



# Brentford School for Girls

## SCHOOL DOG POLICY

|   | <b><i>Rev</i></b>    | <b><i>Date</i></b> |
|---|----------------------|--------------------|
|   | <i>December 2026</i> | <i>Review due</i>  |
| 3 | December 2024        | Reviewed           |
| 2 | December 2022        | Reviewed           |
|   | December 2019        | Original           |

## **Introduction**

Students can benefit educationally and emotionally, increase their understanding of responsibility and develop empathy and nurturing skills through contact with a dog. In addition to these benefits, students take great enjoyment from interaction with a dog.

Academic research has shown that dogs working and helping in the school environment can achieve the following:-

- 1) Improve academic achievement
- 2) Increase literacy skills (reading sessions)
- 3) Calming behaviours
- 4) Increase social skills and self-esteem
- 5) Increase confidence
- 6) Teach responsibility and respect to all life
- 7) Help prevent truancy
- 8) Motivate students who are often less attentive

Introducing a dog into a school environment is not without its risks, but these risks managed with control measures. A thorough risk assessment has been carried out, and this is included in this document (see appendix 2).

Dogs are not allowed anywhere on the school site during school hours at any time unless specifically authorised by the Head Teacher. This includes drop off and collection times. This policy outlines measures put in place to allow the school dog to be present.

The dog is owned by a member of staff, Ms Webb.

- The Governors have the right to refuse entry to the dog.
- Only the school dog is allowed on the premises. All other dogs must not come on site during school hours unless they are a known therapy or assistance dog and the Head Teacher has been informed beforehand.
- The dog is a Cockapoo, chosen because it is a quiet breed that will respond well to training and which is known to be good with students, is hypoallergenic (does not shed hair) and is very sociable and friendly.
- The Chair of Governors and the governing body agree that a school dog will benefit the students and staff
- Staff, parents and students have been informed by letter that a dog will be in school.
- A risk assessment will be done and this will be reviewed annually.
- Staff, visitors and students known to have allergic reactions to dogs must not go near the dog. All visitors will be informed on arrival that there is a dog in school.

- If the dog is ill he will not be allowed into school.
- The dog will be kept on a lead when moving between classrooms or on a walk and will be under the full control and supervision of a trained adult.
- The dog will on occasion be outside during break and lunchtime and will be under the full control and supervision of a trained adult.
- Students must never be left alone with the dog and there must be appropriate adult supervision at all times.
- Students should be reminded of what is appropriate behaviour around the dog. Students should remain calm around the dog. They should not make sudden movements and must never stare into a dog's eyes as this could be threatening for the dog. Students should not put their face near a dog and should always approach it standing up.
- Students should never go near or disturb the dog that is sleeping or eating.
- Students must not be allowed to play roughly with the dog.
- Everyone must wait until the dog is sitting or lying down before touching or stroking him.
- If the dog is surrounded by a large number of students, the dog could become nervous and agitated. Therefore the adult in charge of the dog must ensure that s/he monitors the situation.
- Dogs express their feelings through their body language. Growling or bearing of teeth indicate that the dog is feeling angry or threatened. Flattened ears, tail lowered or between their legs, hiding behind their owner, whining or growling are signs that the dog is frightened or nervous. If the dog is displaying any of these warning signs he should be immediately removed from that particular situation or environment.
- Students should not eat close to the dog.
- Students should be careful to stroke the dog on the body, chest, back and not by his face or top of head.
- Students should always wash their hands after handling a dog.
- Any dog foul should be cleaned immediately and disposed of appropriately.
- Parents will be consulted on allowing their daughter access to the dog.
- Records and anecdotal evidence of the work and impact of the school dog.
- The office will know the whereabouts of the dog and which staff are supervising at all times.
- The dog will be included in the fire evacuation procedure under the supervision of dog handler.

### **Actions**

If someone reports having an issue with the dog, this information must be passed to the Head Teacher or a member of SLT as soon as possible.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Governing Body has a responsibility to ensure that the school has a written policy for dogs in School.

The Head teacher is responsible for implementing this policy.

Teachers, staff, students, parents and visitors are required to abide by this policy. The curriculum will support learning about dogs and how best to behave around our dog.

This will include highlighting that not all dogs are well trained and that caution must be used around unknown dogs outside school.

## **Appendix 1- School Dog Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

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

**A** The legal owner of the dog is Ms Webb; 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 a distraction?

**A** The dog will be kept in an office area. The office is separate from the classrooms / playground area to 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, the library and in the garden where students can interact safely.

**Q** Has a risk assessment been undertaken?

**A** Yes, we have carefully considered having a dog in school and sought advice from many sources, including other schools that successfully have a school dog and a reputable dog behaviourist.

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

**A** In the interest of health and hygiene our school dog will be toileted when taken out for short walks in the grounds. Only staff members will clear this away appropriately leaving no trace on the ground, cleaning the area with disinfectant if needed. Our policy of no dogs in the playground is still applicable as we are unable to put effective control measures in place that guarantee temperament and safety when students come into unsupervised contact with unknown dogs.

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

**A** The dog will be walked regularly and given free time outside. Parents will be able to give permission in advance to allow their child to be able to walk with a member of staff and the dog during that time. The dog will be kept in an office and will only have planned and supervised contact with students and visitors. We will work carefully to ensure the dog's welfare is always considered.

