

James Cambell Primary School

School Dog Policy and Risk Assessment

Approved by: Mr Joe Wilson
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The aim of introducing a school dog

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

Benefits of having a school dog:

- Pupil wellbeing
 - Children can empathise with animals in a way that they can't always with other humans and this develops their emotional well-being
 - Spending time with an animal improves self-esteem and lifts mood
 - Dogs can also teach compassion and respect for other living things as well as relieving anxiety
- Physical
 - Improved behaviour and concentration
 - Reduced stress and improved self-esteem
 - Increase levels of dopamine and serotonin
 - Interaction with dogs reduces blood pressure, provides tactile stimulation, gives motivation to move and improves fitness and stimulates the senses
- Social
 - A dog provides a positive mutual topic for discussion
 - Encourages responsibility
 - Improves wellbeing and boosts interaction with others
 - Supports the development of cooperative play
 - Teaches children to nurture and respect life
- Academic
 - Companionship with a dog stimulates memory & problem-solving
 - School dogs have been proven to improve attendance
 - Motivating pupils to think and to learn, as most children have a high level of natural interest in, enthusiasm for and enjoyment of animals
 - Reading to dogs has been proven to help children develop literacy skills and build confidence, through both the calming effect the dog's presence has on children as well as the fact that a dog will listen to children read without being judgemental or critical. This comforting environment helps to nurture children's enthusiasm for reading and provides them with the confidence to read aloud.

It is accepted that interacting with a school dog is not appropriate for all children, including those with allergies or a phobia of dogs. We also understand that some parents may prefer for their child not to interact with the school dog.

Parents are invited to complete an online form to state that they do not wish their child to have any interaction with the school dogs. <https://forms.office.com/e/91z9wScB2n>

Parents will also be notified and consent sought for any pupils where there will planned interaction with the school dog.

Staff will also have the opportunity of notifying that they do not wish to interact with the dog: <https://forms.office.com/e/f4vyR9FFKm>

School Policy

At James Cambell Primary School we will always prioritise the safety of pupils, staff and animals by:

- Considering the needs of pupils as a priority at all times - ensuring our pupils' physical safety and emotional wellbeing is prioritised when considering any interaction with the school dog
- Managing any risks associated with a school dog through a thorough risk assessment which identifies a list of control measures taken to limit risks (see below)
- Ensuring animal welfare is maintained at all times

Context:

- The school dog is owned and cared for by Miss Breakwell.
- All costs associated with caring for the school dog will be covered by Miss Brekawell
- The dog is a working cocker spaniel. Working cocker spaniels are an intelligent breed that respond well to training. They have gentle temperaments and are known to be good with children and are very sociable and friendly. They have fairly short hair and do not moult excessively.

Day-to-day Management

The dog will:

- Not be allowed in school if he is unwell
- Be kept on a lead when moving between classrooms or on a walk
- Be under the full control and supervision of an adult at all times
- Will be kept in 6D classroom (used for intervention) with a quiet area for resting
- Will also interact with pupils in the Year 3 and 4 courtyard area, with direct supervision
- Be fully trained to go into a crate
- Have had all vaccinations, flea and worm treatments

Our pupils will:

- Not have sole responsibility for, or be left alone with, the dog

- Meet the dog in a group of no more than three children, following 'approach, ask, pet, goodbye'
- Not bring food into the dog's vicinity
- Be reminded of what is appropriate behaviour around the dog every time they meet him:
 - Always remain calm
 - Be gentle
 - Do not put your face near the dog's face
 - Do not disturb a dog that is eating or sleeping
 - Always approach the dog standing up
 - Do not feed the dog

The pupils and adults will also learn about how dogs express their feelings through their body language. Growling or baring of teeth indicates that the dog feels threatened or angry. 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 signs, he should immediately be removed from that particular situation or environment.

Health and safety principles

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. The Governors have the right to refuse entry to the dog.

Children and adults will always wash their hands or use hand sanitiser after handling the dog.

Any dog excrement will be cleared up immediately and disposed of appropriately by the adult in charge of the dog at the time. Children must never be allowed to do this.

In the very unlikely event that a bit should occur (even playfully):

- 1) Parents will be contacted immediately.
- 2) The wound will be cleaned and covered with a sterile, non-sticky dressing.
- 3) The child/adult will be released for medical attention.
- 4) Relevant members of staff will be informed.
- 5) A full investigation will take place.
- 6) The suitability of having a dog will be reassessed by the Headteacher.

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, pupils, parents and visitors are required to abide by this policy.
- The children will be supported in 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.

Meet our school dog: Ralphie

Meet Ralphie!

