

School Dog Policy (FAQ & Risk Assessment) 2023-2024 St Matthias CE Primary School



This policy is reviewed and updated by **Lydia O'Connor, Trauma Informed Lead** at St Matthias CE Primary School. It is approved annually by the Local Governing Body.

Date: March 2025

Ratified: **5th March 2025**

Next Review: March 2026

in collaboration with





Introduction

Children 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, children take great enjoyment from interaction with a dog.

- ▶ Animals help children to develop secure attachments – they get an oxytocin burst. Children have an innate limbic to limbic connection and fascination with animals.
- ▶ Having an oxytocin exchange will counteract cortisol, lower blood pressure, increase and initiate social engagement.
- ▶ Research shows that when opioids and oxytocin are optimally activated in a child's brain, we do not want to fight and we don't feel anxious. Children and animals prefer to spend time in the presence of those with optimal levels of opioids and oxytocin in their brains. (Panksepp 1998)

'It is no surprise therefore that neuroscientists refer to these neurochemicals as nature's gift to us'

Oxytocin is a hormone which is typically linked to warm, fuzzy feelings and shown in some research to lower stress and anxiety.

Therefore, having a school dog will support children to make social connection, build attachments, develop trust, offer purpose, act as a distraction, lessen anxiety, reduction of stress.

Is there a risk in bringing a dog into a school environment?

Yes there is, though there are a variety of accidents, which can happen within the school environment which far exceed the number of injuries or incidents caused by a dog. Therefore,

it is just another risk that needs to be managed. A thorough risk assessment has been carried out and this is included in this document (see appendix 3). Dogs are not allowed anywhere on the school site 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. When completing risk assessments, we consider if the benefit outweighs the risk and due the integration plan, socialisation and training measures put in place, we consider the school dog to be very low risk. We also believe the benefits by far outweigh the risk.

About The School Dog:

The dog is owned by Our Trauma Informed Practitioner

- 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 unless the Head Teacher has been informed beforehand. The dog is a Working Sprocker Spaniel, chosen because it is an intelligent breed that will respond well to training and which is known to be good with children, have short hair and is very sociable and friendly. This Spaniel dog breed has unwavering loyalty, intelligence and charm. Sprocker spaniels are easy to train and very good with children, making them an ideal family dog. They are energetic and love exercise, they are keen to please and thrive on socialisation as they have a love for human companionship.
- The Chair of Governors and the governing board agree that a school dog will benefit the children and staff of St Matthias.
- Staff, parents and children will be informed by letter that a dog will be in school.
- The school has produced a risk assessment and this will be reviewed annually.
- Staff, visitors and children 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 unwell he will not be allowed into school.
- The dog will be kept on a short lead when moving between classrooms or on a walk and will be under the full control and supervision of a trained adult.
- Children must never be left alone with the dog and there must be appropriate adult supervision at all times.
- Children should be reminded of what is appropriate behaviour around the dog
- Children should remain calm around the dog.
- Children should never go near or disturb the dog that is sleeping or eating.
- Children must not be allowed to play roughly with the dog.
- Everyone must wait until the school dog is sitting or lying down before touching or stroking him.
- 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 s/he monitors the situation.
- Children should not eat close to the dog.

- Children should always wash their hands after handling a dog.
- Any dog foul should be cleaned immediately and disposed of appropriately. The dog will be taken out onto **surrounding roads and fields for his 'free play'** and the school dog will be trained to toilet off site.
- Parents will be consulted on allowing their pupil's access to the dog.
- Appropriately trained staff will maintain 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 The Trauma Informed Practitioner or a member of the SLT
- Actions - someone reports having an issue with the dog, this information must be passed to the Head Teacher or a Deputy as soon as possible.

Roles and Responsibilities:

The Trust has a responsibility to ensure that the school has a written policy for dogs in School and the Local Governing Body ensure that this policy is adopted in accordance with their own school's needs. Teachers, staff, pupils, 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. Reasons to have a dog in school

Appendix 2. School Dog Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Appendix 3. Risk Assessment

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 detail 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 62%. Behaviour problems occur in school and these can interfere with learning.

