



The Priory School of Our Lady Of Walsingham



Well-Being Dog Policy

Reviewed by: Executive Committee

On:

Next review due: September 2024

Signature of Principal

Well-Being Dog Policy

This policy is consistent with the school's policies on Keeping Children Safe in Education, Health and Safety and Safeguarding.

Introduction

*“Every school should have a dog ... to reduce stress in the classroom”
Sir Anthony Seldon, Vice-Chancellor, University of Buckingham.*

Evidence shows that the presence of a well-being dog in school has certain beneficial effects for the students, such as helping to improve literacy skills, motivation, confidence and self-esteem. It also helps to foster a sense of responsibility.

Roles and Responsibilities

- The Principal is responsible for ensuring the school has a written policy for encouraging the presence of a dog for the benefit of the pupils. Any misgivings expressed by any parents concerning the presence of the dog will be carefully considered.
- The dog is owned by Mrs Soar, the Head of Senior School and Sixth Form. She is responsible for the health of the dog including regular veterinary care and relevant certification. If the dog is ever unwell, he will either not be brought into school or removed from the premises.
- The dog is a cockapoo named Charlie, fully house trained and accustomed to being in the presence of groups of pupils.
- This breed of dog is known to be hypoallergenic.
- It is well trained. The charity, Ability Dogs 4 Young People, have visited the school and offer free training for staff, pupils and the dog.
- The dog is always kept on a lead except when in the Sixth Form area.
- An adult is always present when the dog is in the company of children; in class situations, an adult is always present except where the Sixth Form are concerned.
- Any dog foul should be disposed of immediately; a remote area of the school grounds is designated for this purpose.
- Records and anecdotal evidence of the effect and impact of the school dog will be maintained in the school office, and the Principal and appropriate senior management personnel will be informed. The office will also keep a record of any incidents that arise involving the dog.
- The dog's whereabouts will be accountable at all times, including for fire evacuation procedures. In the event of an emergency evacuation Mrs Soar will be responsible for taking the dog to the fire assembly point.

Pupils

- The pupils will be taught protocols when in the presence of the dog: no rough treatment, the need to remain calm when in the dog's presence and to be mindful of the dog's own behavioural characteristics.
- No feeding of the dog or eating in the dog's presence.
- Pupils should always wash their hands after touching, stroking or handling the dog.
- Access to the dog is carefully managed and supervised and children do not need to have close contact with it. We hope to work closely with parents of children who are fearful of dogs to alleviate their fear and to teach them how to manage this.

Authorised by the Principal, Mr David EJJ Lloyd

September 2023