

School Dog Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Who is the legal owner of the dog and who pays for its costs?

A: The legal owner of the dog will be Ms Pagliero; she will bear the costs associated with owning the dog; the school budget will support insurance and staff training costs where appropriate.

Q: Will the dog be from a reputable breeder?

A: Yes. The dog is from a home where one of the parents was seen and was chosen for its temperament.

Q: Will the dog be a distraction?

A: The dog will be kept in an area away from classrooms and will also have access to an outside area that is separate to students. This will ensure it only comes into contact with students who are happy to have contact and have parental permission for this, under strict supervision. The dog will also have a space to spend time in classrooms and will also attend meetings with staff to support further socialisation (following consultation with staff beforehand).

Q: Has a risk assessment been undertaken?

A: Yes, a full risk assessment is in place, and will be reviewed regularly. We have carefully considered having a dog in school and sought advice from many sources, including other schools that successfully have a school dog.

Q: Who is responsible for training?

A: Ms Pagliero is the legal owner of the dog and as a result, will be responsible for its initial training. If the school decides to seek further training (for example, reading therapy training, etc) then the school will be responsible for this specific training.

Q: How will the dog be toileted to ensure hygiene for all?

A: In the interest of health and hygiene, our school dog will have an area on the school site that has no access to students – this will be the dog's own outside area. The staff in charge of the dog will ensure that this is cleared away appropriately. If the school dog toilets when out on the school site, staff members will clear this away appropriately leaving no trace on the ground, cleaning the area with disinfectant if needed.

Q: How will the dog's welfare be considered?

A: The dog will be walked regularly and given free time outside. The dog will have its own space in the MFL department in the first instance where it will not be disturbed by students. The dog will be carefully trained over a period of time and will have unlimited access to food and water. We will work carefully to ensure the dog's welfare is always considered and remove the dog from the school environment if we don't feel it is happy.

Q: How will this be managed where children have allergies?

A: Students will not need to touch the dog, which will relieve the possibility of allergic reactions. We already manage a number of allergies at school and this will be no different for students and adults that are allergic to dogs. Individual needs will always be met and we are happy to work with parents to put additional control measures in place for individual allergies. Any students with allergies to dogs will be built into the risk assessment as they are made known to the school.

Q: My child is frightened of dogs; how will you manage this?

A: Access to the dog will be carefully managed and supervised and students do not need to have close contact with it if this has been expressed by parents. We hope to work closely with parents of students who are fearful of dogs to alleviate their fear and to teach them how to manage this.

Q: Will other school dogs be allowed in school?

A: Only assistance dogs such as guide dogs will be allowed on the school site and only in exceptional circumstances.