



School Dog Risk Assessment

Introduction

Jayne Davis, the leadership team and the governors at Moat Farm Infant School have considered having a school dog for some time. The rationale to have a School Dog is as follows:

- A calming effect on pupils, particularly those with social, emotional and mental health difficulties and/or special educational needs.
- Fosters a sense of responsibility in children.
- Improved behaviour, concentration and attendance.
- Increased exercise and movement if they participate in dog walking activities.
- Reduced stress and improved self-esteem.
- Encourages respect and therefore improves pupil's relationships with each other, teachers and parents
- Teaches children to nurture and respect life.
- Helps work undertaken with the most vulnerable children and educational improvements in children who find learning in school more difficult.
- Helps children build confidence with reading and speaking.
- Helps children to self-regulate their emotions when they are feeling stressed.

Lottie lives with Mrs Davis in her home. Mrs Davis will be responsible for upkeep of the vaccination, and immunisation programme including worming treatments every month.

It is accepted that interacting with animals is not appropriate for all children but that for the majority it has the potential to provide multiple positive benefits. Any parent who does not wish their child to interact with the school dog will be invited to inform school of their wishes in writing.

This risk assessment will be reviewed annually and the impact of the school dog will be evaluated by the school leadership team.

Part 1: H&S Checklist

Conducted by: **The Deputy Head/SBM**

Date: **04/09/2025**

Risk Assessment for: **School Dog**

School: **Moat Farm Infant School**

Assessment Date:

September 2025

Name of Assessor(s):

Neil Bradley/Jayne Davis

Assessment Ref No:

Risk Matrix scoring

Likelihood	
1	Very unlikely
2	Unlikely
3	Likely
4	Very likely
5	Certain

guide:

Severity:	
1	No Lost time
2	Under 7-day injury or illness
3	Over 7-day injury or illness (RIDDOR)
4	Specified injury or illness (RIDDOR)
5	Fatality, disabling injury or illness

High (15-25)	These risks are unacceptable; significant improvements in risk control are required. The activity should be halted with immediate effect until risk controls are identified/implemented that reduce the risk to an acceptable level
Medium (5-12)	Additional control measures should be identified and implemented to reduce the risks associated with the activity or workplace so far as reasonably practicable
Low (1-4)	Minimal control measures are required to be implemented to satisfy the level of risk. Maintain current arrangements for risk control

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how?	CONTROL MEASURES (existing workplace precautions/risk control systems in place)	What further action is required?	By Who and When?	Residual Risk rating			Date completed
					L	S	R	
Financial cost of the dog	School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The dog will be owned by Mrs Davis and she is financially responsible for the dog. The dog will have insurance that covers it to work in school and as a pet. 	No further action required at this point	Mrs Davis	1	1	L	Ongoing

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how?	CONTROL MEASURES (existing workplace precautions/risk control systems in place)	What further action is required?	By Who and When?	Residual Risk rating			Date completed
					L	S	R	
Insurance		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School has public liability insurance that covers school dogs. 						
Poor hygiene	Pupils, teachers, adult helpers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cuts and abrasions on the exposed skin of hands and arms are to be covered before handling the dog; Pupils are reminded to wash their hands after after coming into contact with the dog, bedding, toys, water bowl etc.); Reception & KS1 pupils are to be closely supervised to ensure they do not put their fingers in their mouths before hands have been washed; The dog may be allowed to walk unrestricted around classrooms in KS1 when with one of the dog handlers, only if children are all sitting at their desks; Dog crate/bedding is cleaned and washed regularly; In the unlikely event the dog gets onto tables etc. staff will clean and disinfect them immediately; 	No further action required at this point	Mrs Davis & trained dog handlers	2	1	L	Ongoing
Manual handling	Pupils, teachers, adult helpers, visitors, school dog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils and visitors are requested/instructed not to lift/carry the dog as this could injure themselves or the dog. Nominated members of staff will supervise any interaction with the dog (called 'handlers'). 	No further action required at this point	Mrs Davis & trained dog handlers	2	1	L	Ongoing Daily monitoring
Slips, trips and falls	Pupils, teachers, adult helpers,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good standards of housekeeping must be maintained at all times. The dog is moved around the building on a short lead by its 	No further action required at this point	Mrs Davis & trained	2	1	L	Ongoing

