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Lanesend Primary School

Animal Friendly Policy 2020

School Curriculum Policy

Signed: Date:
(Headteacher)

Signed: Date:
(Chair of Trustees)

Review Date: May 2023 (Every 3 Years)
Reviewed By: Headteacher and Science Lead

Lanesend Primary Animal Friendly Policy

Lanesend Primary School encourages animals in school as they have an emotional benefit to our children. This policy details the basic health and safety issues associated with handling and keeping animals in schools, as well as visiting animals.

Handling Animals

If animals will be handled, the most important issue is the maintenance of good hygiene.

When handling animals:

- Do not consume food or drink,
- Cover any open cuts or abrasions on the exposed skin of hands and arms with waterproof adhesive dressings,
- Wash your hands with soap and water before and directly after handling animals.
- Keep animals away from the face.

Careful handling of small mammals and other animals is most important; the animals should be restrained sufficiently so that they cannot damage themselves or the handler.

Mammals should be handled daily if possible. This way they will normally become quite tame and accustomed to being handled.

Gloves should not normally be worn unless it is known that an animal for one reason or another is likely to bite or scratch. In this situation a pair of rubber gloves which does not particularly reduce dexterity, is a sensible precaution.

Physical injuries

There is always the danger of bites and scratches, and teachers should check that any animals kept are friendly and gentle in the presence of children.

Small fingers poked towards the mouths of normally non-aggressive animals may be interpreted as an offering of food and obligingly bitten. Children should be made aware of the dangers and should not poke their fingers through the bars when the animals are in their hutches/cages.

Diseases, parasites and allergies

The likelihood of diseases being passed on from pet animals is low. However allergic reactions to mammals, birds and a few other animals cannot be discounted. These might result from handling the animals or just from being near them and be detected by the development of skin rashes, irritation to the eyes and nose or breathing difficulties. Hand washing soon after handling animals will help. Teachers should watch for the development of allergic reactions in children who come into contact with the animals. Children known to have allergic reactions to specific animals must, of course, have restricted access to those that may trigger a response. In most cases, an allergic reaction will subside once the animal and the affected person are kept apart; in extreme cases, seek medical advice.

Consent and Risk Assessment

Families will receive a letter explaining about new pets and that if they do not wish their child to handle new pets, they must inform the school. A risk assessment is to be signed by all members of staff (teaching and non-teaching staff) and displayed in each classroom.

Cleaning and Hygiene

This is clearly important, both for the health of the animals and for those people looking after them. Hands should be washed before and, of course, after cleaning cages, tanks etc. rubber or plastic gloves should preferably be worn.

After removing soiled litter material, cages should be scrubbed with hot water and liquid detergent.

Frequency of cleaning:

Rabbits should be cleaned at least once a week.

Arrangements must be made for cages to be cleaned as regularly as normal at holiday times.

If a teacher has chosen to have a class pet, it is their responsibility to ensure that the animal is kept clean and healthy, including the cleaning of cages and arrangements during holiday times.

The care and humane treatment of animals:

Animals within the school will be handled, treated, and cared for in a humane manner. Enclosures must be appropriate to the animal and it is the responsibility of the staff member to ensure that the animal has sufficient food, water and a comfortable environment to reduce the stress for the animal. Habitats must be maintained and cleaned by staff.

Soiled Litter Disposal

Soiled litter should be sealed in strong plastic bags and placed with other waste in dustbins. The school therapy dog will have a cornered off area in the staff carpark, away from the school building for toileting. Any soiled litter will be disposed of in the same way as other soiled litter.

Visiting Animals

Lanesend Primary School recognises that a visiting animal offers the potential for a very positive learning experience for children to learn about taking care and showing responsibility for animals as well as developing an understanding of the importance of the humane treatment of living creatures. The school is particularly keen to support the introduction of service animals such as hearing dogs or seeing dogs and this reflects the school's ethos of celebrating diversity and promoting inclusion.

Procedures

Animals brought to school for short term/day visits:

Before bringing an animal onto the school premises during school hours, staff and children must seek prior authorization. Children must obtain permission from their class teacher.

Wherever possible, arrangements for animal visits should be made in advance to ensure that families are appropriately notified. The class teacher will check children's risk assessments for any allergies or fears the children may have.

Any animal brought to school must remain under control of the responsible adult at all times. No wild animals or protected animals will be purposely brought to the building or on school grounds by anyone other than an authorized or licensed animal handler. Handling between the animals and children will be assessed to determine if safe and appropriate.