Some schools are using dogs to improve behaviour problems by promoting positive behaviour in students. In a controlled study, students were found to have fewer disciplinary referrals in schools with a dog than schools without.

Students' 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.

Education:

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. After all, a dog won't judge or correct you."

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 are incredibly calm and happy to have student read to them or join a group of children in the library whilst they are having a book reading session.

Dogs give unconditional acceptance, as they are non-judgmental, which is especially crucial to struggling, emerging readers. The dogs 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 proved 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:

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.

As a reward:

Dogs will be gentle and loving, but at the same time full of fun and enjoyment for the students. Those students who have performed incredibly well during the week or those who have made progress in a certain subject, or those who have achieved tasks set for them, will be rewarded with spending time during lunch or break to interact with these dogs. Walking, grooming, playing and training are some of the responsibilities students will be allowed to undertake.

It has been proved that working and playing with a dog improves children's social skills and self-esteem. Support Dogs can work with students on a one-one basis and will especially help those students who have been bullied, abused, going through upsetting/difficult times or even scared/phobic of dogs.

The dog will bring much joy and help to all the students and staff they meet and are happy to provide plenty of hugs to the students they are spending time with. Students who struggle with social interaction can find a reassuring friend in a dog.

Appendix 2

School Dog Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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

The legal owner of the dog will be Mrs O'Connor, our Trauma Informed Practitioner ; she will bear the costs associated with owning the dog.

Q Is the dog from a reputable breeder?

Yes. The dog was purchased from a reputable breeder. The Trauma Informed Practitioner visited the puppies in their home. The mother and litter were seen fortnightly from 6 days old. This puppy was specifically chosen for its temperament.



Q Will the dog be a distraction?

The Cabin, outside Year 1, is Barney's safe space. He will be attached to a lead to furniture or Mrs O'Connor at all times. A gate is across the door to prevent him from leaving. The space is separate from the classrooms / playground area to ensure it only comes into contact with children 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 children can interact safely. The dog will also attend meetings with staff to support further socialisation, following consultation with staff beforehand.

Q Has a risk assessment been undertaken?

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 reputable dog behaviourist, Lisa Jackson.

Q Who is responsible for training?

Our Trauma Informed Practitioner, Mrs O'Connor, will be the legal owner of the dog and as a result, will be responsible for its training. Barney has passed The Kennel Club Puppy Foundation Assessment and the Good Citizen Dog Scheme Bronze Award. Appropriate professional training will continue with Lisa Jackson, who is a Kennel Club Accredited dog trainer in companion dog training and behavioural training. He has also had 1:1 sessions with Zoe Goode, a dog trainer who specialises in retriever breeds.

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

In the interest of health and hygiene our school dog will be toileted when taken out for short walks in the local area off site, which is easily accessed from the school playground. 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?

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. This will also be used as a behaviour reward, in line with our positive

relationships policy. The dog will stay with the Trauma Informed Practitioner in her working area and will only have planned and supervised contact with children and visitors. 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.

Q How will this be managed where children have allergies?

Children 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 children 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 dog 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?

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. We hope to work closely with parents of children who are fearful of dogs to alleviate their fear and to teach them how to manage this.

Other notes and key points

- Continued integrations and socialisation – familiarisation with the school environment
- The dog is mature enough to act as full therapy dog and comfort children.
- The Trauma Inform Lead has a half termly timetable which involves sessions in social or emotional support and reading time alongside Barney. Rest periods and exercise will also be timetabled.
- The dog will have an annual temperament test from dog training school and health check from vet. Records kept at school

