



Malet Lambert Dog Policy

Version 24/25 - 1.0

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| Name and Title of Author: | Stacey Lalic |
| Name of Responsible Committee/Individual: | Local Governing Body |
| Implementation Date: | Summer 2024 |
| Review Date: | Summer 2025 |
| Related Documents: | |

1. Rationale

There is a strong evidence base from research that human-animal interactions (HAI) have a positive effect for people in a wide range of areas. Beetz et al 2012 stated that positive effects have been demonstrated in areas such as:

- Social Behaviour
- Interpersonal Interactions
- Mood
- Stress-related Parameters
- Heart Rate
- Blood Pressure
- Fear and Anxiety
- Mental Health
- Cardiovascular Diseases

We also believe that children can benefit in other ways from regular interaction with animals.

These ways include:

- Emotional Regulation
- Increased Understanding of Responsibility
- Development of Empathy

Many children also get great enjoyment out of caring for and interacting with animals.

2. Risk Management

Potential risks can be effectively managed through a careful and thorough Risk Assessment for each dog working within school.

A copy of the Risk Assessment can be found in appendix 4.

These plans set out the specific risk involved and the control measures in place to mitigate the identified risks.

Dogs other than those covered by a specific Risk Assessment are not allowed on the school site.

The following dogs have a Risk Assessment in place and are authorised to work with children within the school.

| Dog | Breed | Owner |
|------------|--------------|--------------|
| Olive | Cockapoo | Stacey Lalic |

This breed of dog has been identified because they:

- Respond well to training
- Are known to be good with people
- Are sociable and friendly
- Hypo Allergenic – do not moult

3. Organisational and Operational Information

- 3.1** Only the school dog(s) are allowed on the premises. The school dog will be attending Monday to Friday when the owner is in school. All other dogs must not come on site in term time unless they are a known therapy or assistance dog and the permission has been granted beforehand.
- 3.2** Staff, parents and children will be informed when the dog will be in school. Information to parents must set out clear arrangements for how parents should contact school if they do not want their child to interact with the dog. School staff who do not wish to be involved with the dog will not need to, the dog will be based within the SEND office. Through prior discussion with the dog owner staff can agree to be a 'handler'.
- 3.3** Dog handlers for the purpose of this policy are members of staff who have entered into a discussion and sought permission from the dog's owner to take the dog and interact with pupils. All handlers are expected to be fully aware and adhere to the conditions outlined in the School Dog Policy and School Dog Risk Assessment. Signed confirmation of this agreement will be sought.
- 3.4** Information will be shared with parents prior to the dog attending Malet Lambert. Parents will be asked to give consent for their child to interact with the dog. This will be shared centrally with all of the dog handlers.
- 3.5** Risk Assessments for each dog will be reviewed annually. All staff (handlers) working with the dog must familiarise themselves with the Risk Assessment annually.
- 3.6** Staff, visitors and children known to have allergic reactions to dogs must not go near the dog. The dog will not go into communal areas when all pupils are present, for example break and lunch times.
- 3.7** If the dog is ill they will not be allowed into school.
- 3.8** 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 an appropriate adult.
- 3.9** Children must never be left alone with the dog and there must be appropriate adult supervision at all times.

- 3.10** Children will be taught how to behave appropriately around the dogs, i.e.
- Remain Calm
 - Not make sudden movements
 - Not put their face near a dog and should always approach it standing up
 - Children should never go near or disturb the dog if it is sleeping or eating
 - Children must not be allowed to play roughly with the dog
 - Children should wait until the dog is sitting or lying down before touching or stroking it
 - If the dog is surrounded by a large number of children, the dog could become nervous and agitated. Therefore, the adult in charge of the dog must ensure that they monitor the situation and only allow 2 students at any time around the immediate area of the dog.
- 3.11** The handlers will be aware of the dog's body language and Pupils will be taught to identify how a dog may be feeling and act appropriately e.g. Dogs express their feelings through their body language. Growling or bearing of teeth indicates 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 it should be immediately removed from that particular situation or environment.
- 3.12** Pupils should not eat close to the dog.
- 3.13** Pupils should always wash their hands before and after handling a dog.
- 3.14** Any dog foul should be cleaned immediately and disposed of appropriately. This will be the responsibility of the dog's handler.
- 3.15** The dog will be included in the fire evacuation procedure under the supervision of a responsible adult.
- 3.16** If someone reports having an issue with the dog, this information must be passed to the Owner, the Headteacher or Senior Leader as soon as possible. All concerns will be responded to by the owner in the first instance.
- 3.17** 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.
- 3.18** The owner will commit to ongoing appropriate training from a reputable trainer. When or if required the training provider will attend school and work with a group of pupils and staff/handlers to ensure consistency of training. List of DoF Trainers regulatory bodies and affiliations are available in appendix 3.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body has a responsibility to ensure that the school has a written policy for dogs in the school and to ensure that this policy is reviewed annually.

