



St Michael and St Martin Catholic Primary School 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**

Current Risk Assessments completed: January 2020

Risk Assessments to be reviewed: January 2021

School Dog Risk Assessment

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.

Many people have studied dogs in attempts to decipher their behaviour, and the theories abound. However, you just have to witness the interactions between dogs and children to 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. After all, dogs are basically four-legged children who never grow up!

Introduction

The St Michael and St Martin Catholic Primary School Dog 'Kermit' lives with Mrs Duggan and her family. Kermit is a very caring and well behaved puppy who has the right temperament to become a real asset to St Michael and St Martin Catholic Primary School.

Kermit's mum is a Cocker Spaniel and his dad is a Toy Poodle making Kermit an F1 Cockapoo. He is registered and insured through the Kennel Club.

Kermit has public liability insurance which means that he can come into school. He regularly visits the vet for check-ups. Whilst he is there they administer his vaccinations, and worm & flea treatments as well as make adjustments to his food intake to ensure he remains a healthy weight.

In addition to the 5 key reasons for Kermit joining us outlined in the purpose, we also believe he will improve the children's abilities within the school and help to improve and secure higher attendance levels.

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 Trivial / low / medium / high / stop	Step 4 Is anything further needed?
School dog biting a child or adult	Child or adult could be hurt if the school dog bites.	The school dog is being trained not to bite. When the dog is approached in the correct way there is very limited danger.	Low	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.
Jumping up / scratching	If the school dog becomes excited there is a danger that he could jump up and knock a child over or leave a scratch mark.	<p>The temperament of Kermit and the agreed training programme has involved not jumping up with praise/rewards being given when successful.</p> <p>A letter was sent home asking parents to sign and return the form if they were unwilling for their child to have contact with Kermit.</p> <p>Parents asked to explain their wishes to their child and ask them not to approach the dog if they do not want any contact.</p>	Medium	<p>Ensure that children and adults do not interact with the school dog without supervision.</p> <p>The school dog will be provided with a safe / bedded area, and under lead control by an authorised adult.</p>
Running loose	If the school dog was to run loose he could hurt children/adults or damage property.	The school dog will be contained at all times either in an office (with a clear sign on the door) or on a lead.	Low	Monitor that the area used to contain the school dog is appropriate and effective.
Direct interaction with children/ staff	If the school 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 behavior or distress.</p> <p>Rewards / praise will be given to reinforce the desired behavior.</p>	Medium	Ensure that the dog is approached in the agreed manner.
Destruction of materials	If allowed the school dog may chew /destroy some school materials/resources.	<p>The school dog will be contained at all times.</p> <p>The school dog will have his own toys to play with and normal school resources will be removed.</p>	Low	Monitor that the equipment used to contain the school dog is appropriate and effective.

Area: Pupils and staff interaction with the school dog

Reason: To ensure the school dog is effectively supported to interact 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 Trivial / low / medium / high / stop	Step 4 Is anything further needed?
Incorrect / inconsistent interaction with dog	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.	Agreed guidelines that must be followed at all times when interacting with the school dog. There cannot be any interaction with the school dog without authorisation.	Medium	If there are any inconsistencies in approach with the school dog the adult/child will have the interaction stopped.
Use of rewards / treats	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.	Alcohol gel will be available to all adults (and children with written permission from parents). Treats will only be given to the school dog with authorisation.	Low	Reminders to the children to wash hands / use alcohol gel after handling treats. Treats to be locked away to ensure they can only be used after authorisation.
Pupil / Staff interaction with a puppy / dog	If adults and children have limited knowledge of how to interact correctly this could result in harm to the school dog or themselves.	Agree list of 'Doggy Do's' and have this displayed in classrooms and prominent areas	Medium	There will be an agreed format for how to interact with the school dog.

Area : Hygiene / Health

Reason : To ensure that pupils, staff and the school dog do not have an increased risk of illness as a result of the school dog in school

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?
Worms / fleas	If the school dog is not treated for worms there is a danger that germs can be transferred to humans.	The school dog will be treated monthly to ensure he is correctly treated for worms and fleas.	Low	Monitor worming cycle.
Faeces	If a child/adult come into contact with the school dog's faeces some germs could be transferred.	The school dog will only be walked under supervision. No child will be asked to pick up the dog's faeces, this will always be undertaken by the adult in supervision.	Low	If a child finds faeces on the school field/playground they will report it to an adult
Allergies	If a child is allergic to dogs they could become unwell.	Children will not be in contact with the school dog if we have received a negative response form from parents/guardians. If a child has an allergy the school dog will not carry out tasks near the child.	Medium	

Reason : To ensure that pupils, staff and the school dog do not have an increased risk of illness as a result of the school dog in school – Continued /...

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?
Children's access to school dog's resource	If a child has access to the school dog's treats/food and eats some they could become unwell.	All of the school dog's resources will be locked away. No child will be allowed to enter the school dog's area without authorisation.	Low	Remind children not to enter area.
Contact with food preparation areas	If the school dog enters a food preparation area this could be unhygienic.	The school dog will be in a contained area or on a lead at all times around school. He will never enter the school kitchen.	Trivial	
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.

Area: Activities involving the school dog, including walking

Reason: To ensure that the school dog has a meaningful and safe impact on the school community

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?
Walking the dog on and off the site	Children could be harmed during a walk offsite if they are not focused. Children might be harmed if they do not interact correctly when the school dog is on a walk.	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 he is on a walk unless permission is given.	Medium	Careful consideration needs to be given to the amount of time the school dog is allowed to walk around school during play/lunchtimes.
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 dog will initially only make classroom visits with Mrs Duggan and Mrs Bell. The children in classrooms will follow the agreed procedure or interaction will stop.	Medium	Careful consideration will be given to when the school dog can visit classrooms and be under the control of the class teacher or teaching assistant.
Being fed	If a child tries to interact when the school dog is eating he may respond aggressively.	No child will be allowed in the school dog's contained area when he is eating. Children may prepare the food for the school dog	Low	Reminders to the children feeding the school dog to not interact when he is eating.

Reason: To ensure that the school dog has a meaningful and safe impact on the school community – Continued /...

		(washing their hands afterwards). All feeding will be supervised.		
Being fed	If a child tries to interact when the school dog is eating he may respond aggressively.	No child will be allowed in the school dog's contained area when he is eating. Children may prepare the food for the school dog (washing their hands afterwards). All feeding will be supervised.	Low	Reminders to the children feeding the school dog to not interact when he is eating.
School events	If the school dog is overwhelmed he 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 supervising adult.	Low	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.
Other dogs (on and off the site)	If the school dog is overwhelmed he may become aggressive or boisterous.	No other dogs will be allowed on the school premises, unless permission has been obtained. 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 supervising adult.	Low	Monitor the school dogs reaction when out walking.