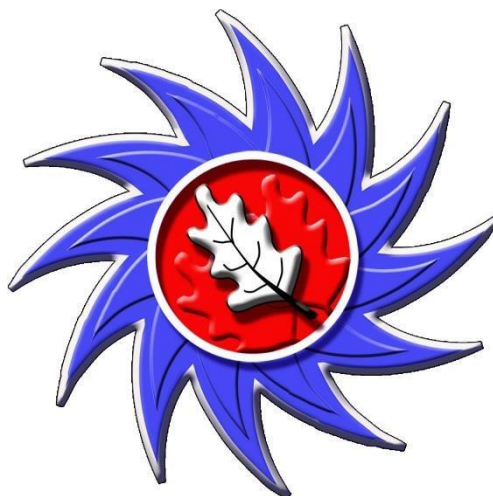


# ACKLAM GRANGE SCHOOL



## School Dog Policy

	Term	Year
Last Review Date/Policy Adopted	Autumn	2023-2024
Next Review Date	Autumn	2025-2026
Lead	Mrs L Gowland	

This school is an academy within The Legacy Learning Trust.



## **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.



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

Of course 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.

## **School Policy**

The dog is owned by Mrs Claire Martin our Student Welfare Officer and is a family pet. The dog is a Working Spaniel called Holly, chosen as they are known to be easily trainable and for their good nature.

In 2018, The Chair of the Local Council, then Mr Taylor, agreed that the school could have a dog. Staff were informed, through staff briefing, and also parents were informed.

A risk assessment was produced and this is reviewed annually.

Staff, visitors and students known to have allergic reactions to dogs must not go near the dog.

If the dog is ill she will not be allowed into school.

The dog will be kept on a lead until fully trained when moving between classrooms or on a walk and will be under the full control and supervision of an adult.

Holly has her own timetable that is placed on the school system (SIMS) so that her whereabouts is known at all times. During any evacuations from school the timetabled member of staff is responsible for escorting her to the appropriate muster point (Hand over to Support Staff Muster Point).

Students must never be left alone with the dog and there must be appropriate adult supervision at all times when the dog is present with students.

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 too roughly with the dog.

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 baring 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 she should be immediately removed from that particular situation or environment.

Children should not feed, or eat close to the dog.

Children should always wash their hands after coming into contact with the dog.

Any dog foul will be cleaned immediately and disposed of appropriately by an adult.

Any deliberate attempt to harm the school dog will result in disciplinary action as per the school behaviour policy.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

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

The Headteacher is responsible for implementing this policy. The Headteacher may delegate this responsibility to a Deputy Head.

Teachers and staff are required to abide by this policy.

The Health and Safety Officer is responsible for providing information, advice and guidance as and when required.

### **What are the benefits of a school dog?**

- A calming effect on students, particularly those with behavioural or learning difficulties.
- Encouraging expression and participation in more withdrawn children.
- Fostering a sense of responsibility.
- Improved behaviour, attendance and concentration, reduced stress and improved self-esteem
- Motivating students to think and to learn, as most children have a high level of natural interest in, enthusiasm for, and enjoyment of animals.
- Encouraging respect and thereby improving student relationships with each other, parents and teachers.
- Helping work undertaken with the most vulnerable students, and educational improvements with lower achievers.
- Helping children build confidence in reading:-  
<http://www.theguardian.com/education/2011/feb/28/dogs-listen-to-children-reading>
- Cognitive – companionship with a dog stimulates memory, problem-solving and game-playing
- Physical – interaction with a furry friend reduces blood pressure, provides tactile stimulation, assists with pain management, gives motivation to move, walk and stimulates the senses.
- Emotional – a school dog improves self-esteem, acceptance from others and lifts mood, often provoking laughter and fun. Dogs can also teach compassion and respect for other living things as well as relieving anxiety.
- Social – a dog provides a positive mutual topic for discussion, encourages responsibility, wellbeing and focused interaction with others.
- Environmental – a dog in a school increases the sense of a family environment, with all of the above benefits continuing long after the school day is over.

### **How will the school plan for this?**

- A full risk assessment and policy will be in place.
- Parents and staff will be informed of the presence of a school dog on sight and opportunity given to inform us of any allergy or fear of dogs.
- All contact with children will be carefully planned and students will not be left unsupervised with the dog.
- When not working, the dog will be based in one of the school offices or a classroom in ARC services.

### **What about allergies?**

- All areas of the school are vacuumed and surfaces are wiped down daily.
- Movement around the school will be controlled to ensure all staff will be fully aware of where the dog will be to ensure anyone that doesn't want contact with the dog can be reassured.
- Any student working with or petting the dog will wash their hands before returning to class.
- First aid and current school policies should be followed if a student presented with an allergy following contact with the dog and their name should then be added to the list for staff.
- The dog will be groomed regularly to minimise the risks of allergy occurring.

### **No Dogs Policy**

The school site has a 'no dogs' policy (except for guide dogs) and this will remain in place with the exception of Holly. Holly is training to be a Pets as Therapy dog, she has been risk assessed and will continue to be monitored closely in order to keep everyone (including Holly) safe. She will be on a lead at all times when moving around the school property and will always be accompanied by a trained member of staff.