Should any child or adult be scratched or bitten by an animal at school, first aid must be administered immediately and in the case of a child, families will be called. A copy of the incident report will be given to the involved family and the policy for animals in school will be reviewed accordingly.

Children with medical concerns:

Health issues must be considered when assessing the appropriateness of animals in the classroom. Prior to the consideration of the introduction of an animal to the classroom, the teacher should review the medical notes of the children in their class to ensure there is no conflict.

It is the policy of the school to consider the safety, health and well-being of every child when making decisions regarding the introduction of animals to the classroom. When there is a conflict in this area, the Headteacher will confer with the staff member to find an agreeable solution to the matter in consultation with others, e.g. the families and child, school and others as appropriate. If children have petted an animal it is essential that they wash their hands after the activity and that this is supervised to ensure that it is thorough.

Responsibility:

The owner or handler of any animal, including a service animal, is responsible for the animal at all times and must take responsibility in the event of any harm accidentally or otherwise that befalls a child.

School Therapy Dog:

Lanesend Primary School has a School Therapy Dog called Daisy. There is a separate risk assessment as Appendix A and an information leaflet as Appendix B. Approaching and interacting with the school therapy dog should follow the school dog risk assessment. Posters should be displayed in classrooms, so that children understand how to behave with the school therapy dog.

Other Animals in School:

Presently in school we have:

- African snails
- Rabbits
- Chickens
- Guinea Pigs
- Hamsters

Appendix A – School Dog Risk Assessment – January 2020

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 the rate of anxiety, simply by making the environment happier, more enjoyable and less forbidding. The DFE paper “Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools”¹ suggests “It might also be helpful for schools to further their awareness of risk factors relating to mental illness, particularly where pupils are not behaving in overtly disruptive ways, such as pupils who might be suffering with anxiety, depression, self-harm and suicidal thoughts.” and continues “ is there a relationship between high spend and high cost interventions such as targeted counselling and better outcomes, or are schools investing in more preventative strategies, at a lower cost, more successful in promoting whole school mental health and wellbeing?” The school recognises that a school dog working with the children would meet this preventative response to the mental wellbeing of the children and school community.

To minimise the risk to children in school, animals are not allowed on school premises. The definition of animals includes all pets including insects, fish and birds. The only exceptions to this rule are assistant animals (dogs for the blind etc.) and the school therapy dog. During school fairs there may be other animals on the premises and further risk assessments for these individual occasions will be written. Please also refer to our Animals In School Policy.

CLEAPPS notes that “the Animal Welfare Act 2006, requires the owner and persons responsible for looking after an animal to ensure it will not suffer unnecessarily.”²

As part of the preparation for having a school dog the school explored experiences from other schools as well as professional guidance including CLEAPPS and The Key.

When guide dogs and the School Therapy dog are allowed on school premises, the animal’s owner and handlers must ensure that the animal is not a nuisance and that it does not interfere with the school environment. If any parent or pupil object to the animal’s

¹ Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools Review of published policies and information Research report
October 2018 Rebecca Brown

² CLEAPPS Choosing animals to keep in school GL202 Oct 2016

presence, then arrangements must be made to ensure that this animal is kept away from them. If necessary, the animal may need exclusion from specific areas.

It is a requirement of our school dog that they are within the following recommended guidelines:

- All animals should be regularly groomed and checked for signs of infection or other illness.
- Pets that are ill should be diagnosed and treated by a vet and should not be allowed in the school premises until their health is restored.
- All animals should have received relevant inoculations.
- All animals should be wormed regularly as recommended by the vet.
- Claws should be kept trimmed to reduce the risk of scratches.
- Pets should have been exercised before being allowed to work with children.
- All pets should have their coats cleaned regularly.

The school dog handler has the responsibility to ensure that:

- Dogs are physically fit before visiting the school environment. If the dog is unwell they will not be brought to school.
- Dogs are kept on a lead throughout the day unless they are in their crate
- They remain with the dog at all times, unless the dog is locked in the crate in a locked office.
- The dog is discouraged from jumping, scratching and licking
- The dog is of an acceptable hygienic standard, i.e. not wet, muddy etc.
- Natural relief for dogs is taken into account prior to visiting. There is a clear site identified for the dog to use as a toilet. Faeces will be bagged as will wet newspaper from the crate after accidents. These will be binned separately away from children.