The owner is responsible for implementing this policy.

Teachers, Staff, Pupils, Parents and Visitors are required to abide by this policy.

Appendix 1 - Reasons to have a dog in school in summary

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
- 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 children who are often less attentive

The following information has been taken from a range of sources to provide further details about the benefits of having a dog in school:

Behaviour:

In some schools, dogs are making a difference in the behaviour of pupils. Researchers report that:

- Students can identify with animals and with empathy for the dog can better understand how classmates may feel.
- It was found that violent behaviour in participating students declined by 55% and general aggression went down by 62%.
- In a controlled study, students were found to have fewer disciplinary referrals in schools with a dog than schools without. Student's behaviour improved toward teachers, and students also showed more confidence and responsibility. Additionally, parents reported that children seemed more interested in school as a result of having a dog at school.

Reading:

- Reading programmes with dogs are doing wonders for some students. Children who might be embarrassed to read aloud to the class or even adults are likely to be less scared to read to a dog. "It might be less stressful for a child to read aloud to a dog than to a teacher or a peer.
 - Dogs are used to encourage struggling readers to practise reading aloud.
 - With the presence of a "calm and well-trained dog", students find social support and peer interaction.
 - Dogs give unconditioned acceptance, as they are non-judgemental, which is especially crucial to struggling, emerging readers.
 - Dogs can also provide confidence to children as they do not make fun of them when they read, but above all they make amazing listeners, providing the children with a sense of comfort and love.
 - Research has shown that students who read to dogs show an increase in reading levels, word recognition, a higher desire to read and write, and an increase in intra and interpersonal skills among the students they mix with.
- Social Development:

Emotional Wellbeing

- Dogs in school offer an opportunity for improving social development. They are especially useful for teaching students' social skills and responsibility.
- Specifically, schools are using dogs to help older students build self-esteem, learn about positive and negative reinforcement, responsibility and boundaries.
- Older students use dogs to help communicate, teach kindness and empower students.
- With a dog in school, students have the opportunity to learn how to care for the animal. This includes walking and grooming. Researchers report that involving students in the daily care of classroom dogs is a positive experience, promoting their own daily care. The students also learn about responsibility, caring and sharing when helping each other take care of a dog at school.

Appendix 2 - School Dog Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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

A The legal owners of the dogs are identified in Table 1, They will bear the costs associated with owning the dog. Malet Lambert School will contribute towards cost incurred by the dog being in school through prior agreement.

| Item/Cost | Responsibility |
|--|---|
| Food | Owner |
| Veterinary costs including annual vaccinations etc | Owner |
| Grooming cost | Owner unless frequency needs to be increased to manage potential allergens. Malet Lambert to cover additional costs |
| School/Business Insurance cost | Malet Lambert |
| Ongoing training costs | Malet Lambert |
| Specialist equipment required by the dog in school | Malet Lambert |

NB: If there are any costs that are not shown in the above table, but are attributable to being in school and is agreed with the Headteacher or the Finance Business Manager, the school may contribute towards the costs.

Q. *Is the dog from a reputable breeder?*

A *Yes. The dog is from a home where both parents were seen and has been specifically chosen for its temperament.*

Q *Will the dog be a distraction?*

A *No, the dog will be used to support learning and behaviour. When the dog is not being used she will be kept in an appropriate calm quiet environment away from distractions (crate in the owners' office)*

Q *Will my child be left alone with the dog?*

A *No, interaction with the dog is always under strict supervision. The adult/handler will be responsible for monitoring the body language of the dog and child, they will remove the dog if there are any warning signs.*

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 trainer.*
- Q *Who is responsible for training?*
- A *The legal owners of the dog will be committed to ongoing training. By prior agreement Malet Lambert will contribute to ongoing training costs.*
- Q *What level of training will be required?*
- A *There is no minimum requirement for training for a school dog, however, we will continue to work through the Kennel Club Award Schemes.*
- 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. The dog will only be walked in designated areas. (Behind the science block and the dedicated SEND outside areas) Only 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 be given areas of the SEND office where they can rest when not with students. The dog will be carefully trained over a period of time and will have appropriate access to food and water. We will work carefully to ensure the dog's welfare is always considered.*
- Q *How will this be managed where children have allergies?*
- A *Children with allergies will not need to touch the dog, which will relieve the possibility of allergic reactions. A centralised list of pupils will be maintained and shared with the dog handlers. The dog is non-moulting and will be regularly professionally 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 children do not need to have close contact with it unless permission for this has been given. Again, a centralised list will be maintained and shared with the dog's handlers.*

