



Risk Assessment

St Nicolas CE Combined School, Taplow

Business Name: School therapy dog

Name of Dog Handlers & Dog: Rebecca Holmes, Sian McCatty Halle

Dogs Last Health Check: August 2024

Date of Risk Assessment: 1.11.2024

| What is the hazard? | Who is at risk? | Level of Risk | What are you already doing? | Does Anything Else Need To Be Done To Control The Risk? |
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| Animal Phobias | Staff and Young People | Low | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parents/caregivers asked to identify young people known to have a phobia or fear reaction to dogs.• All young people will have familiarisation sessions before the interventions begin to ensure confidence and comfort levels• Where there are phobias of young people, dogs are not banned from attending but every effort will be made to segregate dogs from those with phobias.• Staff that have phobias will be informed of dogs arrival and every effort will be made to separate dog and phobic staff members. | |

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| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be a whole school log of humans with phobias or anxieties of dogs. • Display board/assembly created to set safety boundaries. • Signs will be displayed in reception areas and on doors of rooms where the dog is present to make everyone including visitors aware there is a dog present • Plans will be created to support those with phobias | |
| Allergies | Staff and Young People | Low | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents/caregivers/staff are asked to identify those with allergic reactions to dogs. These people may have restricted access depending on their allergic trigger. • On the rare chance an allergic reaction does not subside, medical attention must be sought • The therapy dog will be regularly groomed and bathed to remove dander and excess hair. • The dog will not eat any food stuffs of known food allergic triggers 48 hours before attending school site • All known humans with allergies will be logged. | |
| Zoonotic Diseases and Pathogens | Staff and Young People | Low | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The therapy dog will be up to date with all vaccinations and will receive regular veterinary check ups. • They will have regular flea and worm treatment • Anti bacterial hand gel / wipes will be available after handling the dog. | |

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| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dog licking will be discouraged • All waste produced, (accidental or routine) will be handled and disposed of safely. • The dog's toilet area will be away from the main school site or separated to avoid potential contamination risks. • All surfaces will be properly washed and disinfected in accordance with the school's health and safety standards. | |
| Hygiene | Staff and Young People | Low | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School infection procedures will always be followed • Health and safety procedures will always be followed • Any significant cuts or abrasions will always be covered before contact with the dog • Hand sanitizers and antibacterial wipes will be available for use before and after interventions with the dog • Staff and young people are to wash their hands after contact with the dog | |
| Areas not Accessible to the dog | | Low | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The dog will not enter any food preparation areas within the school. • The dog will not enter any areas where a phobic person is present • The dog will not enter any space where someone has allergies to pet hair, saliva or dander. | |

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| <p>Safeguarding and Protection of Children (Human Behaviour)</p> | <p>Young People</p> | <p>Low</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valid consent to be obtained by from human participants/caregivers • Participants can withdraw at any time, without giving a reason. • Vulnerable groups/participants should be monitored for signs of withdrawal and the intervention should stop if this is observed. • Sessions will be logged • The facilitator will monitor for signs of distress in the participant and end the session if necessary | <p>Contact with Halle is invitational and no child need have contact unless they wish to. Individual consent from a caregiver may be requested where a child is going to work 1:1 with the school therapy dog. Otherwise consent is by opt-out: all parents have been emailed and asked to let us know if their child has any allergies or phobias or they do not wish them to interact with the dog.</p> |
| <p>Safeguarding and Protection of Children (Dog Behaviour)</p> | <p>Young people and staff</p> | <p>Low</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checks are carried out by dog handlers and facilitators to ensure dogs are clean, healthy and suitable to work • Dogs and handlers have valid and appropriate insurance • Dogs will always be closely supervised by the handler • Dogs will not be allowed to wander unrestricted around the building • Participants will be closely supervised by the handler • Participants will be given dog safety training with regards to behaviour around dogs prior to interaction with the therapy dog. • Participants will be taught to recognise dog stress signals both before and during interventions • Access to first aid will be available at the | |

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| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any incidents will be recorded according to organisations procedures and logged in incident books. If necessary medical attention will be sought. • The dogs rest area will be only accessible by the dog handler and trusted staff members. • Young people will always be supervised. • The dog will never be left on their own for more than they are comfortable with. • The therapy dog will wear their uniform to inform all that they are on duty | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Halle's therapy-dog-in-training vest will arrive in the next few weeks. |
| <p>The Protection of the Dog</p> | <p>The dog</p> | <p>Low</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The dog handler is responsible for the dog and ensuring that their dog is physically fit and their psychological wellbeing is protected and not compromised • Dog first aid kits should be available and dog handlers are responsible for this • The Animal Welfare Act 2006 should always be adhered to. These laws apply to all dog owners/keepers but it is every staff/adults member's responsibility to follow the 5 freedoms. • Dogs will be monitored for signs of stress by the handler and removed should they consider the dog stressed • Dogs will be familiarised with the setting, given access to water and an appropriate place to rest, toilet and exercise. Only the handler will interact with them at these times. | |

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| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory rest times must be incorporated into the dog's day. • Mandatory periods of time where the dog is taken for walks, toilet breaks and rest periods allowing them to meet their needs. • If at any point the dog's welfare becomes compromised the intervention will end immediately and the dog removed and taken to their safe space. • Dogs will have a care plan created by dog handler and PAWS trainer • The Therapy space will be large enough for both dog, handler and child to move around and complete small activities. • The Therapy space will be within close proximity to an outside area. • The handler will be mindful of busy periods of the day when walking the dog around the school site eg breaks/start and end of days etc. | |
| <p>Practical Activities on with Dog on site</p> | <p>Staff and young people</p> | <p>Low</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any equipment used should be monitored for signs of wear and tear • Trips and slips, first aid will be sought • When walking with a dog and child the dog will be on a double lead so the handler still has full control • If the young person has displayed strong dog handling skills, opportunities will become available for them to walk independently with close supervision • Individual risk assessments of participants will be created if deemed necessary and appropriate staff support allocated. | |