


Nurture Dog Policy

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| Author | S Davies, Head Teacher |
| Signed |  |
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Letters have been sent to all parents/carers informing them of the school's decision to have a nurture dog placed within the site and the benefits and risks of the nurture dog. Letters will be forward to the parents/carers of any new pupils.

Pupils have been informed via worship and during lessons delivered by the class teacher. Any new pupils will be informed as part of our admission process.

All visitors will be informed that there are dogs on site. This will be openly advertised on our webpage for the community.

It is acceptable that interacting with animals is not appropriate for all children but that for some it has the potential to provide many positive benefits. Any parents who do not wish their child to interact with the dog are invited to write to inform the school of their wishes.

5 Health and safety

To ensure the safety and welfare of our pupils, employees, visitors and the nurture dogs, the following actions are in place:

- The dogs will be under the full control and supervision of an adult at all times.
- Pupils will never be left alone with the dogs.
- Pupils and employees will be informed on how to act around the dogs e.g. no sudden movements, do not put face near dog, approach whilst standing up, and do not stroke face.
- Pupils will be informed not to disturb the dogs whilst sleeping or eating. The dog will have a designated quiet place where it can rest and eat.
- Pupils and employees will be trained to read the dog's body's language and adults will remove the dog from situations if body language shows uncomfortable behaviours e.g.
 - Dog is growling and bearing teeth – dog is angry
 - Dog's ears are back, tail lowered between legs – dog is frightened
- Anyone who has access to the dogs will be encouraged to wash their hands following interaction
- Dogs will be discouraged from jumping, scratching or licking

6 Allergies and phobias

All employees and Pupils have been asked to inform the school of any allergies or other reasons they do not wish to be in contact with the dogs. This will be collated on the SIMS system and a list held by the dog's owner and handlers. Any person with an allergy or phobia of the dogs will be kept away from the dogs as much as possible.

All visitors will be informed about the dogs, and any issues will be reported directly to the dog owner.

7 Welfare of Nurture Dogs

It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that:

- The dogs are regularly groomed and checked for signs of infection or other illness
- If a dog is unwell then she will not be allowed on the school site until health is restored
- The dogs will receive relevant vaccinations. The owner will be responsible for keeping a record of dates when vaccinations are undertaken and a copy will be held on the school site.
- The dogs will be required to wear a collar with a tag at all times stipulating his name and the contact numbers of the owner. The dogs will be microchipped and will be registered to the owner
- The dogs will have rest periods scheduled throughout the day to allow them to rest and eat without disruption
- The dogs and their handlers will be fully trained by a Kennel Club registered organisation following the Kennel Club Good Citizen Dog Training scheme.

Any dog excrement will be cleaned up immediately by an adult using the appropriate cleaning products.

8 Curriculum

The curriculum will support learning about dogs and how best to behave around our dogs. This will include highlighting that not all dogs are well trained and that caution must be used around unknown dogs outside the school.

The dogs will be supporting Pupils with

- Reading – Pupils to read to the dogs to help build their confidence in reading to someone who is non-judgemental
- Responsibility and Life Skills – Pupils responsible for walking and feeding the dogs to learn the importance of taking responsibility for a living creature
- Welfare – the dogs to be involved with Pupils who may require someone to talk to or stroke/play with when feeling overwhelmed
- Rewards – to be involved in rewarding Pupils, particularly those who have an interest in dogs and would like to be involved in their care.

Trained staff will maintain records and anecdotal evidence of the work and impact of the Nurture dogs.

Training

The Dog will undergo thorough and rigorous training (beginning with puppy classes and then The Kennel Club Good Citizen Award Scheme) so she will quickly learn to become extremely well-behaved. She will also be assessed by a 'Pets As Therapy' Assessor when he is the right age. Copies of all certificates will be maintained on the school site.

9 Complaints and Allegations

Christ Church CE Primary has completed a thorough risk assessment to allow for the dog to be present on the site. The risk assessment will be reviewed and updated annually unless required earlier than the review date.

If anyone reports having an issue with the dog, they will be asked to raise their concerns in writing and this will be responded in line with our complaints procedure.