Appendix 3 - Dog trainer's accreditation/affiliation

Helen Thompson

Guns and Noses Dog Training

- KCAI Kennel Club Accredited Instructor
- APDT Association of Pet Dog Trainers
- The Dog Training Charter Group
- APBC Association of Pet Behaviour Councillors
- The Gun Dog Trust – Gundog trainers and instructors
- Canine Hydro Therapist

Appendix 4 - Risk Assessment

| Malet Lambert School Dog Risk Assessment | |
|---|----------------|
| Date | February 2024 |
| Review Date | September 2024 |

| Details: |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The owner Miss Lalic (SLL) will be the primary handler for the dog and will have primary responsibility for the dog both in and out of school hours. • Other handlers will be under the guidance of Miss Lalic. • Ongoing training for the dog will be carried out. • The owner (SLL) will ensure that designated handlers are provided with a clean-up pack at all times including hand sanitiser. • The dog will always be accompanied by a designated handler and kept on a lead when moving around the school site when deemed necessary by the handler. • All learner contact with the dog will be supervised by a designated handler and at no time will a learner be left unsupervised • Parents will be given the option for their children to opt out of contact with the dog. The designated handler will ensure that no learner who has opted out comes into contact with the dog. • The owner will ensure that the dog is of satisfactory level of health to attend the school site- i.e. absence of communicable illness or disease. • Suitable footwear should be worn when walking the dog around the school site. • All individuals who have come into contact with the dog must adopt thorough and appropriate hand- washing technique and personal hygiene: all designated handlers will carry hand gel with them whilst supervising the dog. |
| <p>Emergency Arrangements Seek first aid or medical assistance to treat injuries or allergic reactions Dial 999 or 112 to request an ambulance as required.</p> <p>Record all accidents and incidents in line with school policy</p> |

| Identified Hazards | |
|---|---|
| Dog getting over excited when interacting with staff, students or visitor | <p>The dog will always be in the care of a designated handler and will never be allowed to freely roam the school premises.</p> <p>Suitable footwear should be worn when walking with the dog</p> |

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| | <p>Learners are not left with the dog unsupervised. The dog will be on a lead when in situations where he could get distracted or excited around students / staff when she is out of the pen.</p> <p>The dog will continue to be trained not to jump up or bite the students.</p> <p>Learners have been, and continue to be, taught the impact of their actions. Education of this nature is continually given to learners about how to behave appropriately around the dog.</p> |
| The dog gets loose from his pen or from his lead | <p>The dog's pen is big enough for her to be happy and safe during the school day and the students are taught not to tease her whilst in this quiet space.</p> <p>If the dog does get loose from the pen, the teacher on duty will call for a designated staff member who will come and put the dog back in his pen.</p> <p>There are members of staff who will be called upon in the event of the dog getting loose or if she needs attention at any other time, they are: SLL/LOL/VCL</p> |
| Dog hair causing allergies | <p>Parents have been asked to inform the school of any known allergies prior to introduction of the dog to school.</p> <p>A list of any learners who should not interact with the puppy will be kept by the SEND team.</p> <p>Learners with allergies or phobias will be able to opt out of any interaction with the dog.</p> <p>Learners have been taught to wash their hands after interaction with the dog. The dog will be regularly groomed to minimise the shedding of dog hair.</p> |
| Dog reacting in a poor way to children's behaviour | <p>Learners will be educated about how to behave when around the dog. If this happens then the dog will be moved to a safe area and returned until trust is re-established.</p> |
| Students getting germs from the dog | <p>Should the dog defecate on the school site, a designated handler will clear this up immediately and dispose of it in a safe manner.</p> |

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|--|---|
| | <p>All immunisations will kept up to date and a register of this kept by the owner.</p> <p>Flea and worming treatments will be kept up to date and a register of this kept by the owner.</p> <p>The dog will not go in the school dining hall at mealtimes or in the food preparation areas or the Food Technology room</p> |
| Financial cost of the dog's upkeep | <p>The dog is the responsibility of the owner, she is financially responsible for the dog's care.</p> <p>The school will contribute the cost of the dog's needs for the time in school or any additional costs that are incurred for example additional training.</p> |
| Fire Alarm | The designated handler at the time of the alarm will be responsible for evacuating the dog from the building to the designated assembly point. |
| Claim is made against school re: behaviour of the dog. | The school dog is insured for public liability cover by Malet Lambert School. |

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| Assessors Signature: | Date: |
| | |

Dog handlers/Staff Consent:

I confirm that I have read through and understood the School Dog Policy and the School Dog Risk Assessment.

I confirm that I will adhere to the expectation and procedures outlined in both documents whilst the dog is in my care:

| Name | Signature | Date |
|------|-----------|------|
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