Background

Ability Dogs for Young People Charity provided support in locating a suitable therapy puppy and a breeder that the charity uses for their own dogs was chosen. The puppy lives with Mrs Sice in her home and will be introduced to the school environment and the children following the advice of the charity who have supported two other schools who introduced therapy dogs into school. The school have identified a vet who will thoroughly check the puppy for any illnesses and is responsible for her vaccination programme. There are no diseases that could be caught from the puppy as she is kept up to date with immunisations including rabies and her worming treatment is in line with European vet guidelines. Both the school and the vets' surgery keep a register of her annual health check.

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. A Survey Monkey will be sent home and to staff so that any parent who does not wish their child to interact with the puppy can inform the school of their wishes, this is the same for staff too.. This risk assessment will be reviewed annually and the school senior leadership team will evaluate the impact of a school dog on a regular basis.

The dog will have pet insurance to provide support for health care. There will also be insurance for the dog in school. Costs for the dog will be shared between the school and Mrs Sice. No school funds will be used for equipment or feeding of the dog at the home.

The puppy will attend weekly puppy training sessions at the Ability Dogs for Young People. The Charity will provide support for the socialisation of the puppy as well as training the school community.

Risk Assessment for School Dog

Purpose

1. Dogs teach children responsibility. Having to remember to feed, provide water and show support for a dog can give children a sense of importance and satisfaction that they can't get from school or other chores. The relationship that develops 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 a walk in the park (pun intended).
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.

Area: Interaction with pupils and staff	Assessment Date: January 2020
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Reason: To ensure the school dog interacts appropriately at all times					Review Date: January 2021		
Step 1 Identify the hazards	Step 2 Who might be harmed & how?	Step 3 What are you already doing?	Risk Rating Trivial/ low / medium / high / stop	Step 4 Is anything further needed?	Step 5 Action & Review		
					Action required	Responsible person	Date completed
School dog biting a child or adult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child or adult could be hurt if the school dog bites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school dog is being trained not to bite. When the dog is approached in the correct way there is very limited danger. As a puppy the dog may explore using her mouth, this is part of her normal development that is explained to children and differentiated from biting in response to something. 	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that children and adults do not interact with the school dog without supervision Ensure that all interaction with the school dog is completed in the agreed way Provide toys for the dog to chew when she is teething so it can focus on these when needed. 			
Jumping up/scratching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the school dog becomes excited there is a danger that she could jump up and knock a child over or leave a scratch mark 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The temperament of dog and the agreed training programme has involved not jumping up with praise/rewards being given when successful 	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that children and adults do not interact with the school dog without supervision The school dog will be enclosed in a crate when people come to interact with him or under lead control by an authorised adult 			
Running loose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the school dog was to run loose she could hurt children/adults or damage property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school dog will be contained at all times either in an office (with a clear sign on the door), in a crate or on a lead 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor that the equipment used to contain the school dog is appropriate and effective. The dog's pen is big enough for her to be happy and safe during the school day and the children are taught not to tease her. <p>If the dog does get loose from her pen the teacher on duty will call for a designated staff member who will come and put the dog back in her pen.</p> <p>There are five members of staff who will be called upon in the event of the dog getting loose or if he needs attention at any other time, they are:</p>			

				<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Caroline Sice (Head Teacher). 2. Dave Cooper 3. Andrea Flux 4. Cloe Denham 5. Carrie Almond 			
Direct interaction With children/staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the school dog is allowed to interact when not in the correct frame of mind children/staff could be scratched 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No interaction is allowed without authorisation • Interaction will be cancelled if the school dog shows signs of incorrect behaviour • Rewards/praise will be given to reinforce the desired behaviour 	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the school dog is approached in the agreed manner • Ensure the nominated handler at that time is asked before approaching the dog 			
Destruction of materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If allowed the school dog may chew/destroy some school materials/resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school dog will be contained at all times • The school dog will have her own toys to play with and normal school resources will be removed 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor that the equipment used to contain the school dog is appropriate and effective 			

