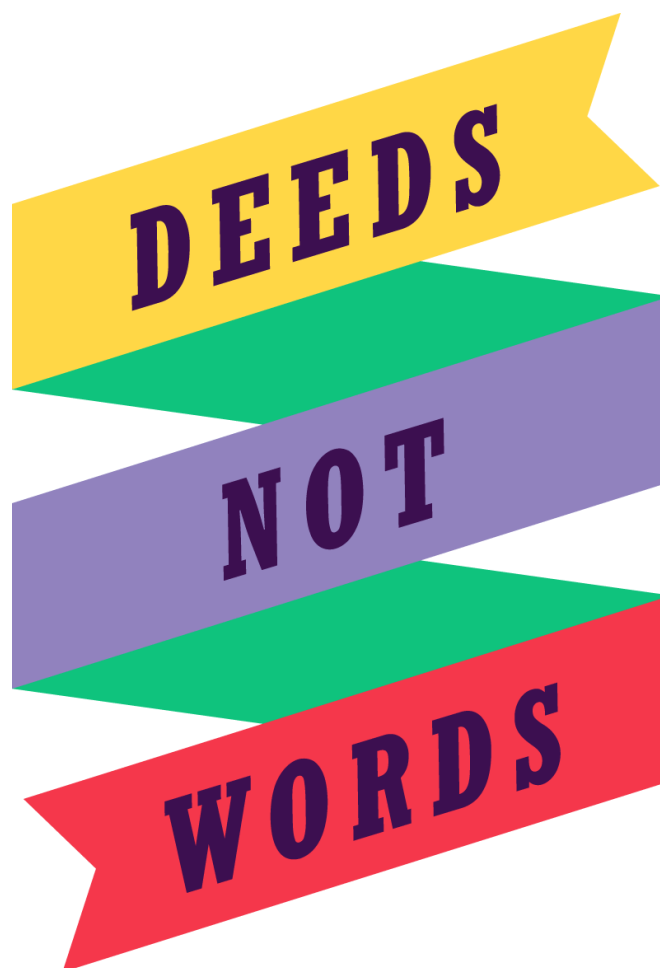




EMILY DAVISON SCHOOL

DOGS IN SCHOOL POLICY



Date Created	June 2023
Date of Review	June 2024
Next review date	June 2025
Headteacher	Michael Hutchison
Chair of Governors	David Harrison

Introduction

Emily Wilding Davison School recognises that the presence of animals in our school can provide a valuable learning experience and additional mental health benefits to students, but animals cannot be allowed to endanger pupil safety or disrupt learning. In line with RSPCA guidance the school does not support the keeping of pets on the school site and encourages a community which includes therapy and staff owned pets being welcomed within the school.

The school recognises the positive learning experiences 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.

Aim

This policy is designed to set out to pupils, parents, staff and visitors the reasons for having dogs in school and the rules and responsibilities to ensure the safety of all - including the dogs. Although there are risks associated with having dogs in school, we can mitigate those risks with robust risk management (see risk assessment in Appendix A).

Benefits

School dogs have been proven to help develop and improve pupil behaviour, attendance and academic confidence, as well as increasing understanding of responsibility and development of empathy and nurturing skills. We recognise our school dogs as additional therapeutic input, alongside other interventions, promoting engagement for those children who have found accessing school and traditional therapies in the past challenging.

Main benefits:

- Contribute to a calm environment
- Support building confidence and self esteem
- Encourage interaction
- Provides companionship when adult company can be too intense
- Impacts behaviour - resulting from reduced aggression, increased confidence and respect
- Social development support
- Increased academic achievement through improved engagement in learning

While we are enthused and motivated by the benefits of working with dogs in school, we are mindful of the potential drawbacks and risks involved too.

Procedures

Before bringing an animal onto the school premises during school hours, staff must seek prior authorisation - in writing.

Owners must ensure that the animals are in good health and have had all the necessary immunisations or vaccinations. Where possible, evidence should be provided of well maintained medical care and up to date vaccinations. Any animal brought to school must remain under control of a responsible adult at all times (member of staff the animal belongs to who wants to bring an animal in). The animal should be restrained on a lead when needed. This applies to days when school is in session, prior to the start of school and for any time after the school day, whenever the animal is on the school premises. Transportation of animals to and from school will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian or other adult

Owners must read and adhere to the schools risk assessment and provide evidence of appropriate insurance.

