



# DITCHAM PARK SCHOOL

*Where every child is known and valued*

## Dogs in School Policy

Compiled by	Bursar
Approved by	Headmaster & Head of Juniors
Publication Date	September 2019
This review	March 2021
Governor Approval:	Chair of Governors (via H&S Committee)
Next Review	March 2023



---

## Dogs In School Policy

---

### 1) Introduction and Aims

This policy applies to the whole school including Early Years and aims to ensure the safety and well-being of all pupils, staff, parents and visitors to Ditcham Park School.

#### **Animals in the School Buildings**

To minimise the risk to children in school, animals are not allowed in the School buildings. The definition of animals includes all pets including insects, fish and birds. The only exceptions to this rule are as follows:

- Assistance dogs partnered to pupils, staff or visitors to the school (eg: Guide Dogs for the Blind, Canine Partners, Hearing Dogs);
- Animals that have permanent residence in the school grounds, belonging either to the resident of Ditcham Park School Cottage or an educational department of the School, with the express agreement of the Headmaster and Bursar;
- Dogs registered to charities providing Animal Assisted Interventions in Schools who subscribe to the Kennel Club Educational Trust “Bark & Read” Standards of Practice (see paragraph 3), and with the advance written agreement of the Headmaster and Bursar;
- Dogs belonging to members of staff working in School during School holiday periods, when pupils are not in attendance, with the advance express agreement of the Headmaster or Bursar;

#### **Dogs in the School Grounds**

Dogs are not allowed anywhere on the School site at any time unless specifically authorised in advance by the Headmaster or Bursar. This includes drop off and collection times. The only exceptions to this rule are as follows:

- Assistance dogs partnered to pupils, staff or visitors to the school (eg: Guide Dogs for the Blind, Canine Partners, Hearing Dogs);
- Animals that have permanent residence in the school grounds, belonging either to the resident of Ditcham Park School Cottage or an educational department of the School, with the express agreement of the Headmaster and Bursar;
- Dogs registered to charities providing Animal Assisted Interventions in Schools who subscribe to the Kennel Club Educational Trust “Bark & Read” Standards of Practice, and with the advance written agreement of the Headmaster and Bursar;
- Dogs belonging to members of staff working in School during School holiday periods, when pupils are not in attendance, with the advance express agreement of the Headmaster or Bursar; and
- Any dog belonging to a member of staff or family of the School supporting a School event such as a sponsored walk, with advance notification to the organising member of School staff.

All dog owners who have been granted permission to access the school buildings and grounds are required to adhere to the School’s “Dogs in School Regulations” listed at paragraph 2.



### **2. Dogs in School Regulations**

- Dogs must be on a lead at all times
- Dogs must be under control at all times
- Dogs must not be left unattended at any time
- Owners must pick up, and appropriately dispose of, their dog's excrement
- Dogs must not enter any of the school buildings unless they satisfy the criteria listed at point 1.
- Dogs must not enter food preparation areas.
- If it is felt by the Headmaster, Bursar or Estate Bursar that a dog is causing harm to individuals or the school site and/or equipment, or is creating a nuisance of itself, the owner of the dog will be asked to remove the dog from site with immediate effect.

### **3. Canine-assisted Intervention Programmes**

Children can benefit educationally and emotionally, increase their understanding of responsibility and develop empathy and nurturing skills through contact with a dog. In addition, most children take great enjoyment from interaction with a dog.

Dogs registered to charities providing Animal Assisted Interventions (AAI) in Schools, who are members of the Kennel Club "Bark & Read" Alliance and subscribe to the Bark & Read Standards of Practice are, with the advance written agreement of the Headmaster and Bursar, permitted into the School buildings to deliver canine-assisted intervention programmes.

Owners who bring their dogs into School for this purpose agree to adhere to the Kennel Club "Bark and Read" Alliance Standards of Practice (copy provided at Appendix A).