- Ralphie is owned by, and lives with, Miss Breakwell and her family.
- Ralphie is a working cocker spaniel. He is 'Kennel Club registered' and his parents were both working cocker spaniels with a lovely temperament.
- Working cocker spaniels are a very sociable breed. They are intelligent and very willing to learn.
- Ralphie was born on March 21st and joined Miss Breakwell's home when he was 8 weeks old. He is now 7 months old. He has spent a lot of time with Miss Breakwell's 3 stepchildren who are 5, 11 and 13 years old as well as friends' children who range from 1 year old onwards. He has also spent a lot of time in the park meeting other people and dogs. He is very friendly to everyone!
- Ralphie has participated in puppy training classes. He is able to follow a range of instructions including sit, down, no, stay and back. When you say 'Ralphie, here' Ralphie will come.
- Ralphie is a working type cocker spaniel, which is a breed that does not shed lots of hair.
- Ralphie is still a puppy and has a lot of energy!



Frequently Asked Questions

We hope that the FAQs below will help to answer some of your questions and that you will join us in welcoming Ralphie to James Cambell Primary School and embrace all that he can offer the school.

The school has a 'no dogs' policy

Our school does have a 'no dogs' policy and dogs are not allowed anywhere on the school site. However, there is a risk assessment in place for Ralphie and the school has a policy specifically for him. Ralphie has undergone training and will be on a lead or under control at all times when moving around the school property. He will always be accompanied by an adult who knows him well and children's time with him will be carefully monitored and supervised.

What will the school dog do on a day-to-day basis?

Ralphie will be supporting a variety of pupils during his time at James Cambell. He will specifically work with some of our pupils who have additional needs, where research has shown that interactions with a dog can have a very positive effect. In the future, Ralphie may be trained to sit and listen to children read. **He may eventually attend classes to support learning where appropriate e.g. to writing instructions if learning about how to care for a pet etc.**

Safety around the dog

Children will only have contact with the dog with a supervised adult. Ralphie will generally be in one room or in an outdoor area which is restricted to children. When moving around the school, he will be under strict control or on a lead.

What about the children who have allergies around a dog?

Ralphie is a cocker spaniel which is a low moulting breed. Parents and staff will be asked to inform the school if their child is allergic and if so we will work with the family to ensure that the child doesn't have contact with him if this is their wish.

What about the children/ staff who have a fear for dogs?

Parents will have the option to 'opt out' of their child having any 1:1 interaction with Ralphie. It may be that your child has a phobia but over time would like to have some interaction. If so, we can be aware and work with parents/children to build up their confidence so that they feel safe.

Health and well-being of the dog.

Ralphie will receive all vaccinations, be wormed, groomed and cared for. Pet insurance is in place to insure if he is ill the dog will receive immediate medical attention.

Hygiene

There will be a designated area for the dog to toilet if necessary which will be away from the children. The staff in charge of the dog will ensure that this is cleared away appropriately. If the school dog toilets when out on the school site, staff members will clear this away appropriately leaving no trace on the ground, cleaning the area with disinfectant if needed. If children have stroked the dog, they will be taught to wash their hands afterwards.

What happens if the dog is ill?

If Ralphie were to be taken ill, he would not attend school and would be cared for at home until it was fit to return to school. Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you have any questions that have not been covered above.

Risk Assessment

This risk assessment will be reviewed annually.

These risk assessments are based on a generic model These guidelines cannot be expected to cover all eventualities

Step 1 Identify the Hazards	Step 2 Who might be harmed & how?	Step 3 Control measures - What are we doing to minimise the risk?	Step 4 Member of staff responsible for control measure	Risk rating Low/Medium/High
Allergies	If a child is allergic to dogs they could become unwell	<p>If a child has an allergy the school dog will not come into contact with that child</p> <p>The school dog is low shedding, limiting the allergens</p> <p>Medical records used to list pupils identified as having an allergy and not to have contact with dog</p> <p>Children to wash hands after contact with dog</p> <p>Dog bedding regularly washed to reduce dust</p> <p>Visitors advised dog is in the school and removed if requested</p> <p>All parents aware dog is in school</p>	Office team (responsible for allergy information) and supervising adult	Low
Jumping up/scratching	If a dog becomes excited there is a danger that they could jump up and knock a child over or leave a scratch mark	<p>Ensure that children and adults do not interact with the school dog without supervision</p> <p>Dog kept on lead and harness at all times, outside of office area</p> <p>The school dog will be kept in 6D classroom and the Y3/4 courtyard area (which is not part of the children's playground).</p> <p>When people come to interact with him or under lead control by an authorised adult</p> <p>Pupils who interact with the dog will be taught how to read dog behaviour and the impact of their actions.</p> <p>Pupils will be taught what to do to prevent the dog from running after them. (i.e. stand still with arms crossed over their bodies –'standing tall like a tree')</p>	CB and supervising adult	Medium

