-children ratio will be implemented for children with greater emotional and behavioural needs to ensure a safe and supportive environment. <p>Limit on Children During Dog Interactions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of children allowed to interact with the dog at any given time will be limited to a maximum of four (4). 	<p>Low</p> <p>Low</p>



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Planning for dog interactions will be done in advance to ensure that the staff-to-children ratio is appropriate, and the dog is not overwhelmed. ● This limit is in place to maintain a calm and controlled environment, minimising the risk of overstimulation for both the children and the dog. 	
Safe Area Design for the Dog:	Overstimulation, accidental injuries, or stress for the dog.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Designate a quiet and secure area with a crate for the dog to rest when needed. ● Ensure the area is well-ventilated, with access to water and toys. ● Establish clear boundaries for children's interaction with the dog. 	<p>Medium</p> <p>Low</p>
Supervision and Monitoring:	Unsupervised interactions leading to potential incidents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Always have a responsible adult present during dog interactions. ● Train staff and educators on reading and responding to dog body language. ● Regularly monitor the dog's stress levels and well-being. 	<p>Low</p> <p>Low</p>
Procedures for Dysregulated Children:	Dysregulated behaviour or emotional distress in children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop a clear protocol for handling dysregulated children during dog interactions. ● Have a designated safe space for children to go if they need a break. ● Train staff to recognise signs of distress in children and provide appropriate support. 	<p>Low</p> <p>Low</p>



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Incident Response:	Dog-related incidents or emergencies.	<p>Minor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establish a clear protocol for handling dog-related incidents, including bites or scratches. ● Have a first aid kit available for immediate treatment if necessary. ● Maintain communication with parents/guardians and report any incidents promptly. <p>Severe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In case of more serious injuries or emergencies, immediately contact emergency services by dialling 999. ● Administer any necessary first aid while awaiting emergency services. ● Notify parents/guardians promptly in the event of a serious incident, providing clear and accurate information. ● Document the incident, including actions taken and any observations, for future reference and improvement of procedures. 	<p>Low</p> <p>Low</p>
Dog Faeces Management:	Exposure to bacteria, hygiene concerns, and potential slips or falls.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Instruct handlers to carry waste disposal bags at all times during dog interactions. ● Promptly clean up any dog faeces in designated areas using the provided waste disposal bags. ● Ensure waste disposal bags are securely tied and placed in designated bins for proper disposal. 	<p>Low</p> <p>Low</p>



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide handwashing facilities or hand sanitisers for handlers after cleaning up dog faeces. ● Regularly sanitise and disinfect the designated dog areas to prevent the spread of germs. ● Educate children on the importance of hygiene and the proper procedure for handling dog waste. 	
Dog Handling, Grooming, and Hygiene	Potential injuries, allergies, or transmission of germs during dog handling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Only trained staff and designated children should be allowed to interact with the dog. ● Handlers must follow established guidelines for safe and appropriate dog handling. ● Incorporate regular grooming sessions for the dog to maintain hygiene and minimise allergens. ● Emphasise the importance of handwashing for handlers after any direct contact with the dog, including grooming activities. ● Educate children on the proper way to interact with the dog, emphasising gentle behaviour and respect for the dog's boundaries. 	Low Low
Dog Health and Preventive Measures	Spread of diseases, potential allergic reactions, and compromised well-being of the dog.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintain a health record for the dog, documenting vaccinations. ● Ensure the dog is up-to-date on all necessary vaccinations. ● Implement a regular deworming schedule for the dog, and keep records of the treatments administered. 	Low Low



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administer preventive flea and tick treatments as recommended by a veterinarian. • Conduct routine health check-ups for the dog to identify any signs of illness or discomfort. • If the dog shows any signs of illness, immediately isolate it from children and seek veterinary care. • Educate handlers, staff, and children on the importance of hygiene, including hand washing after interacting with the dog, to minimise the risk of disease transmission. 	
<p>Regular Review and Evaluation:</p>	<p>Inadequate adaptation to changing circumstances.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct regular reviews of the intervention's effectiveness and safety. • Update risk assessments based on feedback and incidents. • Provide ongoing training for staff involved in the intervention. 	<p>Low</p> <p>Low</p>