Area: Pupils and staff interaction with the school dog

Assessment Date: January 2020

Reason: To ensure the school dog is effectively supported to interact appropriately at all times					Review Date: January 2021		
Step 1 Identify the hazards	Step 2 Who might be harmed & how?	Step 3 What are you already doing?	Risk Rating Trivial/ low / medium / high / stop	Step 4 Is anything further needed?	Step 5 Action & Review		
					Action required	Responsible person	Date completed
Incorrect/ inconsistent interaction with the school dog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a child/adult interact with the school dog in the incorrect or inconsistent way this will affect the school dogs training and have a negative impact on future interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreed guidelines that must be followed at all times when interacting with the school dog There cannot be any interaction with the school dog if a parent has said that they do not want their child to engage with the dog <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A list of children and staff who do NOT wish to interact will be available and the named handlers must be aware and keep updated with this list The named handlers must use the commands from the training the dog is having through Ability Dogs 	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If there are any inconsistencies in approach with the school dog the adult/child will have the interaction stopped 			
Use of rewards/treats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and adults could be harmed if the school dog is over excited when receiving a reward/treat Children/adult must clean their hands after handling treats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Antibacterial gel/foam Authorised training treats will only be given to the school dog by Caroline Sice or named handlers as part of her training NO food is to be given to the dog in any circumstances 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reminders to the children to wash hands / use Gel/foam after handling treats Treats to be locked away to ensure they can only be used after authorisation 			
Pupil/staff/visitor knowledge of interaction with a puppy/dog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If adults and children have limited knowledge of how to interact correctly this could result in harm to the school dog or themselves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Ability Dog for Young People will led an assembly to share how we look after our school dog with the children An information leaflet is available at the school office A poster for all classrooms explaining the interaction with the school dog is to be shared with children and displayed 	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There will be an agreed format for how to interact with the school dog 			

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A poster at the main reception explains we have a school dog 					
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Area: Hygiene/Health					Assessment Date: January 2020		
Reason: To ensure that pupils, staff and the school dog to not have an increased risk of illness as a result of the school dog being in school					Review Date: January 2021		
Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Risk Rating	Step 4	Step 5		
					Action & Review		
Identify the hazards	Who might be harmed & how?	What are you already doing?	Trivial/ low / medium / high / stop	Is anything further needed?	Action required	Responsible person	Date completed
<input type="checkbox"/> Worms/fleas	<input type="checkbox"/> If the school dog is not treated for worms there is a danger that germs can be transferred to humans	<input type="checkbox"/> The school dog will be treated monthly at a local vets to ensure he is correctly treated for worms and fleas	Low	<input type="checkbox"/> Monitor that vet visits happen promptly and take actions suggested by the vet			
<input type="checkbox"/> Faeces	<input type="checkbox"/> If a child/adult come into contact with the school dog's faeces some germs could be transferred	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school dog will only be walked under adult supervision No child will be asked to pick up the dog's faeces, this will always be undertaken by the adult in supervision A specific area for toileting for the dog away from the children will be at the bottom of the school car park.. Faeces will be cleaned from this area as soon as it is used. 	Low	<input type="checkbox"/> If a child finds faeces on the school field/playground they will report it to an adult There will be a dog kit that will have poo bags and hand sanitiser			

<input type="checkbox"/> Allergies	<input type="checkbox"/> If a child is allergic to dogs they could become unwell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents will inform the school of any allergies that will be as a result of the dog. If a child has an allergy the school dog will not carry out tasks near the child. A sign will identify classrooms where allergic children are present. 	Medium	The breed of dog does not moult. Regular grooming will be necessary.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Children's access to school dog's resource	<input type="checkbox"/> If a child has access to the school dog's treats/food and eats some they could become unwell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All of the school dog's resources will be locked away in the Head's office. No child will be allowed to enter the school dog areas without authorisation 	Low	<input type="checkbox"/> Remind children not to enter area			
<input type="checkbox"/> Contact with food preparation areas	<input type="checkbox"/> If the school dog enters a food preparation area this could be unhygienic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school dog will be in a contained area or on a lead at all times around school She will never enter the school kitchen <input type="checkbox"/>	Trivial	<input type="checkbox"/> The dog will not enter the school hall during the children's lunchtime.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Cleaning hands after interacting with the school dog	<input type="checkbox"/> If hands are not cleaned children/adults could become unwell	<input type="checkbox"/> All adults and children will clean their hands after interaction with the school dog	Low	<input type="checkbox"/> Remind children and adults to clean their hands			