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how?	CONTROL MEASURES (existing workplace precautions/risk control systems in place)	What further action is required?	By Who and When?	Residual Risk rating			Date completed
					L	S	R	
	visitors, school dog	<p>handler to reduce the risk of anyone tripping over the dog.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils are supervised by the handler at all times when engaging with the dog. In the unlikely event of liquid and faeces around school, this will be cleaned up immediately to both reduce the risk of slips, trips and falls and also to reduce the risks from poor hygiene. 		dog handlers				Daily monitoring
Diseases, parasites and allergies	Pupils, teachers, adult helpers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents and Carers are asked to identify any pupils known to have allergic reactions to dogs and these pupils will not stroke the dog. Any pupils who are not known to have allergies, but who may appear to develop one, are instructed to avoid all further contact with the dog and parents/carers informed; Medical assistance will be sought where an allergic reaction does not subside after a reasonable timeframe, the dog and the affected person will be kept apart; Dog food will be kept safe and secure to prevent unauthorised access and to keep away from pests. 	No further action required at this point	Mrs Davis & trained dog handlers	2	2	L	Ongoing Daily monitoring required
Infections/ill health	School Dog Staff, pupils, visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The dog will attend regular veterinary appointments for general health checks including treatments for worming, flea control and required vaccinations. The Deputy 	No further action required at this point	Mrs Davis	3	1	L	Ongoing

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how?	CONTROL MEASURES (existing workplace precautions/risk control systems in place)	What further action is required?	By Who and When?	Residual Risk rating			Date completed
					L	S	R	
		<p>Headteacher will be responsible for all immunisations will be kept up to date.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To reduce the risk of infection/bacteria spread when the dog has had a comfort break, the dog's handlers will ensure that all faeces is safely disposed of using appropriate poo bags (tied and disposed of in an external bin). If the dog visits the playground area with children and urinates etc, this must be cleaned and washed down to prevent Staff, Pupils and Visitors coming into contact with harmful bacteria etc. Should the dog defecate in the school building, the dog handler will clear this up immediately and dispose of it in a safe manner, and disinfect the area. If the dog is ill in school, it will be taken home/to the vets as necessary. If the dog is ill away from school it will kept out of school until it has returned to full health. Worming treatment will be completed every month. 						
School dog eating food in school	School Dog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The dog must only eat its own food and treats and must not be fed by pupils without authority from and under the supervision of the dog's handler. All food will be kept out of the dog's reach e.g. in a store cupboard off the floor. 	No further action required at this point	Mrs Davis	2	1	L	Ongoing
School Dog behaviour	Pupils, teachers, adult helpers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils are warned of the general hazards and risks posed by some dogs; 	No further action required at this point	Mrs Davis & trained	3	1	L	Ongoing

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how?	CONTROL MEASURES (existing workplace precautions/risk control systems in place)	What further action is required?	By Who and When?	Residual Risk rating			Date completed
					L	S	R	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures are introduced and pupils are taught the correct handling of the dog. There are resources for this here: • The dog will be closely supervised by an adult when in the presence of children. • The dog will be exercised before working with the children. • Pupils are closely supervised by an adult when in contact with the dog; • A First Aid kit is available. Any dog scratches and bites must be carefully washed and a first aider contacted; • In line with existing school procedures, all accidents/incidents will be reported and investigated; • The dog has attended Kennel Club training sessions outside of school and has achieved Puppy, Bronze, Silver and Gold standard. • The dog and its handlers have also undergone training by 'The Dog Mentor' for dogs who work in schools. • Playing with the dog and giving them safe toys and chew toys helps prevent boredom. • A notice is displayed in the school reception area informing everyone when the dog is on the premises; • All pupils, staff and visitors are made aware of the rules of behaviour when interacting with the dog; • The dog's claws will be kept trimmed to reduce the risk of scratches. 		dog handlers				

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how?	CONTROL MEASURES (existing workplace precautions/risk control systems in place)	What further action is required?	By Who and When?	Residual Risk rating			Date completed
					L	S	R	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The dog will be discouraged from jumping, licking and scratching. The dog will be trained not to mouth or jump up on the children. Risks of scratching and mouthing will reduce as the dog progresses through its training programme. ALL staff have been introduced to the dog and the expectations (dos and don'ts) have been shared. The children have an assembly at the start of each academic year and are reminded how to behave around the dog in school regularly and as and when required. 						
School Dog Welfare	School Dog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The dog will be exercised regularly by a nominated person or supervised pupil. All gates will be kept closed/locked during exercise periods, regular checks of any fencing for breaches must be undertaken to ensure the dog cannot escape. The dog is taken out regularly to allow for comfort needs. 	No further action required at this point	Mrs Davis	2	1	L	Ongoing
School Dog Welfare	Pupils, teachers, adult helpers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any specific welfare conditions for the breed of dog have been considered prior to making the decision to allow a dog on site; The dog have access to clean water throughout the day; Provision is made for the dog's welfare out of school hours e.g. the dog lives with the Deputy Headteacher. 	No further action required at this point	Mrs Davis	1	1	L	Ongoing

