| SCHOOL DOG | | | |
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| **Review frequency:** | Annually | **Review date:** | May 2020 |
| **Governing committee responsible:** | | SEC | |
| **Governor approval:** | October 2019 | **Website:** | Yes |
| **Staff responsible:** | MB, A Mc, AB | **Date produced:** | Oct 2019 |

## Background

The Governing Body, Senior Leadership Team and Learning Support Team have considered the possibility of having a school dog in school.

Our findings are that schools that have a School Dog, find that they assist in:

- Teaching responsibility and respect;
- Teaching empathy, non-violence and in some cases how to love and have patience;
- Motivating children who are not that attentive;
- Increasing social skills and self-esteem;
- Increasing confidence around dogs and in general;
- Improvement in attendance rates;
- Helping to calm behaviour down – both in classrooms and in a1:1 situation;
- Increasing literacy skills – children begin to enjoy reading and want to read aloud.

Governing Body approval was granted in October 2019, for a trial of a school dog.

It is recognised that animals are not generally allowed in either the school building or grounds, unless a full risk assessment has been undertaken, that considers the behaviour and characteristics of the animal(s). This is the reason why dogs belonging to parents and carers are not allowed on the school site. A full risk assessment has however been undertaken for the school dog/puppy and is attached to this document. This will be reviewed when the puppy is introduced to school, and then again on a regular basis.

It is accepted that interacting with a dog may not be appropriate for all children, but that for the majority it has the potential to provide many positive benefits. Any parent or carer who does not wish their child to interact with the dog/puppy will be asked to inform Mrs Mac of their wishes – an opportunity to do this will be offered through the parent app . We will then ensure that this is considered and that these children do not have any contact with the dog at any time. A list of these children will be kept in the school office.

## Context

The dog will:

- Be owned by Mrs Barlow and her family.
- Be introduced to school as a puppy and will 'grow' up with Mrs Barlow in school.
- 'Live' in Mrs Barlow's room, where it will have its bed, water, etc. it will also spend time in Mrs Mac's room and Mrs Burrow's room. These will be the school dog's main bases.
- Always be kept on a lead when moving around school.
- Have a dedicated area to relieve itself in an area that children do not access.
- Costs associated with the dog, including veterinary costs will be covered by Mrs Barlow
- Visitors and pupils will be informed of times when the dog will be present.
- Any parent or carer who does not wish their child to interact with the dog/puppy will be asked to inform Mrs Mac of their wishes.

## The Role of the School Dog

### First 6 months

- During this time, the dog will be socialised by Mrs Barlow and will learn basic commands through positive reinforcement training.
- At the same time, Mrs Barlow will run a 'puppy club' for pupils, during which she will teach them how to interact with the school puppy and dogs in general. This will extend to teaching the children how to 'read' the body language of dogs and the golden rules to apply when meeting dogs.
- Those children that have been given permission by their parents, may as the dog gets older have basic interaction with the dog, albeit constantly supervised. This may form part of a reward system, or if an entire class has permission to spend time with the dog, Mrs Barlow may visit their classes occasionally.
- The dog will take part in Kennel Club Training – Good Citizen Dog Training Scheme
- If appropriate the dog may sometimes welcome children to school with Mrs Barlow /another staff member in the mornings.

### 6 to 12 months

- Mrs Barlow or other staff may run a lunchtime club where a handful of children will be allowed to walk with her/them and the dog (although the dog will have relieved itself prior to the walk). She would ensure that all children who would like to do this are given a 'fair' opportunity to do so.
- The dog will begin its more intensive training with Mrs Barlow,
- Begin interactive work with pupils, listening to readers etc.
- Work with nurture staff to support children in school

### It will be a requirement that the dog:

- Is regularly groomed and checked for signs of infection or other illness.
- Is diagnosed and treated by a vet if it is ill.
- Receives annual vaccinations.
- Is wormed monthly (as recommended by the Vet).
- Is treated with flea preventative treatment 3 monthly in the winter and every 8 weeks in the summer.
- Has its claws trimmed to reduce the risk of scratches.
- Is exercised before being allowed to work with children.