Should anyone get hurt by the dog:

- Parents will be informed immediately (if Pupil)
- First aid will be administered
- Employee or Pupils will be released for medical attention (if required)
-

Should the dog get hurt by someone:

- Owner will be informed immediately

- Owner will visit a registered vet if deemed necessary and an incident form will be completed
- A full investigation of circumstances will be undertaken.
- The access of the person responsible for injuring the dog will be reassessed by the school once the investigation has been completed

10 Contingency

If the dog escapes from the school, is loose on the school grounds, and will not return, the following process needs to be followed:

- Owner will be informed immediately
- Owner and other identified handlers/staff members will be asked to secure exits to prevent the dog from leaving the grounds
- Pupils will be informed not to approach the dog and not to chase the dog
- Owner will secure dog with lead using training commands
- The dog will be required to wear a collar with a tag at all times stipulating his name and the contact numbers of the owner

If the dog escapes from the school grounds the following process needs to be followed

- Owner will be informed immediately
- Owner and other identified handlers/staff members will be asked to search the surrounding area Pupils will be informed not to approach the dog and not to chase the dog
- If found, owner will secure dog with lead using training commands
- If not found the missing dog will be reported to the correct outside agencies e.g. dog warden
- The dog will be required to wear a collar with a tag at all times stipulating his name and the contact numbers of the owner

In case of an emergency evacuation/fire drill the following process needs to be followed:

- The appropriate adult will walk the dogs on a lead to the assembly point on the main playground
- The dogs will be passed to either Tracey Smith, Fiona Baker or Olly West who will be at the main entrance to the school or playground depending on their exit route

- The dogs will remain with either them until the building is deemed safe and all Pupils have re-entered classrooms.
- If the above staff are not on site when there is an evacuation, then another member of staff will be responsible for the ownership of the dogs during this time

In case of severe weather, the following process needs to be followed:

In cases of severe hot weather:

- The dog will only be walked during cooler periods of the day (during morning or evening) to prevent overheating and burns to paws.
- The dog will have a supply of water throughout the day
- A fan will be provided to keep the dog cool during rest periods if required

In cases of severe cold weather:

- The dogs will only be walked if the ground is deemed appropriate (e.g. clear of snow and ice) to prevent frostbite
- The dogs will be kept in a room which is warm during rest and work periods

The school will ensure that the welfare of the dogs is its priority and the owner will not take unnecessary risks to bring the dogs onto site in severe weather conditions.

11 Appendix

Appendix 1 - Risk assessment

Risk Assessment completed by: Tracey Smith

Date completed: 1st March 2021

Review Date: 28th February 2022

| Hazard/Risk | Controls in place |
|---|---|
| Pupil employee or visitor is knocked to ground by dog | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The dogs will always be in the care of a member of staff. ● The dogs will undertake specific training to not jump or mouth anyone ● Pupils have been and will continue to be taught the impact of their actions. Education of this nature is continually given to Pupils and staff during PSHE lessons, worship and nurture time. ● Pupils and staff will be taught what to do to stop the dogs from chasing them e.g. fold arms and stand still ● The owner and handlers will continue to reinforce positive training strategies in a controlled area. ● The dogs will also undergo conditioning to the school environment to involve the nurture dogs in a calming/therapeutic programme ● Risk of scratching and mouthing will reduce and the risk assessment will be reviewed as the dogs process through their training programme ● Pupils and staff will be taught not to tease the dogs or get them to jump up. |
| Pupil, employee or visitor is scratched by dog | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The dogs will always be in the care of a member of staff. ● The dog will undertake specific training to not jump or mouth anyone ● Pupils have been and will continue to be taught the impact of their actions. Education of this nature is continually given to Pupils and staff during PSHE lessons, worship and nurture time. ● Pupils and staff will be taught what to do to stop the dogs from chasing them e.g. fold arms and stand still ● The owner and handlers will continue to reinforce positive training strategies in a controlled area. ● The dogs will also undergo conditioning to the school environment to involve the nurture dogs in a calming/therapeutic programme |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk of scratching and mouthing will reduce and the risk assessment will be reviewed as the dogs process through their training programme • Pupils and staff will be taught not to tease the dogs or get it to jump up |
| Pupil, employee or visitor is mouthed by dog | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The dogs will always be in the care of a member of staff. • The dogs will undertake specific training to not jump or mouth anyone • Pupils have been and will continue to be taught the impact of their actions. Education of this nature is continually given to Pupils and staff during PSHE lessons, worship and form time. • Pupils and staff will be taught what to do to stop the dogs from chasing them e.g. fold arms and stand still • The owner and handlers will continue to reinforce positive training strategies in a controlled area. • The dogs will undergo conditioning to the school environment to involve the nurture dog in a calming/therapeutic programme • Risk of scratching and mouthing will reduce and the risk assessment will be reviewed as the dogs process through their training programme • Pupils and staff will be taught not to tease the dogs or get it to jump up them |
| Dog gets injured on site by person | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The dogs will always be in the care of a member of staff. |
| Dog gets injured/sick due to ingesting objects on site | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The dogs will always be in the care of a member of staff. • Staff, Pupils and visitors will be made aware not to feed the dogs, unless it is with the agreed food within the dogs diet • Rat Bates around site are covered. The areas where rat bate is not covered are in areas which are locked. The dog will not have access to areas where rat bate is open, and the owner will be informed when rat bate is being checked to ensure that the dog remains out of these areas at this time. |
| Dog escapes the school site | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The dogs will always be in the care of a member of staff. • The dogs will be microchipped and registered to the owner. |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Pupil, employee or visitor has allergic reaction to dog</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A contingency plan is in place if the dog escapes the school site. • Parents and employees have been asked to inform the school of any known allergies prior to introduction of the dogs to the school. • A list of all employees and Pupils who should not interact with the dogs will be kept on the school SIMS system and a hard copy will be held by the handlers and owner • Pupils and employees have been taught to wash/sanitise their hands after active participation with to dogs • The school site is cleaned daily • Visitors will be informed of the dogs when entering site and will be asked to inform reception of any allergies, this information will then be passed to the owner to ensure the dogs do not have contact with the visitor |
| <p>Pupils, employee or visitor contracts germs from the dog</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should the dogs defecate on the school site a member of staff will clean this up immediately and dispose of it in a safe manner • All immunisations are kept up to date in accordance with the vet guidelines • If the dogs are unwell they will not be permitted on site until seen by a vet and deemed fit and healthy |
| <p>School unable to afford ongoing cost of dogs day to day upkeep or medical bills</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The dogs are the responsibility their owner who is financially responsible for the care of the dog and his day to day costs • The dogs are the responsibility of their outside of school hours • The school will have insurance to help protect them and the owner financially if the dog is injured on site. This will be paid for by the school. |
| <p>School no adequately covered financially</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school will have public liability insurance which will cover the school |