**Q** How will this be managed where students 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. The breed of dog is known for minimal moulting, she is given a high quality food and regularly groomed to reduce any possibility of allergens.

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

**A** Access to the dog is carefully managed and supervised and students do not need to have close contact with it unless permission for this has been given. 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.



## Appendix 2

### Health and Safety Risk Assessment – *School Therapy Dog*

|                               |                                      |          |           |                                             |           |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------|-----------|---------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Academy / School              | <b>Brentford School for Girls</b>    |          |           | Assessment No.                              | 4         |
| Site                          | Whole School                         | Location |           |                                             |           |
| Subject of Assessment         | School Therapy Dog                   |          |           |                                             |           |
| Assessed by                   | Natalie Webb                         | Date     | June 2025 | Review date                                 | June 2026 |
| Details of workplace/activity | Weekly visit from school therapy dog |          |           | Persons Affected<br>(Who may be harmed)     |           |
|                               |                                      |          |           | Students, Staff, Premises Team and visitors |           |



| Hazards and Risks |                                                                                                                             | Existing Control Measures                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Risk Level<br>(Very High, High, Medium, Low) | Further Actions<br>✓/X<br>(If ✓ See Actions) |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| 1.                | Dog becomes over-excited when interacting with students causing a student to be knocked to the ground, scratched or bitten. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The dog will always be in the care of a responsible adult and will never be allowed to roam freely around the school premises.</li> <li>Students will not be left unsupervised with the dog.</li> <li>The dog will always be on a lead when moving around the school site.</li> <li>Students have been and will continue to be taught about the consequences of their actions and how to behave around an animal.</li> <li>The dog breed is Cockerpoo, which has a naturally good temperament, is highly sociable and intelligent.</li> <li>The dog is owned by a member of staff; therefore temperament and nature are known. Any change in behaviour that might cause issues, will be notified by the dog's owner immediately and visits suspended if necessary.</li> </ul> | LOW                                          |                                              |
| 2.                | The dog causes allergies                                                                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The dog is a Cockerpoo which is hypoallergenic</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | LOW                                          |                                              |
| 3.                | Students or staff contracting diseases that can be carried by dogs (e.g. rabies, norovirus, Salmonella)                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Should the dog defecate on the school site a member of staff will clear this up immediately, wearing PPE, and dispose of it in a safe way. He will be allocated an area of the grounds that students have limited access to.</li> <li>All immunisations are kept up to date in accordance with the European Passport Scheme and a record will be kept of this</li> <li>Flea treatment is carried out at regular intervals</li> <li>The dog will not be permitted in the dining hall or anywhere where food is prepared.</li> <li>The dog will not be permitted into school if it has been unwell within the last 48 hrs.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                           | LOW                                          |                                              |



| Hazards and Risks |                                              | Existing Control Measures      | Risk Level<br>(Very High, High, Medium, Low) | Further Actions<br>✓/X<br>(If ✓ See Actions) |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| 4.                | Claim made against the school about the dog. | Insurance will cover any claim | LOW                                          |                                              |

**Please note:**

The hazards and controls noted above are an example of that which may be present when completing such a task. This assessment template is an example only and should either be used as reference only or amended to reflect the actual hazards and controls identified on site by the assessor.

Following assessment if no further actions are assessed to be required, please mark an **X** in the "Further Actions" box. If, however additional controls or actions are assessed to be required please place a **✓** in the box and note the action in the action plan.

| ACTION PLAN<br>(Additional Control Measures Required/Recommended Actions) |  |                     |             |              |                |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|---------------------|-------------|--------------|----------------|
| Hazards and Risks                                                         |  | Recommended Actions | Target Date | Completed by | Date Completed |
|                                                                           |  |                     |             |              |                |
|                                                                           |  |                     |             |              |                |

Any further actions identified should be completed before the assessed task is carried out.

| Reviewed / Approved By | Job Title | Date |
|------------------------|-----------|------|
|------------------------|-----------|------|

**By signing this risk assessment, I confirm the assessment has been shared / made available to all relevant staff to review. All staff have been asked to confirm they have read and understood the control measures.**



## Appendix – Assess the Level of Risk

In this risk assessment the level of risk is expressed qualitatively as **Low, Medium, High or Very High**. Underlying these descriptors of risk is a probabilistic model which factors the **likelihood** of an accident or event against the **severity** of harm that may occur. The **risk rating**, calculated as **likelihood x severity**, maps into the qualitative terms used as follows:

|            |          | Severity     |                   |                |           |
|------------|----------|--------------|-------------------|----------------|-----------|
|            |          | Minor Injury | Reportable Injury | Serious Injury | Critical  |
| Likelihood | Unlikely | Low          | Low               | Low            | Medium    |
|            | Possible | Low          | Medium            | High           | High      |
|            | Probable | Medium       | High              | High           | Very High |



**Reportable Injury** is an important threshold and refers to UK legislation in this respect, often referred to as **RIDDOR**. A reportable injury or occurrence includes:

- major injuries as defined in RIDDOR,
- accidents that resulted in more than 7 days off work,
- an injury to member of the public, a customer or visitor, or a school pupil or student, that required hospital treatment.

(See <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/edis1.pdf> for more information on RIDDOR).