		Dog trained not to jump up Dog's nails to be kept clipped		
School dog biting a child or adult	Child or adult could be hurt if a dog bites	The school dog is a friendly, sociable breed. The school dog is trained not to bite. When the dog is approached in the correct way there is very limited danger. If the school dog were to bite anyone, the school dog would no longer visit the school site and have interactions with pupils.	CB and supervising adult	Low
Dog Phobia	Pupils and staff who are afraid of dogs becoming distressed by being in proximity to the school dog	Parents will be asked to inform the school if their child is scared to be in close contact with the dog. Parents also offered the option of their child having no close contact. A list of any children who should not interact with the dog will be kept by the office staff. Staff will also have the option to 'opt out' of any interaction with the dog Contact with dog will always be made clear that it is optional Visitors will be advised that a dog is in the school. Staff to supervise dog at all times and be sensitive to all children's reactions Notice on school website.	CB, Office team	Low
Dog pulling on lead	Pupils / staff Someone being pulled over	Dog will wear harness when walking. If students are to hold the lead, a training lead will be added to harness to support this. Always with adult supervision	CB, Supervising adult	Low
Noise - barking	Disruption to lessons Pupils who cannot cope with noise	Dog has been trained not to bark. If the dog begins barking, pupils will be removed and dog will have a chance to rest quietly.	Supervising adult	Low
Fire drill -	Member of staff, dog	The school dog will be under	Supervising	Low

evacuation of dog		<p>the supervision of a member of staff at all times - supervising adult will accompany dog to gathering point on field</p> <p>Drills carried out so the dog is used to the alarm and evacuation procedures.</p>	adult	
Hygiene - cleaning hands after interacting with the school dog	If hands are not cleaned children/adults could become unwell	<p>All adults and children will clean their hands after interaction with the school dog.</p> <p>Anti-bacterial gel available in all classrooms, offices and staffroom.</p>	Supervising adult	Low
Destruction of materials	If allowed a dog may chew/destroy some school materials/resources	<p>The school dog will be under close control at all times</p> <p>The school dog will have his own toys to play with and normal school resources will be removed</p> <p>The school dog has been taught a 'leave it' command</p>	CB and supervising adult	Low
Use of rewards/treats	Children and adults could be harmed if a dog is over excited when receiving a reward/treat	<p>Adults and children are reminded to wash their hands.</p> <p>Treats will only be given to the school dog with authorisation</p>	CB and supervising adult	Low
Worms/fleas	If a dog is not treated for worms there is a danger that germs can be transferred to humans	The school dog will be treated monthly for worms and fleas	CB	Low
Faeces	If a child/adult come into contact with dog faeces some germs could be transferred	<p>The school dog will be 'taught' to go to the toilet in a specific site, not accessible to pupils. This site will be behind the staff room. Faeces safely disposed of in bags and immediately put in large lidded bins next to staff room.</p> <p>The school dog will only be walked under supervision</p> <p>No child will be asked to pick up the dog's faeces, this will always be undertaken by the adult in supervision</p> <p>In the unlikely event that a child finds faeces (of any sort) on the school field/playground they will report it to an adult</p>	CB and supervising adult	Low

Children's access to school dog's food/treats	If a child has access dog treats/food and eats some they could become unwell	The dog will not eat meals on site. All of the school dog's treats will be kept out of child's reach No child will be allowed to enter the school dog's area without authorisation	CB	Low
Contact with food preparation areas	If a dog enters a food preparation area this could be unhygienic	The school dog will be under close control or in a contained area or on a lead at all times around school He will never enter the school kitchen	Supervising adult	Low
The dog gets loose from office area, his crate or from his lead.	Injury to children or adults, destruction of property, pupils frightened	Supervising adult will immediately retrieve dog. Dog trained to have good recall and be gentle when interacting with children.	Supervising adult	Low
Other dogs (on and off site)	If a dog encounters another dog they may become boisterous	No other dogs will be allowed on the school premises	SLT	Low
Financial cost of the dog's upkeep	School unable to afford ongoing cost of the dog's day-to-day upkeep or medical bills	The dog is the financial responsibility of Miss Breakwell. She is financially responsible for all his care and day-to-day costs. The dog is the responsibility of Miss Breakwell outside of school hours. As the dog gets older, if he is suitable, he may be trained as a 'pets as therapy' dog. If this is the case, then the school may pay a contribution towards these additional training costs.	CB	Low
Claim is made against school re: behaviour of the dog A third party could sue the school for injury caused by the dog.	School not adequately covered financially	Miss Breakwell has insured the dog's medical needs. Liability insurance will be held and will be renewed annually. The certificates are kept by Mrs Stevens.	CB, Mrs Stevens	Low

Letter to parents

Dear Parents/Carers,

We are writing to inform you that we will soon be adding a new member to our James Cambell community. During the second part of Autumn Term, we will be welcoming a school dog who will be attending James Cambell on a regular basis to work with our pupils.