Should any pupil or adult be scratched or bitten by an animal at school, first aid must be administered immediately and in the case of a pupil, parents will be called. A copy of the 2 incident report (signed by the Headteacher) will be sent to the involved family and the policy for animals in school will need to reviewed accordingly.

Responsibilities

Emily Wilding Davison School ensures that all legalities are followed to maintain the safety of all students, staff visitors and animals. Whilst the [DfE](#) doesn't issue any school-specific guidance on keeping pets in schools we follow guidance set out in the following:

- **The Animal Welfare Act 2006** states that any person responsible for an animal, whether on a permanent or temporary basis, has a legal responsibility to ensure that the animal/s needs are met.

These include;

- its need for a suitable environment;
- its need for a suitable diet (food and fresh water);
- its need to be able to exhibit normal behaviour patterns;
- any need it has to be housed with, or apart from, other animals, and
- its need to be protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease.

- **The DfE Health and safety: responsibilities and duties for schools** (updated 5 April 2022)

Schools must have a health and safety policy in place. This should be an integral part of the school's culture, values and performance standards.

The key elements of the policy should:

- set out the roles and responsibilities within risk management processes
- the mechanisms to control risk
- specific control measures that need to be implemented

Therefore, whenever an animal is brought onto the school premises, whether on a short-term or long-term basis, the school must ensure that due consideration is given to

ensuring that such needs can sufficiently be met in that environment, including outside of school hours. Students should also learn appropriate behaviour around dogs prior to working with them.

When exercising and giving dogs comfort breaks outdoors, owners must be mindful that school playing fields and playgrounds are private property and should not be used for the purposes of exercising dogs. Leaders should ensure that playing fields and/or the playground are not used for dog fouling. It is the sole responsibility of the owner to bag and dispose appropriately of waste.

The policy documents of EWDS are revised and published periodically in good faith. They are inevitably subject to revision. On occasions a significant revision may have to take effect between the re-publication of a set of policy documents. Care should therefore be taken to ensure, by consultation with the Senior Leadership Team, that the details of any policy document are still effectively current at a particular moment.

Dogs in schools risk assessment

Use our model risk assessment if you'll have a dog visiting your school site. We've set out the common risks and provided examples of control measures – but make sure you adapt it to reflect the type of visit and your school's context.

HAZARD	WHO IS AFFECTED/AT RISK	RISK RATING (LOW, MEDIUM, HIGH)	ACTIONS/CONTROL MEASURES	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
Bites, scratches or illness caused by the dog	Staff, pupils and handlers	Low/Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All dogs in school are vaccinated, wormed, and treated for fleas ● Dogs are regularly groomed ● All staff and pupils are reminded to wash their hands after contact with dogs ● Dogs are not taken anywhere near food preparation areas ● Dogs are for therapy support in school and are preparing or attending training 	Handlers

HAZARD	WHO IS AFFECTED/AT RISK	RISK RATING (LOW, MEDIUM, HIGH)	ACTIONS/CONTROL MEASURES	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
Allergies	Staff and pupils	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parents aware of dog support in school ● Alternative activities are provided in a separate room for those with allergies ● Breeds in school are chosen based on hypo allergenic basis 	First Aid Lead
Phobias	Staff and pupils	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contact with dogs is optional ● Alternative activities are provided in a separate room for those with a phobia 	Tutors/Handlers
Activities and games involving the dog	Staff, pupils, dogs and handlers	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Handler(s) remain with dogs at all times ● Handler(s) clean up urine and faeces ● School staff remove children who misbehave or upset dogs or dog moves to another setting within the school ● We set a time limit on activities as recommended by handlers, so dogs do not get tired 	Handlers/Teaching staff
Children misbehaving	Pupils, dogs and handlers	Med/High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Children are told in advance what to expect and how to behave ● School staff are present at all time during the visit ● School staff are ready to remove children who misbehave or upset dogs 	Teaching staff

HAZARD	WHO IS AFFECTED/AT RISK	RISK RATING (LOW, MEDIUM, HIGH)	ACTIONS/CONTROL MEASURES	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
Damage caused to school materials, equipment and the school site	Dogs	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dogs are kept with a responsible adult at all times ● If left on own, in a secure room. ● Handlers bring suitable toys if necessary ● Areas/classrooms are kept clear and appropriate for dogs in the environment 	Handlers
Faeces	Students	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All owners to be responsible for their own dog and any urine or faeces is immediately cleaned up, disinfected and disposed of in an appropriate external bin. ● Pupils are kept away ● Pupils are not to clean up faeces 	