Area: Activities involving the school dog, including walking					Assessment Date: January 2020		
Reason: To ensure the school dog has a meaningful and safe impact on the school community					Review Date: January 2021		
Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Risk Rating	Step 4	Step 5		
					Action & Review		
Identify the hazards	Who might be harmed & how?	What are you already doing?	Trivial/ low / medium / high / stop	Is anything further needed?	Action required	Responsible person	Date completed
<input type="checkbox"/> Walking the dog on and off site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children could be harmed during a walk offsite if they are not focussed Children might be harmed if they do not interact correctly when the school dog is on a walk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the school dog is taken off site normal risk assessed procedure will take place No children will take the lead when the school dog goes for a walk unless authorised to do so by accompanying adult No children will be allowed to interact with the school dog when she is on a walk unless permission is given 	Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Careful consideration will be given to the amount of time the school dog is allowed to walk around school during play/lunchtimes			
<input type="checkbox"/> Visits to classroom	<input type="checkbox"/> If the school dog visits a class and the children do not follow the correct procedure she may become over excited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school dog will initially only make classroom visits with Mrs Sice or authorised named handlers The children in classrooms will follow the agreed procedure or interaction will stop 	Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Careful consideration will be given to when the school dog can visit classrooms and be under the control of the authorised named handlers			
<input type="checkbox"/> Being fed	<input type="checkbox"/> If a child tries to interact when the school dog is eating she may respond aggressively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No child will be allowed in the school dog's contained area when she is eating 	Low	<input type="checkbox"/> Reminders to the children the school dog to not interact when he is eating Feeding will normally happen at home but as a puppy this will also need to be at school.			

<input type="checkbox"/> School events	<input type="checkbox"/> If the school dog is overwhelmed she may become aggressive or boisterous	<input type="checkbox"/> The school dog will only attend school events if they are appropriate and she will be under the control of an authorised named handler or authorised supervising adult if out of school hours	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor the school dog's reaction to school events If the school events are too overwhelming the school dog might not attend school on that day or will stay in her crate during the event 			
<input type="checkbox"/> Other dogs (on and off site)	<input type="checkbox"/> If the school dog encounters another dog she may become boisterous	<input type="checkbox"/> No other dogs will be allowed on the school premises <input type="checkbox"/> At no time will the school dog be walked by a child and as a result if another dog is seen this will be dealt with by the authorised named handler	Low	<input type="checkbox"/> Monitor the school dogs reaction when out walking			

Area: Welfare of school dog					Assessment Date: January 2020		
Reason: To ensure the school dog remains safe and well					Review Date: January 2021		
Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Risk Rating	Step 4	Step 5 Action & Review		
Identify the hazards	Who might be harmed & how?	What are you already doing?	Trivial/ low / medium / high / stop	Is anything further needed?	Action required	Responsible person	Date completed
Fire in school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dog might be hurt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the dog is in an office the staff within those offices are responsible for taking her outside to the meeting point If the dog is around the school, the named handler is responsible for taking her to the meeting point If the dog is in her crate in a locked room then the person/people with the key who locked her away are responsible for taking her outside – if safe to return to the area Fire staff to be advised if not able to return to locked room 	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out a variety of fire drills so that staff and dog have opportunity to try the procedure. 			

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caroline to sign Daisy in and out on VisitEd 					
Access to water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dog may dehydrate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bowl of water to be available within the office area dog is located – not in crate. • Regular access to water bowl when working around the school 	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase a number of water bowls 			
Travel by car	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hurt in crash or driver distracted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only those authorised by Caroline Sice may take the dog in their car • The dog was be appropriately harnessed or crated during the journey • Staff must have appropriate business insurance for their car 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 			
Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poisoning from ingestion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only food authorised by Caroline Sice may be given with express permission • NO human food to be given • Only treats authorised by Caroline Sice as part of training may be given with permission 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 			

Identify as working dog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure staff, children and visitors know that Daisy is working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daisy must wear her working jacket everyday when in school 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caroline to ensure daisy is wearing jacket when in school 			
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Authorised named handlers:
 Caroline Sice
 TBC

Signature:	Date signed:
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Overview of activities of the School Therapy Dog

8 weeks – 20 weeks	<p>Puppy familiarisation with school environment. This will include visits to each classroom. Initially the puppy will be carried. The puppy will go into assemblies and will spend time with other members of staff.</p> <p>The puppy will take part in weekly puppy training sessions with Ability Dogs for Young People.</p> <p>The puppy crate will be in either the Headteacher’s office, Family Team office or Chloe/Carrie’s office. The dog will not be left unattended. When the dog is not in the crate the dog will be on the lead.</p> <p>The dog will be introduced to the toileting area in school. This area is not to be visited or entered by the pupils.</p> <p>The puppy will also have days when it is not in school.</p> <p>The children may have further contact with the puppy in classroom learning such as reading to the dog. This will only happen at times when the puppy is not over tired. The puppy will not be woken to engage with children. If the dog starts a session with the children and then shows evidence of tiredness it will be returned to the crate.</p>
20 weeks – 1 year	<p>The puppy from this stage will be more familiar with the environment. It remains a puppy and should still be understood as such.</p> <p>Weekly puppy lessons will continue and providing the puppy shows it is happy in its environment there can be further interaction with the children. The interaction will be similar to previous but will happen more frequently.</p>

Why have a school therapy dog?

