Risk Assessment: Dog on school premises

Willow – our School Dog
Reviewed Sept 2024

Introduction:
Current research is suggesting that a 'companion' animal in school can make a difference to the wellbeing of both staff and pupils. With this in mind, Albrighton Primary School & Nursery has become the daytime home for Willow, our Cockapoo.

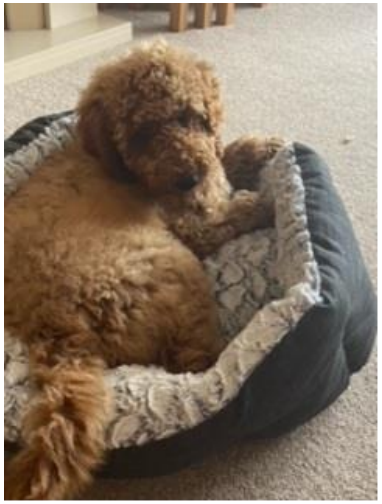
In order for Willow to be successfully and safely integrated into the life of the school, a risk assessment has been undertaken and is outlined below. The safety of children, staff, visitors and Willow are paramount. We must also ensure that a dog in school can have as natural a life as possible while in the school building.

The following precautions have been undertaken:

1. Research into the most appropriate breed indicates that cockapoos are well suited to working and playing with children.
2. A visit was undertaken to the puppy's home to see her parents and how she interacted with the family there.
3. The puppy was bred by council registered breeders who breed and train therapy dogs. Willow's parents are therapy dogs.
4. Willow began puppy and therapy training from 5 weeks old.
5. As part of her training, Willow has been trained to interact with other dogs, children and adults. Willow continues to be trained.
6. The dog is regularly groomed and checked for any infections or illnesses.
7. Visits to the vet take place regularly and she will have all necessary inoculations.

8. Willow will be wormed and flead every two months.
9. Willow's claws are trimmed to reduce the risk of scratching.
10. She has plenty of exercise and is exercised before working with children.

It is accepted that interacting with animals is not appropriate for all children but that for some it has the potential to provide many positive benefits. Any parent who does not wish their child to interact with the dog should notify the school. This risk assessment will be reviewed annually, and the impact of a school dog will be evaluated by the school leadership team and governors.



Willow is currently a year old and is currently undertaking therapy training, which she began at 5 weeks old. Work is also undertaken with the children throughout school to ensure that they know how to approach dogs, interact with them and how to behave when dogs are around.

Willow lives with Mrs Tearle and her family when she is not at school, and she will ensure that Willow is healthy and fit to be in school at all times. She is registered with the vet in Donnington, Telford and is up to date (and will be kept up to date) with immunisations and worming. A record is kept of her immunisations and health checks.

Willow will only be in school on days that it is appropriate for her to be there and will have rest days.

Hazard & Risk	Who could be harmed	Risk Level High/Medium/Low	What precautions are in place?	What else can be done?
Animal Health, diseases and parasites	Pupils/Staff/Visitors	Low	Dog to have necessary vaccinations before coming into school. Dog to have regular veterinary checks. Dog to be bathed regularly. Dog to be well cared for in and out of school.	
Dog excrement & urine - illness and falls/slips	Pupils/Staff/Visitors	Low	Dog will be wormed. Dog will be kept free of fleas, ticks. Any excrement or urine will be cleaned up immediately and thoroughly disposed of hygienically by the adult with responsibility at the time of the incident.	Dog will be exercised out of school daily. Dog will be walked away from pupil's play area. Dog will be walked around perimeter of grounds. If a mess is made it will be washed away straight away.

Hygiene/Infection	Pupils/Staff/Visitors	Low	Adequate provision is in place for hand washing. Do not allow children to touch any part of their face with their hands before hands are washed.	Children are taught about washing hands when handling any animals.
Dog getting over excited when interacting with children and jumping up, scratching or biting.	Pupils/Staff/Visitors	Medium	As part of the dogs training, she will be trained not to chew or jump up and interact with people unless they interact with her first. The dog will always be in the care of a responsible adult and will never be allowed to freely roam the school premises. Children are not left with the dog unsupervised. Pupils will be continually reminded of how to approach and interact with the school dog. Pupils will be taught what to do to prevent the dog	The responsible adult to remove the dog from the situation if she is over excited. Hold an assembly at least termly, to remind children on how to approach dogs and the importance of not petting them without the dog seeing and smelling them first. The dog will attend the groomers' regularly to make sure her claws are kept short and is also walked on concrete/tarmac to keep

			from chasing them. (i.e. stand still, cross arms). During busy times, such as breaks, the dog is kept in a safe and secure area away from any commotion.	them trimmed.
Dog hair causing allergies	Pupils/Staff/Visitors	Low	Parents have been asked to inform the school of any known allergies prior to introduction of the dog to school. A list of any children who should not interact with the dog will be kept in the welfare room. The dog will be crate trained and the crate will always be available if needed. Children will be taught to wash their hands after active participation with	

			the dog. The dog breed is known to be hypoallergenic and doesn't shed.	
Dog's welfare - Dog getting distressed and behaving out of character causing potential harm to dog and/or pupils.	Dog/Pupils/Staff/Visitors	Low	The dog has access to fresh, clean water always. The dog has access to a cool and quiet place where it can be left undisturbed. Pupils leave the dog alone when instructed by their teachers. The dog's welfare is considered as a priority when planning the activities that it will participate in. If an activity risks the dog's welfare, the activity is amended. The headteacher ensures that the dog has adequate and frequent toilet breaks and any waste is appropriately disposed of.	If any incident occurs an investigation will be carried out by a member of SLT. The risk assessment will be checked, and any procedures will be adapted if required.

			The dog is not over-stimulated, as this can lead to out of character behaviour. The school complies with the Animal Welfare Act 2006. The dog is given opportunities to exercise and move around independently in a secure area, e.g. the headteacher's office. The headteacher ensures that the dog is fit to participate in specific activities and is not brought into the school if it is unwell or if the dog becomes unwell while at school, the dog is taken home. Before any activity is carried out, the adult ensures everyone participating in the	

			activity understands how to treat and behave around the dog, e.g. not shouting or clapping and not running around. Only a limited number of pupils allowed to interact with the dog at a time. Activities do not cause harm, discomfort, or stress to the dog.	
Fire Alarm or emergency evacuation of the building. The dog could become distressed by the evacuation and behave in an unexpected way, become defensive or try to escape.	Dog		Dog signed in so fire marshals know when she is onsite. Member of staff in charge of dog at time of alarm – responsible for bringing the dog outside on a lead.	


ALBRIGHTON
PRIMARY SCHOOL
'Only our best will do!'