

School Dog Risk Assessment

Includes:

Purpose and introduction

Interaction with pupils and staff

Pupils and staff interaction with the school dog

Hygiene/Health

Activities involving the school dog, including walking

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Further reading:

<https://therapypartners.co.uk/therapy-dogs>

<https://www.certapet.com/greyhound-service-dog/>

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<https://www.emotionalpetsupport.com/greyhound-as-a-service-animal/>

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Purpose	<ol style="list-style-type: none">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. 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.6. Dogs improve mental health and wellbeing of those around them. Last, but certainly not least, all of the above combine to help improve mental health and wellbeing of those around them. They are non-judgemental, and keep what you tell them to themselves. They have boundless love and provide a calming environment when needed. <p>Many people have studied dogs in attempts to decipher their behaviour, and the theories abound. However, when you witness the interactions between dogs and children you realise the potential for greatness. Dogs can sense when children with epilepsy are about to have a seizure, they can sense when a diabetic child's sugar is low, and they can help children with severe physical disabilities find happiness in life. With the proper training and supervision, a dog can enrich a child's life. They can sense when a child needs calm and reassurance and provide love that helps improve mental health.</p>
Introduction	<p>The Copperfield Academy School Dogs, TJ and Maggie, live with the Headteacher, Mr Clark. TJ and Maggie are very caring and well-behaved dogs who has the right temperament to become a real asset to Copperfield Academy. They were chosen for their calm nature.</p> <p>TJ and Maggie are both rescue Greyhounds. Greyhounds are known as being calming, well natured, if not sometimes, incredibly laidback, dogs. They are known for being great with children due to their calming temperament.</p> <p>The school's liability insurance covers the dogs, although they do have their own personal insurance. Both TJ and Maggie regularly visit the vet for check-ups, administer worm and flea treatments as well as checking their general health. The vet also</p>

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makes adjustments to their food intake to ensure they remains at a healthy weight, and give advice about their wellbeing where needed.

In addition to the 6 key reasons for TJ and Maggie joining us outlined in the purpose we also believe they will improve the children's abilities and understanding within the school's values and help to improve and secure higher attendance levels.

Throughout the school day, TJ and Maggie will be based in the area around Mr Clark's and Mr Kiff's office. There, adults can bring children to spend time either reading to or stroking the dogs. There is a stairgate in situ to prevent the dogs from being able to roam freely around the school. Should the dogs ever leave this area, then they are put on a lead and escorted out with an adult. Whilst with adults, they are never let off the lead when past the stairgate. It is common for children to take the dogs for a walk, under the supervision of an adult, for self-regulation, behavioural or other reasons. The dogs will not be taken into any classroom, meaning no child with a phobia or allergy to dogs will be put in front of them. Access to the dogs will be completely voluntary for the child(ren).

Area: Interaction with pupils and staff

Reason: To ensure the school dog interacts appropriately at all times

Step 1 Identify the Hazards	Step 2 Who might be harmed & how?	Step 3 What are you already doing?	Risk Rating	Action required
School dog biting a child or adult	Child or adult could be hurt if a dog bites	When the dog is approached in the correct way there is very limited danger. Both dogs live with 3 young children at home and so are used to having children around them. When school children meet the	Low	<p>Ensure that children and adults do not interact with the school dog without supervision</p> <p>Ensure that all interaction with the school dog is completed in the agreed way</p>

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		dogs, the children are reminded how to approach the dogs slowly, with palm open so the dogs are not startled.		
Jumping up/knocking over	If a dog becomes excited there is a danger that they could jump up and knock a child over or leave a scratch mark	Greyhounds are not known to 'jump up' at humans. However, they are considered as 'big' dogs (especially to younger children). Often the dogs are laying down. However, children, with an adult, only pass the stairgate if the dogs are 'calm'.	Low	<p>Ensure that children and adults do not interact with the school dog without supervision.</p> <p>Adult supervising the children visiting the dog only allow the child past the stairgate when the dogs are calm.</p>
Direct interaction with children/staff	If a dog is allowed to interact when not in the correct frame of mind children/ staff could be scratched	<p>No interaction is allowed without authorisation</p> <p>Interaction will be cancelled if the school dog shows signs of incorrect behaviour</p>	Low	<p>Ensure that the school dogs are approached in the agreed manner. The dogs' safe space will be their beanbags in the HT office.</p> <p>In the unlikely event that either dog is showing any signs of excitement, the adult supervising the child visiting the dog will wait for the dog to tire (which will be rather quickly) before passing the stairgate.</p> <p>The child will never be left unsupervised with the dogs.</p>

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		Rewards/praise will be given to reinforce the desired behaviour		
Destruction of materials	If allowed a dog may chew/destroy some school materials/resources	The school dog will be under close control at all times The school dog will have his own toys to play with and normal school resources will be removed	Low	Monitor that the equipment used to contain the school dog is appropriate and effective, (see above).