Whilst there is a risk in bringing a dog into a school environment, the School believes the educational and emotional benefits to pupils outweigh the associated risk of possible injuries or incidents caused by a dog. The risk needs to be managed, and before any dog is introduced into the school environment a thorough risk assessment will be carried out. A sample risk assessment is provided at Appendix B.

Compiled by Bursar	Publication Date: September 2019
Approved by:	Headmaster & Head of Juniors
This Review:	March 2021
Next Review:	March 2023



### **Appendix A**

### **Kennel Club “Bark and Read” Alliance Standards of Practice**

#### **Dog Welfare and Wellbeing Standards**

- 1.1 Dogs should be in good health to undertake the role they are required to do.
- 1.2 Handlers must use only positive reward-based training methods and equipment.
- 1.3 Dogs must travel confidently and comfortably in any mode of transport.
- 1.4 Handlers must have a policy covering procedures in extreme weather conditions, which is implemented when appropriate.
- 1.5 Each active session with the dog must be no longer than one hour and dogs should work for no more than three active hours during a day. They should have access to a quiet, safe and comfortable place to rest for a proportionate break between sessions. During this time, only the dog’s handler should be allowed access to the dog.
- 1.6 Dogs must have access to fresh drinking water at all times.
- 1.7 Dogs must be given the opportunity to toilet when required, in an appropriate place provided by the school.
- 1.8 If a dog shows signs of stress, anxiety, discomfort or fatigue, they must be taken out of the situation and only brought back into the session if fully recovered and the issue causing the stress has been identified and addressed.
- 1.9 Enough space must be provided in the working area for the dog to be able to move about comfortably and lay down.
- 1.10 Dogs must be re-assessed regularly to confirm that they are in good health, both physically and emotionally, to continue working. Ideally, this assessment should be conducted once a year, and no less than once every two years, or after a period of significant absence. Organisations must have a clear policy on approval and assessment.
- 1.11 The handler is responsible for ensuring that the dog is not put into any potential situations which may compromise the dog’s health and wellbeing.
- 1.12 Dogs must not be expected to mix with unfamiliar dogs.

#### **General Health, Hygiene, Safety and Legislative Standards**

- 2.1 Sensible precautions must be in place to minimise the risk of the spread of infectious disease e.g. hand washing after each session, for the handler and child.
- 2.2 Dogs with wounds must not be allowed to participate in a session.
- 2.3 People with open wounds must not be allowed to participate in a session, although dressed wounds are acceptable.
- 2.4 Dogs must be free of disease or infection. AAI sessions must be postponed at the first sign of any illness and only resumed once the dog is back to normal good health. If the illness has required veterinary attention and treatment, clearance to resume work should be given by a vet.
- 2.5 Humans or dogs that are immunosuppressed due to illness and/or certain types of medication must not be involved in AAI sessions without medical approval.
- 2.6 Dogs must be up to date and compliant with vaccinations, in line with current WSAVA guidelines and/or Titer testing.
- 2.7 Dogs must be free of parasites and receive regular worm/flea treatments.
- 2.8 Bitches in season must not be involved in any AAI work.



---

## Dogs In School Policy

---

2.9 Dogs must be discouraged from licking people and handlers should manage excessive salivation.

2.10 Service providers and schools must ensure that risk assessments are carried out, specific to the

AAI programmes taking place, and that all relevant parties have access to them.

2.11 Service providers and schools must ensure that appropriate liability insurance is in place in

relation to the programmes taking place, with copies available to all relevant parties.

2.12 Schools and service providers are expected to be up to date with current legislation and policies regarding working with dogs and dog health and welfare, safeguarding of animals and children, GDPR standards and procedures.

### **Dog Training Standards**

3.1 The handler and dog must work to the minimum standards required by the Kennel Club Silver Good Citizen Award, or to an equivalent standard.