Appendix 2 – Responsibilities

| | |
|--|--|
| School Name: | Christ Church CE Primary |
| The Owner: | Ivy – Tracey Smith Hazel – Sean Davies |
| The Handlers: | Ivy – Tracey Smith Hazel – Sean Davies |
| In case that the owner is absence at a time of an emergency evacuation, the dog will be cared for by: | Fiona Baker or Olly West |
| The dogs base will be: | Ivy – Rainbow KS1 Hazel – Head teacher’s office |
| The School will be responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that the policy is adhered to by staff, Pupils and visitors to the site • To ensure that the dogs have an appropriate rest area and feeding area • To ensure adequate insurance is in place for the dogs whilst within the school | |
| The Owner will be responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The dogs are regularly groomed and checked for signs of infection or other illness • If the dogs are unwell, that they will be diagnosed and treated by a registered vet • That the dogs will receive relevant vaccinations and that a record of dates of vaccinations are held on the school site. • That the dogs are cared for outside of the school to a high standard • To ensure that the dogs rest and food area within the school is kept clean and in line with health and safety standards | |
| The Handlers will be responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that the dog is cared for whilst being handled by Pupils • To be available in case of emergency e.g. dog escaping | |

Appendix 3 – Reasons for a dog

In summary, academic research has shown that dogs working and helping in the school environment can achieve the following:-

- 1) Improve academic achievement
- 2) Increase literacy skills
- 3) Calming behaviours
- 4) Increase social skills and self-esteem
- 5) Increase confidence
- 6) Teach responsibility and respect to all life
- 7) Help prevent truancy
- 8) Motivate children who are often less attentive

The following information has been taken from a range of sources to provide further detail about the benefits of having a dog in school:

Behaviour:

In some schools, dogs are making a difference in the behaviour of pupils. Researchers report that Pupils can identify with animals, and with empathy for the dog, can better understand how classmates may feel. It was found that violent behaviour in participating Pupils declined by 55%, and general aggression went down 62%. Behaviour problems occur in school and these can interfere with learning. Some schools are using dogs to improve behaviour problems by promoting positive behaviour in Pupils. In a controlled study, Pupils were found to have fewer disciplinary referrals in schools with a dog than schools without. Pupils' behaviour improved toward teachers, and Pupils also showed more confidence and responsibility. Additionally, parents reported that children seemed more interested in school as a result of having a dog at school.

Education:

Reading programmes with dogs are doing wonders for some Pupils. Children who might be embarrassed to read aloud to the class or even adults are likely to be less scared to read to a dog. "It might be less stressful for a child to read aloud to a dog than to a teacher or a peer. After all, a dog won't judge or correct you." Dogs are used to encourage struggling readers to practise reading aloud. With the presence of a "calm and well-trained dog," Pupils find social support and peer interaction.

