

# **St Mark's Catholic Primary School Halewood**



## **School Dog Risk Assessment**

**Includes,**

**Purpose and Introduction**

**Interaction with pupils and staff**

**Pupils and staff interaction with the school dog**

**Hygiene/Health**

**Activities involving the school dog, including walking**

**Current Risk Assessments completed:  
September 2019**

**Risk Assessment to be reviewed:  
September 2020**

## Purpose

1. **Dogs teach children responsibility.** Having to remember to feed, provide water and show support for a dog can give children a sense of importance and satisfaction that they can't get from school or other chores. The relationship that develops can be life-changing for a child and a great support system as they themselves continue to grow and develop.
2. **Dogs teach children patience.** Dogs do not always do as they are told first time!
3. **Dogs teach children compassion.** Just like humans, dogs feel emotions and pain. They are prone to injuries and infirmities of age during their relatively short lives.
4. **Dogs teach children about socialisation.** Like most of us, dogs are social animals who enjoy and need attention and affection. By learning how to interact with a dog, children learn how to better socialise with other children. If they can learn the social cues of a dog, then interacting with humans who can talk will be a walk in the park!
5. **Dogs are fun.** Last, but certainly not least, dogs are a lot of fun. They greet you with a wagging tail every day and can cheer you up even on your worst day.

## Introduction

St. Mark's school dog 'Buddy' lives with our Deputy Head Teacher Miss Ferguson, and her family. Buddy is a very caring and well behaved puppy who has the right temperament to become a real asset to St. Mark's Primary School.

Buddy's mother is a cocker spaniel and his father is a toy poodle. This makes Buddy half cocker spaniel and half poodle-this mix is known as a cockapoo

Buddy has public liability insurance, this means he can come into school. Buddy regularly visits the vets for check-ups. Whilst he is there they administer worm and flea treatments as well as make adjustments to his food intake to ensure he remains a healthy weight.

In addition to the 5 key reasons outlined above we also believe he will help in our efforts to improve attendance.

## Area : Interaction with pupils and staff

**Reason: To ensure the school dog interacts appropriately at all times**

<u>Step 1</u> Identify hazards	<u>Step 2</u> Who might be harmed & how?	<u>Step 3</u> What are you already doing?	<u>Risk Rating</u> Trivial/low Medium/ High/ Stop	<u>Step 4</u> Is anything further needed?
School dog biting a child or adult.	Child or adult could be hurt if the school dog bites.	The school dog is being trained not to bite. When the dog is approached in the correct way there is limited danger. Buddy lives with Miss Ferguson who handles him all the time to ensure that he is used to interaction with people.	Medium	Ensure that children and adults do not interact with the school dog without supervision. Ensure that all interaction with the dog is completed in the agreed way.
Jumping up/scratching.	If the school dog becomes excited there is a danger that he could jump up and knock a child over or leave a scratch mark.	The temperament of Buddy and the agreed training programme has involved not jumping up with praise/rewards being given when successful. A letter was sent home asking parents to sign and return to school if they were unwilling for their child to have direct contact with Buddy. Parents were asked to explain their wishes to their child and that they ask them not to approach the dog if they do not want them to have any contact.	Medium	Ensure that children and adults do not interact with the dog without supervision. The school dog will be enclosed in a crate/pen when people come into contact with him or on a lead under the control of an authorised adult.
Running loose	If the school dog was to run loose he could hurt children/adults or damage property.	The school dog will be contained at all times, either in an office or a classroom with a clear sign on the door. At other times he will be contained in his crate/pen.	Low	Monitor that the equipment used to contain the school dog is appropriate and effective.

Direct interaction with children/staff	If the school dog is allowed to interact when not in the correct frame of mind children/staff could be scratched/bitten.	No interaction is allowed without authorisation. Interaction will be cancelled if the dog shows any signs of incorrect behaviour. Rewards/praise will be given to reinforce desired behaviour.	Medium	Ensure that the dog is approached in the agreed manner.
Destruction of materials	If allowed the school dog may chew/destroy some school materials/resources.	The school dog will be contained at all times. The school dog will have his own toys to play with and normal school resources will be removed.	Low	Monitor that the equipment used to contain the school dog is appropriate and effective.

## Area : Pupils and staff interaction with the school dog

**Reason : to ensure the school dog is effectively supported to interact appropriately at all times.**

<b><u>Step 1</u></b> Identify hazards	<b><u>Step 2</u></b> Who might be harmed & how?	<b><u>Step 3</u></b> What are you already doing?	<b><u>Risk Rating</u></b> Trivial/low Medium/ High/ Stop	<b><u>Step 4</u></b> Is anything further needed?
Incorrect/inconsistent interaction with the dog.	If a child/adult interact with the school dog in the incorrect way this will affect the school dog's training and have a negative impact on future interactions.	Agreed guidelines that must be followed at all times when interacting with the school dog. There cannot be interaction with the school dog without authorisation.	Medium	If there are any inconsistencies in the approach with the school dog the adult/child will have the interaction stopped.
Use of rewards/treats	Children and adults could be harmed if the school dog is over excited when receiving a reward/treat. Children/adults must clean their hands after handling treats.	Anti-bacterial hand wash will be available to all adults and children. Treats will only be given to the school dog with authorisation.	Low	Reminders to the children to wash hands/use anti-bacterial hand wash after handling treats. Treats to be locked away to ensure