3.2 Dogs must walk calmly on a loose lead at all time.

3.3 Dogs must be appropriately socialised and oriented into the school environment.

### **Dog Behaviour Standards**

4.1. Dogs involved in active sessions in schools must:

a) Be a minimum of 12 months of age.

b) Not bark, mouth, jump up at, or paw people.

c) Be adaptable to new environments and unexpected stimuli, such as new smells, objects, and sudden noises.

d) Be socially confident, enjoy human interaction, and be relaxed and calm in the company of children, even when there is a level of noise and erratic behaviour around.

e) Be comfortable with appropriate physical interaction e.g. grooming, and not respond unduly negatively to unexpected lively behaviour from children.

f) Be comfortable engaging with children that may have physical/learning disabilities, and around mechanical aids e.g. wheelchairs, where relevant.

g) Exhibit no guarding of resources e.g. food/toys or avoidance behaviour.

h) Take treats gently when offered and not snatch toys from hands.

i) Be easily identifiable as a dog performing a clear role in the school.

### **General Standards for handlers working in schools**

5.1 Handlers:

a) Must have DBS clearance (PVG in Scotland) and have a parent/guardian/staff member in attendance with the children at all times, in accordance with the school's policy and insurance arrangements

b) Must be covered by appropriate Public Liability insurance.

c) Must ensure they are aware of the Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures within the school.

d) Must know the dog well and have passed an assessment for working with that dog.

e) Must be in control of the dog at all times, with the dog on a static lead.

f) Must be competent in understanding that dog's behaviour/body language and their health and wellbeing needs. Only use positive reward-based dog training methods. Be able to recognise initial signs of stress, anxiety, discomfort, illness and fatigue in the dog they are working with, and act suitably.



---

## Dogs In School Policy

---

- g) Must be equipped with the necessary training and knowledge to ensure sessions are effective and safe.
- h) Must identify with the school an appropriate place for toileting the dog that meets the health and safety needs of the dog and the school. Dog waste must be picked-up, bagged and disposed of in an agreed manner.
- i) Must ensure that the dog is groomed and clean before going to the school.
- j) Must be aware of relevant risk assessments and associated procedures, including fire evacuation and assist in their development if necessary.
- k) Must be aware of the appropriate expectations on them in relation to confidentiality. At a minimum, they should seek permission in relation to the following:
  - Having access to personal data on pupils if appropriate, e.g. name, medical information etc.
  - Taking and using photographs.
  - Posting photographs/information on social media.
  - Identifying pupils on social media or other forms of publicity.
  - Discussing and identifying pupils outside of the school environment.

### General Standards for Schools

#### 6.1 Schools:

- a) Must ensure that all volunteers working with children have DBS/PVG clearance and an appropriate adult/guardian or staff member supplied by the school must be present at all times, in accordance with the school's policy and insurance arrangements.
- b) Must ensure that the handler is covered by appropriate Public Liability insurance.
- c) Must ensure that handlers are aware of Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures within the school.
- d) Must ensure that there is an appropriate adult/guardian or staff present at all times while the handler is working with the children and should supply resources as required.
- e) Must ensure handlers are aware of the establishment's Health and Safety policy, including fire drill arrangements.
- f) Must provide a suitable environment for the dog and handler to operate in. This should be discussed and agreed between the school and the handler/service provider prior to work starting in the school.
- g) Must identify with the handler an appropriate place for toileting the dog that meets the health and safety needs of the dog and the school.
- h) Should provide handlers with useful background information about the school, the working day etc.
- i) Should supply any appropriate resources that are required, such as reading materials, hand sanitisers etc. Where resources are provided by the handler/service provider, this must be agreed in advance with the school.
- j) Must take responsibility for all communication regarding the scheme with parents, including obtaining consent for sessions. Where a handler/service provider wishes to communicate with parents, this must be done through the school.
- k) Must provide and agree with the handler, a suitable and consistent area for a dog to rest, where he will not be disturbed and has access to fresh water.
- l) Outcomes being worked towards should be agreed between the school and the handler.