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Area: Interaction with pupils and staff

Reason: To ensure the school dog interacts appropriately at all times

Step 1 Identify the Hazards	Step 2 Who might be harmed & how?	Step 3 What are you already doing?	Risk Rating	Action required
Incorrect/inconsistent interaction with the school dog	If a child/adult interact with a dog in the incorrect or inconsistent way this could have a negative impact on future interaction	Agreed guidelines that must be followed at all times when interacting with the school dog	Medium	<p>If there are any inconsistencies in approach with the school dog the adult/child will have the interaction stopped.</p> <p>Approved way of approaching TJ and Maggie: Greyhounds are very placid dogs by nature, however, when approaching TJ and Maggie, check they are not asleep by calling their name. Approach slowly, so as not to startle them, and with your palm of your hand open. If they roach (lay on their back) then you are in luck, give them a tummy rub!</p> <p>Never approach a sleeping dog without first waking them.</p>
Use of rewards/treats	Children and adults could be harmed if a dog is over excited when receiving a reward/treat	<p>Adults and children are reminded to wash their hands.</p> <p>Treats will only be given to the school dog with authorisation</p>	Low	<p>Reminders to the children to wash hands / use alcohol gel after handling treats</p> <p>Treats to be put away to ensure they can only be used after authorisation. Treats will only be given under adult supervision.</p> <p>To give a treat, simply place the treat in the palm of your hand, with your fingers out and close together. The dogs will simply nibble the treat off the palm of your hand.</p>
Pupil/staff knowledge of interaction with a puppy/dog	If adults and children have limited knowledge of how to interact	The Head teacher will be visiting each year group to conduct	Medium	There will be an agreed format for how to interact with the school dog, this will initially be under the strict direction of the named school adults, and will always be under direction of an adult.

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	correctly this could result in harm to a dog or themselves	a 'Be Dog Smart' course with all of the children each year. The Dogs Trust will also visit each year group to run dog safety classes.		
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Reason: To ensure the school dog interacts appropriately at all times

Step 1 Identify the Hazards	Step 2 Who might be harmed & how?	Step 3 What are you already doing?	Risk Rating	Action required
Worms/fleas	If a dog is not treated for worms there is a danger that germs can be transferred to humans	The school dog will be treated monthly for fleas and every 3 months for worms	Low	Monitor that vet visits happen promptly and take actions suggested by the vet.
Faeces	If a child/adult come into contact with dog faeces some germs could be transferred	The school dog will only be walked under supervision No child will be asked to pick up	Low	If a child finds faeces (of any sort) on the school field/playground they will report it to an adult and will not go near it.

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		the dog's faeces, this will always be undertaken by the adult in supervision		
Allergies	If a child is allergic to dogs they could become unwell	<p>Greyhounds have short fur so are considered very low risk for allergies.</p> <p>If a child has an allergy parents are to contact the school. The dog will not carry out tasks near the child</p>	Low	No child to go near/work with the dogs if they are allergic. Children working closely with the dogs will have specific permission from a parent, or adult with parental responsibility.
Children's access to school dog's resource	If a child has access dog treats/food and eats some they could become unwell	<p>All of the school dog's resources will be put away</p> <p>No child will be allowed to enter the school dog's area.</p>	Low	Remind children not to enter area. Treats/food to be kept out of sight. Children to be cautioned about touching dog food, (and told why they must not touch or eat it).
Contact with food preparation areas	If a dog enters a food preparation	The school dog will be under close control or in	Trivial	TJ and Maggie will never enter the school kitchen, or any classroom during cooking sessions.

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	area this could be unhygienic	a contained area or on a lead at all times around school They will never enter the school kitchen		
Cleaning hands after interacting with the school dog	If hands are not cleaned children/adults could become unwell	All adults and children will clean their hands after interaction with the school dog	Low	Remind children and adults to clean their hands, either with soap and water or sanitiser.

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Step 1 Identify the Hazards	Step 2 Who might be harmed & how?	Step 3 What are you already doing?	Risk Rating	Action required
Walking the dog on and off site	<p>Children could be harmed during a walk offsite if they are not focussed</p> <p>Children might be harmed if they do not interact correctly when a dog is on a walk</p>	<p>If the school dog is taken off site normal risk assessed procedure will take place</p> <p>No children will take the lead when the school dog goes for a walk unless authorised to do so by accompanying adult</p> <p>No children will be allowed to interact with the school dog when he is on a walk unless permission is given</p>	Medium	Careful consideration needs to be given to the amount of time the school dog is allowed to walk around school during play/lunchtimes. The school dogs will never be allowed off the lead when being walked with children.

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Visits to classroom	If the school dog visits a class and the children do not follow the correct procedure he may become over excited	The school dogs will not be allowed into classrooms.	Low	For the dogs' wellbeing, they will not be allowed in the classrooms. This will also protect children that have phobias or allergies to dogs, as the classroom is their safe space.
Being fed	If a child tries to interact when a dog is eating they may respond aggressively	Dogs will never be fed at school.	Low	
School events	If a dog is overwhelmed they may become aggressive or boisterous	The school dog will only attend school events if they are appropriate and he will be under the control of a named, supervising adult	Low	Monitor the school dogs' reaction to school events. If the school events are too overwhelming the school dogs will either not attend school on that day, or will remain in the school, or HT's office in their safe space.
Other dogs (on and off site)	If a dog encounters another dog they may become boisterous	No other dogs will be allowed on the school premises	Low	Monitor the school dogs' reaction when out walking.