				they can only be used with authorisation.
Pupils/staff knowledge of how to interact with a puppy/dog.	If adults and children have a limited knowledge of how to interact correctly this could result in harm to the school dog or themselves.	An assembly at the beginning of each academic year to make pupils/adults aware of how they are expected to interact with the school dog. A visit to each class to reinforce this message. <i>Arrange a visit from 'The Dog's Trust' to deliver a 'Be Dog Smart' course with all of the children.</i>	Medium	There will be an agreed format for how to interact with the school dog.

## Area : Hygiene and Health

Reason : to ensure that pupils, staff and the school dog do not have an increased risk of illness as a result of the school dog being in school.

<u>Step 1</u> Identify hazards	<u>Step 2</u> Who might be harmed & how?	<u>Step 3</u> What are you already doing?	<u>Risk Rating</u> Trivial/low Medium/ High/ Stop	<u>Step 4</u> Is anything further needed?
Worms/fleas	If the dog is not treated for worms/fleas there is a danger that germs/bites can be transferred to humans.	The school dog will be treated regularly at the local vets to ensure he is correctly treated for worms and fleas.	Low	Monitor that vet visits happen regularly and take actions suggested by the vet.
Faeces	If a child/adult come into contact with the school dog's faeces some germs could be transferred.	The school dog will only be walked under supervision. There will be a designated area for the school dog to do its business which is not used by pupils. <b>No</b> child will be asked to pick up dog faeces, this will always be undertaken by the adult in supervision.	Low	If a child finds faeces on the school field/ Playground they will report it to an adult.
Allergies	If a child is allergic to dogs they could become unwell.	Children will not be in contact with the school dog if we receive a negative response form from parents/carers. If a child has an allergy the school dog will not carry out tasks near the child.	Medium	Monitor this when new pupils enter the school. Ensure new parents are made aware and fill in the relevant form.

Children's access to school dog's resources	If a child has access to the school dog's treats/food and eat some they could become unwell.	All the school dog's resources will be locked away. No child will be allowed to enter the school dog's area without authorisation.	Low	Remind children not to enter the area unless authorised and supervised.
Contact with food preparation areas	If the school dog enters a food preparation area this could be unhygienic.	The school dog will be contained in an area or on a lead at all times around the school. He will never enter the school kitchen.	Low	Make sure all staff are aware of this.
Cleaning hands after interacting with the school dog.	If hands are not cleaned children/adults could become unwell.	All adults and children will clean their hands after interaction with the school dog.	Low	Remind children and adults to clean their hands.

## Area : Activities involving the school dog, including walking

**Reason : to ensure that the school dog has a meaningful and safe impact on the school community.**

<b><u>Step 1</u></b> <b>Identify hazards</b>	<b><u>Step 2</u></b> <b>Who might be harmed &amp; how?</b>	<b><u>Step 3</u></b> <b>What are you already doing?</b>	<b><u>Risk Rating</u></b> Trivial/low Medium/ High/ Stop	<b><u>Step 4</u></b> <b>Is anything further needed?</b>
Walking the dog on and off the site.	Children could be harmed during a walk offsite if they are not focussed. Children might be harmed if they do not interact correctly when the school dog is on a walk.	If the school dog is taken off site normal risk assessed procedures will take place. No children will take the lead when the school dog goes for a walk unless authorised to do so by the accompanying adult. No children will be allowed to interact with the school dog when he is on a walk unless permission is give.	Medium	Careful consideration needs to be given to the amount of time the school dog is allowed to walk around the school during play /lunchtimes
Visits to classrooms.	If the school dog visits a class and the children do not follow the correct procedure he may become over excited.	The school dog will initially only make classroom visits with Miss Ferguson. The children in classrooms will follow the agreed procedure or interaction will stop.	Medium	Careful consideration will be given to when the school dog can visit classrooms and be under the control of the class

				teacher or teaching assistant.
Being fed.	If a child tries to interact when the school dog is eating he may respond aggressively.	No child will be allowed in the school dog's contained area when he is eating. Children may prepare the food for the school dog(washing hands afterwards). All feeding will be supervised.	Low	Reminders to the children preparing food for the school dog not to interact when he is eating.
School events.	If the school dog is overwhelmed he may become aggressive or boisterous.	The school dog will only attend school events if they are appropriate and he will be under the control of a supervising adult.	Low	Monitor the school dog's reaction to school events. If the school events are too overwhelming The school dog might not attend school on that day.
Other dogs (on and off the school site).	If the school dog is overwhelmed he may become aggressive or boisterous.	No other dogs will be allowed on the school premises. An adult will always be supervising walks in case another dog is encountered.	Low	Monitor the school dog's reactions when out walking.

<b>Signatures :</b>	<b>Date :</b>
<b>Review date</b>	<b>September 2020</b>