



Inspire - Educate - Motivate

School Wellbeing Dog - Questions and Answers

Further information and answers to any initial questions or concerns you may have :

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

In the mornings, where possible (and once he is old enough), the dog will be around at the school gate with the staff before school to welcome children. All children will have the opportunity over time to have quality time with the dog and learn how to care for it. He will also be available to calm unsettled children, walk around the school on a lead with Mrs Littlewood / and other staff members at appropriate times of the day so that it isn't a distraction to children's learning, and to go out on a lunchtime walk with a member of staff and in time a small group of children.

Safety around the dog:

A risk assessment is in place and available to view on our website. The school will have additional insurance to cover having a school dog on site. If Mrs Littlewood is at a meeting or off-site for any reason, there will be a number of designated staff who have agreed to have responsibility to support the dog in her absence.

Children will only have contact with the dog with a supervised adult. When moving around the school, the dog will always be on a lead. Children will receive training when the dog is introduced into the school setting to teach them how to behave safely around a dog. The dog will be based in the Head's office or the school office and if an adult isn't in the room it will be safely in its crate. There will be clear displays at the front entrance indicating the school has a school dog and signs around the school indicating where the dog is and if he is resting. The dog will always wear a yellow coat when working in the school.

Can I bring my dog into the schoolyard?

Dogs are not allowed on-site unless they are assistance dogs/working dogs. The school dog will be fully trained to be a Well-Being dog and therefore follows the same rules as a working dog.

What about the children who have allergies around a dog?

Any child with allergies will not be expected to work with the dog and the dog will also not work in areas of the school where those children are based. Research shows that washing their hands after working with a dog should help with allergies. Furthermore, research also shows that for children with allergies, simply standing back; keeping their distance and having limited contact with the dog will be sufficient. This exposure may help to reduce the risk of allergic disease develop during childhood.

The dog will be brushed, bathed and groomed regular, both at home by Mrs Littlewood and by a dog groomer. This will reduce the risk of allergens. He will also be fed on a premium diet, as recommended by his breeder. This also reduces dander problems in dogs making them more hypoallergenic.

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

One of the aims of introducing a dog into the school is to reduce the number of children who have a fear for dogs by teaching them how to care and behave safely around them. If a child has a fear for dogs we will ask parents to inform us of this so that we can be aware and work with the parents/child with advice and support from the dog trainer to build up their confidence so that they feel safe.

Health and well-being of the dog

The dog will receive all vaccinations, be wormed, groomed and cared for. The school will have pet insurance to ensure if he is ill the dog will receive immediate medical attention. The dog will be registered with a local vet and receive regular checkups.

Possible Injury Examples are biting and scratching.

The correct socialization of any dog is essential. The school will work closely with both the breeder in the first instance and then the trainer to ensure correct socialization of the dog. The dog will attend puppy training sessions to ensure a high level of training.

No child will have contact with the dog unless this is under the direct supervision of an adult.

Hygiene:

There will be a designated area for the dog to be toilet trained which will be away from the children and will be located in the car park. In the early stages of training if the dog was to have an accident this would be cleared up immediately by a member of staff who is happy to do so with suitable cleaning products. Children will never be asked to handle/ pick up any dog mess. If children have stroked the dog, they will be taught to wash their hands afterwards.

What happens if the dog is ill?

If the dog were to be taken ill, it would not attend school and would be cared for at home until it was fit to return to school.

Please don't hesitate to contact the school if you have any questions that have not been covered above.

Thank you in advance for supporting us in introducing a school dog at Oldcastle. We are confident the children are going to love having him as a member of our school community.