There have been many research studies undertaken to evaluate the benefits of animals in schools and in particular the contribution of therapy dogs. Evidence has shown that therapy dogs can enhance children's psychological development, improve social skills, and increase self-esteem among other benefits. Dogs can also teach responsibility, compassion, and respect for other living things. Dogs in the classroom can be used to calm fears, relieve anxiety, and teach skills. Here are some of the benefits:

- **Physical** – interaction with a furry friend reduces blood pressure, provides tactile stimulation, assists with pain management, gives motivation to move, walk and stimulates the senses
- **Social** – a visit with a dog provides a positive mutual topic for discussion, promotes greater self-esteem and well-being, and focused interaction with others
- **Cognitive** – companionship with a dog stimulates memory, problem solving and game playing
- **Emotional** – an adorable four-legged visitor improves self-esteem, acceptance from others, and lifts mood often

provoking laughter

- **Environmental** – a dog in a facility decreases the feeling of a sterile environment, lifts mood and this continues after visit

Therapy dogs properly managed in the school setting can not only make a measurable difference in terms of gaining various skills relational development. School counsellors are finding that the presence of a therapy dog such as reading enhancement, but also in contributing critically to emotional and can decrease anxiety and enable students to work through issues such as anger management,

bullying tendencies and other social challenges.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **Legal liability** The school has informed their insurers that there will be a therapy dog within school so that our insurance includes this aspect of need.

- **Allergic reactions** Understandably, families may be concerned about potential allergic reactions to dogs within the school environment. Australian Labradoodles are a breed specifically used because they do not moult and are hypoallergenic. Families are asked to let school know if there are allergy concerns. Children who handle the dog will be asked to use hand sanitiser or wash their hands after this contact. The dog will be regularly groomed off site. Children and adults will choose whether they wish to interact with Daisy.

- **Animal Welfare** Daisy will have regular veterinarian checks. Ability Dogs for Young People, an island based charity who regularly place therapy dogs with families have assisted in the selection of Daisy and maintain the training and support of Daisy. This provides support for the school and the experience and understanding of what the needs of Daisy are as well as the children.

Staff in school are trained to watch for potential harm to either a child or Daisy and are primarily responsible to manage Daisy when on site.

- **Fear of dogs** There is no doubt that some children and adults have had very traumatic experiences with animals and thus have a severe fear of contact with a dog for example. The therapy dog is implemented by permission or voluntarily, and only in areas where unwanted contact with a dog can be avoided so that the fear issue can be minimised.

Experience and research has also shown that with proper guidance and handling, children and adults can learn to overcome their fear of animals and with it, grow a respect and appreciation of them. Families should let school know if your child is frightened of dogs. We will work with the child to support this need.

Interacting with Daisy

- We are calm in our approach asking to say hello to Daisy through the grown up with Daisy.
- We are gentle with our hands
- We read to Daisy who especially likes stories that we have written ourselves.
- If we are sad we can ask to speak to our Daisy about it.
- Daisy will always be on the lead and with a grown up.
- We do not need to touch or talk to Daisy unless we want to.

The school believes having a Therapy Dog is invaluable to the Lanesend community. To have a dog does bring expenses with the benefits. We will be fundraising to help with the costs, if you or your workplace could

help with sponsorship please contact Carrie Almond, Finance Manager via email carrie.almond@lanesendpri.iow.sch.uk

The following charity has helped support Daisy being in school. The school community is exceptionally grateful for this support without which we would not be able to have Daisy in our school.

Ability Dogs for Young People - This wonderful charity has guided and advised the selection of the puppy and the ongoing training support for the puppy. The school will reciprocate and raise funds for the Charity.

Medina Veterinary Group are very kindly sponsoring all of Daisy's Healthy Pet Club vaccinations for the first year.





Lanesend Primary School
welcomes

Daisy

Our Pets as Therapy Dog

Daisy is an Australian labradoodle puppy. She is a hypo-allergenic dog and her breed is specifically bred in Australia to support visually impaired people. They are very intelligent dogs that are very kind and gentle.

This leaflet aims to answer any questions and concerns you have regarding Daisy's placement with us.

Ability Dogs will be supporting us all the way, and have offered to work with any children or adults who may be worried around dogs with a support programme.

Daisy