---

## Dogs In School Policy

---

m) Must ensure handlers/service providers are aware of the expectations on them in relation to confidentiality.

n) Must work with the handler to provide a suitable education programme for children and staff on how to behave around and interact with a dog, e.g. Kennel Club 'Safe & Sound' or equivalent. This should take place before the dog is introduced into the school.

6.2 Where a dog is working in a school on a longer-term basis, the school must agree a named person

who is responsible for the dog's welfare and wellbeing as part of their documented job role/description. The dog must have a legally identified owner who is ultimately responsible for the lifetime wellbeing of the dog. A dog must not be owned by a school



### **Appendix B** **Sample of AAI Dog Risk Assessment**

Hazard	Risk	Risk 1-5*	Likelihood 1 – 5*	Risk Total	Controls
Dog gets overexcited when interacting with children.	Child knocked to ground	1	2	2	<p>The dog will always be in the care of a responsible adult and will never be allowed to freely roam the school premises.</p> <p>Children are not left with the dog unsupervised. The dog will always be on a lead.</p> <p>The dog is trained not to jump up or mouth the children.</p> <p>Pupils are taught the impact of their actions. Education of this nature is continually given to children, and often to whole school during assemblies.</p> <p>Pupils will be taught what to do to prevent the dog from chasing them. (i.e. stand still, cross arms)</p> <p>The dog will undergo conditioning to the school classroom environment, this area of training will allow future reading or nurture intervention to involve the dog in a calming/therapeutic manner.</p> <p>ALL staff will be introduced to the dog and the expectations (dos and don'ts) of having a dog in school.</p> <p>The dog will attend the vets' regularly to make sure his claws are kept short and that he is in good health.</p>
	Child scratched by dog	3	2	6	
	Child bitten by dog	4	2	8	
The dog gets loose from his pen or from his lead.	Child knocked to ground	1	2	2	<p>The dog's pen will be big enough for him to be happy and safe during the school day and the children are taught not to tease.</p> <p>If the dog does get loose from his pen the dog's owner and / or teacher on duty will put the dog back in his pen.</p> <p>In the event of the dog getting loose or if he needs attention at any other time, the owner and the following members of staff will deal with this. They are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mr/Mrs xx (Owner)</li> <li>2. Mr/Mrs xx (Teacher/Tutor)</li> <li>3. Mr/Mrs xx (Teaching Assistant)</li> <li>4. Mr/Mrs xx (Other)</li> </ol>
	Child scratched by dog	3	2	6	
	Child bitten by dog	4	2	8	
Dog hair causing allergies	Children have allergic reactions	1	1	1	<p>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 on the school recording management information system SIMS. Children will have the opportunity to interact with the dog as they wish and those with allergies will be able to opt out of interaction.</p> <p>Children have been taught to wash their hands after active participation with the dog.</p>



## Dogs In School Policy

Hazard	Risk	Risk 1-5*	Likelihood 1 – 5*	Risk Total	Controls
Children getting germs from the dog.	Children or staff will contract diseases that can be carried by dogs	1	1	1	Should the dog defecate on the school site the owner will clear this up immediately and dispose of it in a safe manner. The dog will be trained to toilet in a nominated area of the school that pupils do not access on a regular basis. If required, the area will then be disinfected with an appropriate animal disinfectant. All immunisations (including rabies vaccination) are kept up to date in accordance verified by the supporting AAI charity. Flea treatment is carried out prescribed intervals. Worming treatment is carried out at prescribed intervals The dog will not access the school dining hall at meal times; he will not be permitted into the food preparation area of the kitchen.
Claim is made against school re: behaviour of the dog.	Financial and reputational risk to School	1	1	1	All dogs are covered by the insurance policy of the supporting AAI Charity School has declared activity to its own insurance company as part of the School insurance policy requirements School strictly monitors compliance and adherence to the AAI Standards of Practice by the Owner

KEY:

1- Low risk

2

3 -Medium risk of injury

4

5-High risk of injury