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how?	CONTROL MEASURES (existing workplace precautions/risk control systems in place)	What further action is required?	By Who and When?	Residual Risk rating			Date completed
					L	S	R	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The dog has regular veterinary health checks, if it is unwell, it will be removed from the school environment until it is feeling better or treated by a vet. The dog is given regular breaks away from interacting with pupils. 						
School Dog Welfare		<p>Environment – the dog will have their own bed in a quiet place, it will be secured safely when in a car, daily exercise according to breed, age and health, adequate toileting opportunities throughout the day.</p> <p>Diet – a complete balanced diet according to age, breed and lifestyle and 24-hour access to water.</p> <p>Companionship – due to the social nature of the dog they will never be left alone for more than 4 hours in any given day.</p>	No further action required at this point	Mrs Davis	1	1	L	Ongoing
Cleanliness	<p>Pupils, teachers, adult helpers, visitors</p> <p>School Dog</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular cleaning of all areas is carried out by Site Maintenance Team/nominated staff; Workplace Inspections are undertaken on a regular basis by Headteacher/ Site Maintenance Officer/Cleaner/nominated staff; Deputy Headteacher/nominated person ensures that the dog is cleaned/groomed on a regular basis prior to coming into school; The dog is kept in the Deputy Headteacher's office when not interacting with staff/pupils. There is a gate on the door to prevent the dog from leaving the office unsupervised. 	No further action required at this point	Site team cleaning tea	1	1	L	Ongoing

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how?	CONTROL MEASURES (existing workplace precautions/risk control systems in place)	What further action is required?	By Who and When?	Residual Risk rating			Date completed
					L	S	R	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blankets/bedding create a 'safe place' and are cleaned on a regular basis, all blankets and bedding are cleaned off site by the Deputy Headteacher; Windows can be opened to provide fresh circulating air; Air fresheners are available if required; 						
Fire/Emergency Situation	Pupils, teachers, adult helpers, visitors School Dog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The dog is accompanied at all times and will be taken to the Fire Assembly Point by Deputy Headteacher/nominated person as they evacuate themselves. A dog snood will be used to lessen the effect of the loud fire bell on the dog's ear. The dog is included on the school evacuation policy. 	No further action required at this point	Mrs Davis	1	1	L	Ongoing
Noise	Pupils, teachers, adult helpers School Dog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deputy Headteacher to instruct anyone coming into contact with the dog to keep noise levels low to avoid upsetting/startling the dog; Staff to monitor the behaviour of students and dog, including noise levels; The dog will be trained to tolerate some noise levels e.g. walking through the school playground during break times/lunch time; 	No further action required at this point	Mrs Davis	2	1	L	Ongoing
Visiting other Schools or Premises	Pupils, teachers, adult helpers, School Dog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consent is received from the Headteacher/Senior Leadership Team/other before arranging any visit to another premise; Nominated members of staff accompany and supervise the dog and pupils at all times; 	No further action required at this point	Mrs Davis	1	1	L	Ongoing (if required)

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how?	CONTROL MEASURES (existing workplace precautions/risk control systems in place)	What further action is required?	By Who and When?	Residual Risk rating			Date completed
					L	S	R	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the dog needs to be transported, a suitable method is used e.g. strapped in with a safety device attached to seatbelt in the vehicle or is placed in their crate whilst travelling in the vehicle; • The dog is fed/watered and encouraged to take a comfort break prior to travelling; • Confirm date and time of visit prior to the initial visit by the dog, discussions between both parties are recommended; • Site is assessed to ensure suitability of a visit by the dog; • Pupil visit risk assessments to be undertaken/reviewed as necessary; • Parent/Pupil consent forms to be completed; • The Headteacher/nominated person to reiterate responsibilities for the dog's behaviour on other premises e.g. if another adult is with the dog they need to understand how to handle the dog what to do/and what not to do; • Comply with all premises procedures; • Signage to be displayed indicating "Dog on Premises" while the dog is on site; 						

NOTE: CLEAPSS have issued a number of guidance leaflets on keeping Companion/Therapy Dogs in school as well bringing pets, etc to school that may be useful in developing this risk assessment further as the scope for the dog is reviewed:

- L56 – Housing and Keeping Animals;

This risk assessment will apply to a school dog providing the control measures described are in operation and there are no further local significant hazards. If it does not fully apply and further control measures are required then these will be assessed as appropriate or necessary. If it fully applies please sign below.

I certify that the risk assessment above fully applies to a school dog in Moat Farm Infant School.

Assessment reviewed [Date]:	Reviewed by [Name]:	Comments:
03/10/2022	Jayne Davis; Oxana Morgan	
04/09/2025	Jayne Davis; Neil Bradley	