Amendments made during review March 2025- to assist author with next review

Page no	Section	Heading	Text approved
4	18 th Bullet point	About the School Dog	Change: Malvern Link Common and surrounding roads to 'surrounding roads and fields for his 'free play'
7	Q Will the dog be a distraction?	Appendix 2	Change: The dog will be with the Trauma Informed Practitioner either in the cabin or library. If the Trauma Informed Practitioner is called to another area of the school where the school dog cannot accompany, he will be taken to spend time in his crate, located in the Head's office. To 'The Cabin, outside Year 1, is Barney's safe space. He will be attached to a lead to furniture or Mrs O'Connor at all times. A gate is across the door to prevent him from leaving.'
8	Other notes and key points	Appendix 2	Remove: From September 2023 he will have a weekly timetable Replace with : The Trauma Inform Lead has a half termly timetable which involves sessions
8	Other notes and key points	Appendix 2	Remove 'listen to children read' replace with 'comfort children'

St Matthias Primary School Malvern –School Dog Risk Assessment

Legend	
I	Impact (consequence)
L	Likelihood
I x L	Risk Rating

To establish your risk rating, it is necessary to multiply the perceived consequence (or impact) of the risk (score 1 - 5) with the perceived likelihood (or probability) of that risk occurring (score 1-5). Please see tables below for guidance on risk rating scores.

Impact (consequence)	
Description	Indicators
5 (Major)	The risk has a major impact if realised
4 (Significant)	The risk has a significant impact if realised
3 (Moderate)	The risk has a moderate impact if realised
2 (Minor)	The risk has a minor impact if realised
1 (No consequence)	The risk has no consequence impact if realised

Likelihood (Probability)	
Description	Indicators
5 (Very likely)	The risk will emerge
4 (Likely)	The risk should emerge
3 (Unlikely)	The risk could emerge
2 (Very unlikely)	The risk is unlikely to emerge
1 (Impossible)	The risk will not emerge

Score	Risk description	Action required
25	Extreme Risk	Immediate escalation to Headteacher for risk control activities
20-15	High Risk	Risk to be actively managed with appropriate risk control activities
12-8	Medium Risk	Take appropriate action to manage risk
5 and below	Low Risk	Risk to be removed from register with monitoring activity to assess changes in risk rating

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St Matthias Primary School Malvern –School Dog Risk Assessment

Learning Outcomes:

- The value of pet therapy is widely accepted as a powerful aid to stimulation and communication.
- Studies have shown that the presence of companion animals can improve the wellbeing of children and lower anxiety.
- Therapy dogs will aim to make the environment happier, more enjoyable and less forbidding.

Permissions:

It is accepted that interacting with animals is not appropriate for all children but that for some it may have positive benefits. Any parent who does not wish their child to interact with the dogs is invited to inform the SLT at the induction stage.

Review:

The risk assessment is reviewed annually.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Mrs Beale Headteacher – responsible person
 Mr James Thompson – responsible person
 Mrs O'Connor Year 1 teacher – is the designated dog handler for Barney.

Dog Status and Context:

- The dog lives with Mrs O'Connor and her family and will be introduced to the school environment and students gradually. The dog is partaking in Kennel Club approved training and will have an annual temperament test. His vaccination programme records will be kept as part of the school's dog risk assessment.
- Our School Dog has completed Kennel Club Bronze Citizenship training to the recommended level, therefore he now spends time in the Year 1 outside area and school field with Mrs O'Connor. Whilst moving around the school, the dog will be kept on a short lead and will always be with Mrs O'Connor or a member of SLT staff.

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St Matthias Primary School Malvern –School Dog Risk Assessment

Risk description	Risk Control(s)	I	L	Risk Rating (after risk controls are in place)	Lead for Risk Control Activities
Policy and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The headteacher ensures that all staff, pupils and their parents, are aware of the use of therapy dogs at St Matthias. The headteacher considers whether the school needs to register the dog as a performance animal, in accordance with the Performing Animals (Regulation) Act 1925. If yes, the headteacher calls the LA and follows local procedures to register the dog. The School Business/Finance Manager ensures that the school's insurance covers using the dog for the specific planned use for therapy and SEMH provision for pupils. The headteacher ensures that the dog is cared for in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act 2006. The headteacher ensures that there is a suitable and sufficient risk assessment in place 	2	2	L	Headteacher Designated Dog Handler Trust H&S Officer
Dogs welfare provisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The dog has access to fresh, clean water at all times. The dog has access to a cool and quiet place where it can be left undisturbed. Pupils leave the dog alone when instructed by their teachers. The dog's welfare is considered as a priority when planning the activities that it will participate in. If an activity risks the dog's welfare, the activity is amended. Noise is kept to a minimum during the activities that the dog is participating in The headteacher and deputy headteacher ensures that the dog has adequate and frequent toilet breaks and any waste is appropriately disposed of. The dog is not over-stimulated, as this can lead to potentially dangerous behaviour. The dog is not made to participate in potentially distressing activities. 	3	2	M	Headteacher Deputy Headteacher Designated Dog Handler