After careful consideration, we have chosen a working cocker spaniel named Ralphie. Ralphie is a very friendly, 7 month old puppy who belongs to Miss Breakwell, our Deputy Headteacher. Ralphie joined Miss Breakwell's family when he was 8 weeks old. He has participated in puppy training classes and grown up around Miss Breakwell's stepchildren, the youngest being 5 years old.

We have chosen a cocker spaniel for the following reasons:

- Low moulting breed - meaning there is a reduced risk of allergic reactions
- Cocker spaniels are known for being child-friendly, gentle mannered and affectionate
- The breed is known to be intelligent and responds excellently to training

We wish to reassure parents that we have undertaken a significant amount of research into bringing a school dog into our James Cambell family including discussions with local schools who have a school dog established. We believe there will be many benefits to having a school dog including:

- A calming effect on pupils, particularly those with behavioural or learning difficulties
- Encouraging expression and participation
- Fostering a sense of responsibility
- Increasing enthusiasm for and enjoyment of animals
- Teaching children to nurture and respect life
- Helping children with additional needs to develop socially and support wellbeing
- Helping children build confidence
- Improving attendance

Ralphie will be joining James Cambell one day a week and will begin working with a small number of pupils. **These pupils' parents will be contacted directly and permission will be sought for Ralphie to interact with them.** During the day, Ralphie will be kept in 6D classroom which is a classroom used for intervention. He will also spend time with children in the Year 3 and 4 courtyard area (which is separate from the playground). He will be supervised by an adult at all times. A suitable bed, food, water and cleaning supplies will be held for Ralphie.

If Ralphie is moving around the school, he will have a short lead to ensure he is controlled at all times. Ralphie will be trained to go to the toilet in a specific place that pupils cannot access and pupils will never be expected to clean up any dog mess.

We understand that parents may have some concerns regarding bringing a school dog onto the premises. We have conducted a full risk assessment which is on the school website and we have also answered a list of FAQs below.

We understand that interacting with a school dog is not appropriate for all children, including those with allergies or a phobia of dogs. We also understand that some parents may prefer for their child not to interact with a dog. Parents are invited to complete an online form to state that they **do not wish** their child to have any interaction with the school dogs. Please complete the form here: <https://forms.office.com/e/91z9wScB2n>

We will be recruiting a volunteer to help to look after Ralphie whilst he is on the school site. If you are interested in this role, please look out for a letter from Miss Breakwell that will be circulated today.

We hope you will join us in welcoming Ralphie to our school and embrace all he has to offer to our community.

Kind regards,

[Whoever letter is from]

FAQs

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What will the school dog do on a day-to-day basis?

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Safety around the dog

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What about the children who have allergies around a dog?

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Health and well-being of the dog.

Ralphie will receive all vaccinations, be wormed, groomed and cared for. Pet insurance is in place to insure if he is ill the dog will receive immediate medical attention.

Hygiene

There will be a designated area for the dog to toilet if necessary which will be away from the children. The staff in charge of the dog will ensure that this is cleared away appropriately. If the school dog toilets when out on the school site, staff members will clear this away appropriately leaving no trace on the ground, cleaning the area with disinfectant if needed. If children have stroked the dog, they will be taught to wash their hands afterwards.

What happens if the dog is ill?

If Ralphie were to be taken ill, he would not attend school and would be cared for at home until it was fit to return to school. Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you have any questions that have not been covered above.

Rules to share with pupils



Ralphie rules!



dog



Rules

Ready

- Always stay calm around Ralphie
- Be gentle with your hands
- Always approach Ralphie standing up



calm



kind



hands

Respectful

- Do not put your face near Ralphie's face
- Don't touch Ralphie if he's eating or sleeping

Safe

- Clean your hands before and after meeting Ralphie
- Don't feed anything to Ralphie



not

CALM and RELAXED? or SHUT DOWN?



Body Language References

eileenanddogs.com/2013/11/21/shut-down-dogs-part-2/
<https://paws4udogs.wordpress.com/2013/08/12/belly-rub-redux/>
 Illustrations ©2016 Lili Chin

signals



ALERT



SCARED



"PLEASE..."



"PEACE!"



"PEACE!"



"PEACE!"



I'LL BE NO THREAT



I'LL BE NO THREAT



I'LL BE NO THREAT



BEING FRIENDLY



LET'S PLAY!



SUBMISSION



CUTE HARMLESS PUPPY