## Management Day to Day

It will be a requirement of the handler/owner to ensure that:

- The dog is physically fit before visiting the school environment;
- The dog is kept on a lead when moving through the school or school ground during school hours. The dog may be taken off the lead whilst in its penned area and during direct training with the handler;
- They/ an appropriate staff member remain with the dog at all times when it is not in its crate, or penned area;
- The dog is discouraged from jumping, scratching and licking;
- The dog is of an acceptable hygienic standard, i.e. not muddy, wet etc.
- Natural relief for the dog is taken in the designated area only. Waste will be disposed of by the handler, in bags deposited in a designated bin.

Pupils will:

- Never have sole responsibility for, or be left alone with the dog;
    - Directly 'work' or interact with the dog in a group of more than 3 children;

- Be reminded of what is appropriate behaviour around the dog through information assemblies/class discussions/group discussions

Appropriate behaviours are:

- Always remain calm around the dog
- Don't make sudden movements and be gentle
- Always approach the dog standing up
- Do not approach the dog when it is sleeping or eating
- Don't put your face near the dog
- Don't stare into the dog's eyes as this can be interpreted as a threat
- Do not eat close to the dog and never feed the dog.

- Learn about how dogs express their feelings through their body language. Growling or baring of teeth indicated that the dog is feeling threatened or angry. Flattened ears, tail lowered or between their legs, hiding behind their owner, whining or growling being signs that the dog is frightened or nervous. If the dog ever displays these warning signs it will immediately be removed from that situation or environment:
    - Be informed of the following health and safety principles:
    - Always wash their hands and/or use anti-bac gel after handling the dog
    - Any dog 'mess' will be cleaned up immediately by Mrs Barlow/ other appropriate staff member. This must never be done by children.

Should a bite (even playful) ever occur:

1. Parents or carers 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. All staff will be informed.
5. The dog will be removed from direct contact with any child pending the outcome of the full investigation and reassessment.
6. A full investigation into the circumstances will be led by the Head Teacher.
7. The suitability of the dog will be re-assessed by the Head Teacher and the Governing Body

| SCHOOLS RISK ASSESSMENT | Lancashire County Council |
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| PART A. ASSESSMENT DETAILS: | | | |
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| **Area/task/activity:** School Dog<br><br>**Location of activity:** Whole school, primarily Learning Support | | | |
| **School name:**<br>**Address & Contact details:** | St.Bernard's School<br>PR2 1RP | **Name of Person(s) undertaking Assessment:** | Mia Barlow |
| | | **Signature(s):** | |
| **Head Teacher (Name):** | Mia Barlow | **Date of Assessment:** | Oct 2019 |
| **Signature:** | | **Planned Review Date:**<br>**(Minimum 12 months)** | Oct 2020 |
| **How communicated to staff:** | Staff briefing & emails | **Date communicated to staff:** | |

| PART B1. HAZARD IDENTIFICATION AND CONTROL MEASURES: | | | |
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| **Step 1 Identify significant hazards** | **Step 2 Identify who might be harmed and how** | **Step 3 identify precautionary measures already in place** | |

| **List of significant hazards** (something with the potential to cause harm) **(1)** | **Who might be harmed? (2)** | **Type of harm (3)** | **Existing controls (4)**<br>(Actions already taken to control the risk) |
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| All below: | Pupils, teachers, adult helpers | All below: | ♦ Staff will always be referred to refer to the CLEAPSS document PS 55 'Bringing pets and other animals into schools' (04/02) when involved with the school dog. |