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school complies with the Animal Welfare Act 2006. The dog is familiar with the members of staff and pupils who are participating in the activity with the dog. Flash photography is not used when the dog is present. The dog is given opportunities to exercise and move around independently in a secure area, e.g. the headteacher's office, playground. The headteacher and deputy headteacher ensures that the dog is fit to participate in specific activities and is not brought into the school if it is unwell. If the dog becomes unwell while at school, the dog's owner takes it home. Before any activity is carried out, the headteacher and Deputy headteacher ensures everyone participating in the activity understands how to treat and behave around the dog, e.g. not using flash photography, not shouting or clapping and not running around. Activities do not cause harm, discomfort or stress to the dog. 				
Site security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least two adults are appointed to be responsible for the dog. The site team ensures that the site is secure and that precautions are in place to limit the chance of the dog getting loose. The designated dog handler ensures that all appropriate doors are closed when the dog is participating in an activity, e.g. in a school hall. The site team ensures that the premises is secure, e.g. fences are not broken. 	2	2	L	Headteacher Designated Dog Handler Caretaker
Evacuation procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where necessary, the school's evacuation procedures include provisions for the dog. The person handling the dog during specified activities is responsible for the dog's safety during a lockdown or evacuation. 	2	1	L	Headteacher Designated Dog Handler
Disobedience, over excitement or dangerous behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The handler is equipped and trained to react to and control any dangerous behaviour. If the person handling the dog for a specific activity is a pupil, they are given training to handle the dog, and the pupil and dog are given an opportunity to 	3	2	M	Headteacher Deputy Headteacher

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> bond. Pupils are not expected to handle the dog unless: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Their parents have provided permission. – They feel safe and confident in doing so. – They have received training to handle the dog. The dog's obedience is ensured as far as reasonably possible; however, staff, pupils, visitors and parents understand that animals can be unpredictable. The headteacher and deputy headteacher ensures that a plan is in place for if the dog is unable to carry out an activity, e.g. if the dog is stressed, and participating in the activity would cause further distress or could lead to dangerous behaviour. If the dog is not behaving appropriately during an activity, e.g. it is barking excessively or running away, the headteacher or deputy headteacher removes the dog and a contingency plan is implemented. Children are not left with the dog unsupervised. Pupils are taught the impact of their actions in relation to life and in the case of the dog. This is on a continuous basis and forms part of the PSHE curriculum. Pupils will be taught to stand still with their arms crossed to prevent the dog from chasing them or engaging in boisterous play. The headteacher and deputy headteacher ensure that the dog doesn't interfere with the school environment or displays nuisance behaviours. If necessary, they may exclude the dog from entering specific areas. The headteacher and deputy headteacher discourage the dog from jumping, scratching or licking and are confident that the dog will respond to instruction of this nature. Should an injury to a child occur they will be assessed by a trained First Aider. They will administer appropriate medical treatment and advise the parents/carers as to whether tetanus inoculation is appropriate. 					<p>Designated Dog Handler</p> <p>Trust Health and Safety Officer</p>
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St Matthias Primary School Malvern –School Dog Risk Assessment

