



**THE DISTRICT**  
CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

# Dogs/Pets on School Grounds Policy

<b>Chair</b>	Mr F Maguire
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs L Shelford
<b>Date adopted:</b> Summer 2023	<b>Review Date:</b> Summer 2026

*The caring path to achievement, reflecting the values of Christ*

**“I am the vine; you are the branches.” John 15:5**

Just as the branches need the vine to grow and bear good fruits, so we need each other. Within the District family, each person is valued and loved, reaching out throughout our school, homes, families and the wider community for a stronger future. Our Christian vision statement permeates through everything we do at The District and this policy was developed to reflect togetherness, best value and creating a sense of belonging.

**1. Aims**

This policy is intended to ensure that our children, staff, contractors and visitors are kept safe whilst on the school site

**2. Policy Statement**

The District CE Primary School strongly discourages dogs on the school site or from tying them up at the school entrance.

No Dogs Allowed signs are displayed on the school gates. Dogs are not permitted access onto school premises. The only exception to this is if they are working guide dogs/assistance dogs.

Trained dogs may be brought into school very occasionally as part of the curriculum or collective worship, following the completion of an appropriate risk assessment.

**3. Key Issues**

**Dogs being brought onto school grounds by parents/carers when dropping off or picking up pupils.**

Advice to those bringing dogs to school at drop off and pick up times.

Dogs are an important part of family life for many in the school community, and as such are often included in day-to-day activities such as walking children to and from school. However, others may find the presence of dogs in the playground and school grounds stressful, even frightening particularly with younger children, and even well-behaved dogs can behave unpredictably when placed in a busy, noisy and crowded environment.

Consequently, dogs **are not** permitted to access the school or any event within the school grounds. The school's priority is the safeguarding of its children and staff.

**Dogs being brought in the school as an educational activity for pupils**

Before bringing an animal onto the school premises during school hours, staff will obtain authorisation from the Headteacher.

Arrangements for animal visits should be made at least 48 hours in advance to ensure that parents are appropriately notified.

A letter must be sent to parents explaining the animal visit and asking families to advise the school of any allergies or fears the children may have. Staff must ensure that the animals are in good health and have had all the necessary immunisations or vaccinations. Where possible, evidence should be provided.

Any animal brought to school must remain under the control of the responsible adult at all times (member of staff the animal belongs to). The animal should be restrained on a lead or in a suitable carrier. This applies to days when school is in session, prior to the start of school and any time after the school day, whenever the animal is on the school premises.

No wild animals or protected animals will be purposely brought to the building or on school grounds by anyone other than an authorised or licensed animal handler. There will be no physical contact between the animal and pupils unless it is an integral part of the learning with prior approval received from the Headteacher. Should any pupil or adult be scratched or bitten by an animal at school, first aid must be administered immediately and in the case of a pupil, parents will be called.

### **Children with Medical Concerns Health**

Issues must be considered when assessing the appropriateness of animals in the classroom. Prior to the consideration of the introduction of an animal to the classroom, the teacher should review the medical notes of the pupils in their class to ensure there is no conflict.

It is the policy of the school to consider the safety, health and well-being of every pupil when making decisions regarding the introduction of animals to the classroom. When there is a conflict in this area, the Headteacher will confer with the staff member to find an agreeable solution to the matter in consultation with others, e.g., the parents and others as appropriate. If pupils have petted an animal, it is essential that they wash their hands after the activity and that this is supervised to ensure that it is thorough.

### **Responsibility**

The owner or handler of any animal, including a service animal, is responsible for the animal at all times and must take responsibility in the event of any harm accidentally or otherwise that befalls a child. All staff must complete a risk assessment form prior to the introduction of an animal in the classroom which must be signed off by the Headteacher.

### **The Care and Humane Treatment of Animals**

Animals within the school will be handled, treated, and cared for in a humane manner. Enclosures must be appropriate to the animal, and it is the responsibility of the staff member to ensure that the animal has sufficient food, water and a comfortable environment to reduce the stress for the animal. Habitats must be maintained and cleaned by staff, not pupils.

### **Arrangements**

It is important that suitable arrangements are in place prior to any dog being brought into the school.

- Agreement should be sought from the school Headteacher and parents should be notified of the intention to bring a dog into the classroom at least 48 hours prior to the event so letters can be sent home – the letter should ask about allergies and fears.
- A risk assessment should be carried out prior to the visit of any dog into the classroom.
- Allergic reactions cannot be discounted from handling dogs, or just from being near them.

- Pupils known to have allergic reactions to dogs must have their access restricted.
- Consideration should be given to the temperament and characteristics of the breed of dog being brought in, including the size of the dog and its age. You may wish to consult [www.thekennelclubbreedstandards](http://www.thekennelclubbreedstandards) if you have any concerns as to the suitability of a particular breed of dog.
- Dogs that are ill must not be brought into schools.
- Dogs must be kept on a lead at all times and under the full control and supervision of their owner.
- Pupils must never be left alone with dogs and there must be appropriate adult supervision at all times – this should be the dog's owner.
- Prior to the visit, pupils should be reminded of what is appropriate behaviour around dogs.
- Pupils are likely to become excited and it is important that they react calmly and carefully around the dog(s). They should not make sudden movements and must never stare into a dog's eyes as this could be threatening for the dog. Pupils should be told not to put their face near a dog and should always approach it standing up.
- Pupils should be told never to go near or disturb a dog that is sleeping or eating.
- Pupils must not be allowed to play too roughly with the dog.
- Consider the number of pupils who would be patting/stroking or meeting the dog. A large number of pupils could cause the dog to become nervous and agitated. On-going monitoring of the situation is vital. Since dogs cannot speak, the only way they can be understood is through their body language. Growling or baring of teeth indicates 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. Dogs displaying any of these warning signs should be immediately removed from the environment.
- Pupils should not feed or eat close to the dogs.
- Pupils should always wash their hands after handling a dog

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Governors have a responsibility to ensure that the school has a written policy for pets and dogs on site or in the school.

The Headteacher is responsible for developing this guidance into a school policy and implementing it. 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.