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| Poor hygiene | Pupils, teachers, adult helpers | Infection, illness | ♦ Cuts and abrasions on the exposed skin of hands and arms are covered before handling the school dog.<br>♦ Pupils and adults always wash their hands soon after handling the school dog (or coming into contact with the soil, bedding, water etc).<br>♦ Soap, anti-bacterial hand wash and paper towels for washing/drying hands hygienically are provided. |
| Animal behaviour | Pupils, teachers, adult helpers | Bites, scratches, snapping.<br>Dog becoming distressed and unpredictable. | ♦ Pupils instructed in handling the dog and closely supervised.<br>♦ Keep the dog away from the face.<br>♦ The dog will be regularly handled<br>♦ The dog will undergo puppy training as part of the Kennel Club Good Citizen Dog Scheme.<br>♦ Consideration of the breed/size of the dog being brought into school in relation to the age group of the children. Cavapoo dog from a reputable breeder.<br>♦ School has adequate Public Liability Insurance through the Local Authority.<br>♦ Parental consent required for pupils working in close contact with the dog on a regular basis. Parents can 'opt-out' of this provision. |
| Pupil behaviour | Pupils, teachers, adult helpers | Pupils becoming anxious/distressed, which may create a stressful situation for the dog and other pupils. | ♦ Permission collected for all pupils working in regular close-contact with the dog.<br>♦ Pupils informed of how to behave around dogs prior to the dog arriving in school.<br>♦ Small manageable groups of pupils with the dog at any one time.<br>♦ Pupils to be taught about the dog in assembly to ensure all pupils are briefed in advance of meeting the dog.<br>♦ Teachers/supervisors to be vigilant of pupils and what steps to take if a pupil does become anxious/distressed and agreed actions will be taken if the dog shows signs of stress. This will involve returning the dog to its school base. |

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| Allergies | Pupils, teachers, adult helpers | Skin rashes, irritation to the eyes and nose, breathing difficulties | ♦ Parents are asked to identify any pupils known to have allergic reactions to animals and these pupils have very restricted/ no access to the dog.<br>♦ Pupils and adults always wash their hands soon after handling any animal (or coming into contact with the soil, bedding, water, etc, in an animal's housing);<br>♦ Pupils are instructed not to rub their eyes before washing their hands and are closely supervised;<br>♦ Medical assistance will be sought where an allergic reaction does not subside once the animal and the afflicted person are kept apart.<br>♦ The dog breed chosen (cavapoo) will be hypoallergenic, which will reduce the risk of allergies. |
| Diseases and parasites | Pupils, teachers, adult helpers | Illness | ♦ Dog obtained from accredited and high-quality source.<br>♦ Dog must not be able to come into contact with wild rodents etc. due to the possibility of disease transmission.<br>♦ Arrangements in place for care during holidays / weekends<br>♦ Cages kept secure and clean for the wellbeing of the dog and the pupils and staff.<br>♦ The dog will be regular vaccinated and receive worming and flea treatment to reduce to risk of parasitic infection.<br>♦ Dog waste to be disposed of in sealed plastic bags with normal waste.<br>♦ The dog will be vaccinated annually, including against kennel cough.<br>♦ The dog will be given preventative flea, worm and tick medication regularly, with products bought from a veterinary surgery |
| Phobias | Pupils, teachers, adult helpers | Psychological stress | ♦ Parents are asked to identify any pupils to staff if known to have a phobia of dogs,<br>♦ Where there are pupils with phobias, they will be kept at a distance from the dog. Opportunity for systematic desensitisation will be provided by school staff with parental permission. |
| Suitable environment for the animal | Dog | | ♦ Adult handler is asked to identify and maintain optimum conditions for animal in question. The dog will have a crate in school .The dog will never be unsupervised by a staff member unless it is in the crate or enclosed area. |

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| Cuts/minor injury from defective housing | Dog | Physical | ♦ Housing will be maintained by MB and repairs will be done immediately. |
| Fire risk | Dog, Pupils, Staff | Physical | ♦ The dog will be led out of class with the staff and pupils. It will then be given to a nominated member of staff, who has no form/pupil responsibilities once outside.<br>♦ If in Nurture Support, the dog will be taken outside by the Nurture Support team and handed to the nominated member of staff<br>♦ All staff will be briefed on this arrangement and a fire drill will take place to check all procedures are working. |

I certify that the risk assessment above fully applies to the area/task/activity under assessment in St. Bernard's School

Signed: *Mia Barlow* Name: Mia Barlow Risk Assessor.