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should an injury occur the incident will be fully investigated by the Trust Health and Safety Officer. If appropriate, additional control measures will be put in place If a claim is made against the school then the headteacher and deputy headteacher will use the respective insurance policies with Risk Protection Arrangement insurers RPA to reimburse. 					
Parent notification/permission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The headteacher informs parents that the dog will be present on the school's premises. Parents are informed of the activities that the dog will be participating in, e.g. the dog will be used as a therapy dog. The headteacher obtains consent from parents for pupils to be in proximity with, or to handle, the dog. Parents are informed if they are likely to come into contact with the dog. 	2	2	L	Headteacher	
Dogs health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The dog's designated handler is in charge of feeding and caring for the dog while on the school premises. The handler is responsible for permitting people to touch the dog. The dog is permitted to go in the office areas which are kept clean and secure for the wellbeing of the animal, pupils, staff and visitors. The dog is given no opportunity to come into contact with wild rodents on or off the school premises. The dog is fully inoculated. The dog goes to the vet for a regular check-up, to identify whether the dog has any transmittable diseases and for worming or flea treatment. The dog's claws are regularly trimmed to reduce the risk of scratches. On hot days, the handler ensures there are appropriate provisions in place to keep the dog cool and ensure the dog avoids too much activity during the hottest part of the day. The Dog owner will have financial responsibility regarding feeding the dog and 	2	2	L	<p>Headteacher</p> <p>Deputy Headteacher</p> <p>Designated Dog Handler</p>	

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	any day to day costs.				
Hygiene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The dog is suitably toilet trained. The dog is of an acceptable hygienic standard, i.e. not wet or muddy The designated area for the dog to defecate is situated away from pupils and staff. All faeces are immediately picked up by the handler, using a clinical waste bag, and disposed of into a clinical waste bin. The handler immediately washes their hands with sufficient soap and water after picking up faeces. Any soiled dog bedding is immediately disposed of in sealed clinical waste bags and placed into a clinical waste bin. The handler takes the dog's bedding home regularly to wash it. Any pupils, staff and visitors who touch the dog are advised to wash their hands afterwards, and sufficient hand washing facilities are provided throughout the school. Anyone with an exposed wound who touches the dog has the wound suitably covered. If the dog is ill with an infection or a disease, it does not return to the school until it has recovered. Hand sanitiser is provided for anyone who touches the dog. 	2	2	L	Headteacher Designated Dog Handler
Injuries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The dog is well trained and is used to coming into close contact with people. Pupils, staff and visitors around the dog are closely supervised by the handler. Pupils, staff and visitors are advised not to put their face close to the dog. The dog is prohibited from roaming freely around the school without the supervision of the handler. Pupils, staff and visitors are only permitted to stroke the dog during allocated timeslots. 	3	2	M	Designated Dog Handler

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The dog is provided with a place it can go to get away from people. The dog is trained to not pull on the lead or jump up at people. 				
Dogs housing and equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The headteacher and deputy headteacher ensures that the dog has housing that meets its physical and psychological needs. The children are taught that this place belongs to the dog and is their 'safe' place so do not attempt to invade it. The headteacher and deputy headteacher ensures that the dog's housing is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure, e.g. escape proof. Clean and free from parasites and vermin. Free from hazards, e.g. sharp edges. Well-ventilated. Sheltered from extreme weather. Set at a suitable temperature, humidity and light level. Sheltered from noises that may upset it. Capable of providing a darkened sleeping area. The headteacher and deputy headteacher ensures that the dog's housing has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A comfortable resting area. A suitable amount of clean bedding material. The headteacher and deputy headteacher ensures that the dog is able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lie fully stretched out. Turn around without touching either the walls or the ceiling. Stand in its natural posture. Move in its natural manner. Rest comfortably. All dog's bedding/housing is checked for defects on a weekly basis by the headteacher and deputy headteacher. All dog equipment is stored in the designated office areas when not in use. The dog's food and water bowls are kept out of the path of people to avoid any 	2	2	L	Headteacher Deputy Headteacher Designated Dog Handler

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> trips. Any spillages from the dog's bowls are wiped up immediately. 				
Allergies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils and staff known to have allergies to animals have restricted access to the dog. All pupils, staff and visitors are advised not to touch their face after touching the dog. All pupils, staff and visitors are advised to wash their hands thoroughly after touching the dog. A supply of antihistamine tablets is kept in the front office in case anyone has an allergic reaction. The headteacher establishes whether parents have allergies to dogs, and activities where parents may come into contact with the dog, e.g. at a school performance, are amended as necessary. 	2	2	L	Headteacher Duty Headteacher
Phobias	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils and staff known to have a phobia of dogs are given restricted access to the dog. In the above case the dogs are prohibited from roaming freely around the school without the supervision of the handler. If necessary, during busy times, such as breaks, the dog is kept in a safe and secure area away from any commotion. 	2	2	L	Designated Dog Handler
Coronavirus (COVID-19)					
Awareness of policies and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The headteacher ensures that all appropriate staff, pupils and their parents, are aware of and adhere to the school Covid risk assessment. The headteacher considers whether it is safe to resume therapy visits or sessions and postpones them where necessary, e.g. if the dog or their handler is unwell. 	2	2	L	Headteacher Deputy Headteacher All Staff

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Dogs health and welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The handler is aware of the symptoms that coronavirus could present in dogs and monitors the dog's health at all times. If the dog becomes unwell whilst at the school, the handler calls the vet and keeps the dog away from pupils, staff and any members of the public. Gloves and a face covering are worn when caring for the dog. If coronavirus is suspected, the handler arranges a test with the vet. Visits and sessions are postponed if the dog is unwell or has tested positive for coronavirus, and the dog is kept at its designated home until it has recovered. If the handler presents symptoms of coronavirus or tests positive, they remain at home with the dog for 5 days and restrict contact with the dog as much as possible. If they must interact with the dog, they wear a face covering and gloves. Visits and sessions resume only when all of the following criteria apply: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The dog has not shown symptoms consistent with those of coronavirus for at least 72 hours without medical management It has been 14 days since the dog's last positive test It has been 10 days since the handler's symptoms began or, if no symptoms were present, 10 days since their positive test result The dog is not wiped or sprayed with any disinfectants or chemicals that are not approved for use on animals. Staff understand that coronavirus is not known to transfer via animal fur. Face coverings are not put on the dog as this can cause harm. The dog is not allowed to lick or give 'kisses' to any individuals. 	3	2	M	
Infection control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact with the dog is limited only to those participating in the session or visit. Sessions are limited to a number of pupils determined by the headteacher and the risk assessment. Where possible, groups are organised in line with the existing pupil bubbles used in school. 				

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The handler and all participants wear a face covering throughout the duration of the visit or session. • Before and after each contact with the dog, the handler and all individuals wash their hands – individuals do not touch any part of their face with unwashed hands. • Individuals who are, or have been, displaying symptoms of coronavirus do not come into contact with the dog until they have fully recovered. • Individuals who have weakened immune systems are advised to stay away from the dog; however, if contact is necessary, they wear a face covering at all times. • The handler and the dog stay six feet away from others where possible – the allocated room is adjusted to accommodate this. • The handler and the dog do not move around the school during busy times and stay within their allocated room as much as possible. • Where possible, the windows of the allocated room are kept open to improve air flow. • All allocated rooms are cleaned before and after use for therapy visits and sessions. • The dog's lead, collar, harness and other supplies are disinfected regularly. • Items that are usually handled by multiple people, e.g. toys and blankets, are not used during sessions or visits. • Individuals are not permitted to handle objects that could go in the dog's mouth, e.g. treats or toys. 				
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St Matthias Primary School Malvern –School Dog Risk Assessment

RISK MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT (to be completed by assessor)		
School Dog Risk Assessment	Reference No:	100
St Matthias CE Primary School Malvern	Lead Assessor's Name & signature	Phil Berry
 Ginnie Beale Headteacher	AUTHORISING HEAD'S SIGNATURE	 Ginnie Beale
Overall Risk Rating = Low	Risk Assessment Date	11/03/2024
	Review Date	11/03/2025

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