Dogs are incredibly calm and happy to have Pupil read to them or join a group of children in the library whilst they are having a book reading session. Dogs give unconditional acceptance, as they are non-judgmental, which is especially crucial to struggling, emerging readers. The dogs also provide confidence to children as they do not make fun of them when they read, but above all they make amazing listeners, providing the children with a sense of comfort and love. Research has proved that Pupils who read to dogs show an increase in reading levels, word recognition, a higher desire to read and write, and an increase in intra and interpersonal skills among the Pupils they mix with.

Social Development:

Dogs in school offer an opportunity for improving social development. They are especially useful for teaching Pupils social skills and responsibility. Specifically, schools are using dogs to help older Pupils build self-esteem; learn about positive and negative reinforcement, responsibility, and boundaries. Older Pupils use dogs to help communicate, teach kindness, and empower Pupils. With a dog in school, Pupils have the opportunity to learn how to care for the animal. This includes walking and grooming. Researchers report that involving Pupils in the daily care of classroom dogs is a positive experience, promoting their own daily care. The Pupils also learn about responsibility, caring, and sharing when helping each other take care of a dog at school.

As a reward:

Dogs will be gentle and loving, but at the same time full of fun and enjoyment for the Pupils. Those Pupils who have performed incredibly well during the week or those who have made progress in a certain subject, or those who have achieved tasks set for them, will be rewarded with spending time during lunch or break to interact with these dogs. Walking, grooming, playing and training are some of the responsibilities Pupils will be allowed to undertake. It has been proved that working and playing with a dog improves children's social skills and self-esteem.

Support Dogs can work with Pupils on a one-one basis and will especially help those Pupils who have been bullied, abused, going through upsetting/difficult times or even scared/phobic of dogs.

The dog will bring much joy and help to all the Pupils they meet and are happy to provide plenty of hugs to the Pupils they are spending time with. Pupils who struggle with social interaction can find a reassuring friend in a dog.

Appendix 4 – FAQ

School Dog Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Is the dog from a reputable breeder?

Yes. The dog is from a home where both parents were seen and has been specifically chosen for its temperament.

Will the dog be a distraction?

The dogs will spend time in classrooms, the Nurture Room and in the school grounds where children can interact safely.

The dogs will also attend meetings with staff to support further socialisation, following consultation with staff beforehand.

Has a risk assessment been undertaken?

Yes, we have carefully considered having dogs in the school and sought advice from many sources, including other schools that successfully have a school dog.

How will the dog's welfare be considered?

The dogs will be walked regularly and given free time outside. Children will be able to walk with a member of staff and the dog during that time.

The dog will be kept with the owner and will have supervised contact with children and visitors. The dog will be carefully trained over a period of time and will have unlimited access to food and water. We will work carefully to ensure the dog's welfare is always considered.

How will this be managed where staff, Pupils or visitors have allergies?

People may not need to touch a dog, which will relieve the possibility of allergic reactions. We already manage a number of allergies at school and this will be no different for children and adults that are allergic to dogs. Individual needs will always be met and we are happy to work with all to put additional control measures in place for individual allergies. The dogs will be given a high quality food and regularly groomed to reduce any possibility of allergens and the school will be cleaned daily. A list of all known staff and Pupils with allergies will be held on our SIMS system.

Someone is frightened of dogs; how will you manage this?

Access to the dog is carefully managed and supervised and staff, Pupils and visitors do not need to have close contact with it. We hope to work closely with all who are fearful of dogs to alleviate their fear and to teach them how to manage this.

Appendix 5 – DO's and DON'Ts when handling the dogs

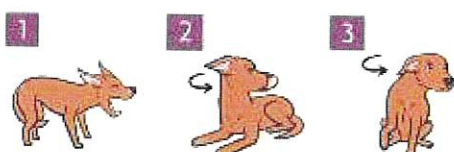
| DOS | DON'T |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be polite and kind to the dogs • Learn to recognise the dogs behaviours (see below) • Play appropriately • Approach the dogs whilst standing • Only approach the dogs if there is an adult present • Stand still and cross your arms to stop the dogs running after you • Approach the dogs with the back of your hand when stroking, and stroke the back only • Wash your hand once you have interacted with the dogs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rough play with the dogs • Don't tease the dogs • Don't disturb the dogs when they are sleeping or eating • Don't make sudden movements • Don't put your face near the dog • Do not touch the dogs face, ears, tail or legs • Do not approach the dogs without an adult present • Don't encourage the dogs to jump up |

A happy dog



- Dog has a relaxed body posture, smooth hair, mouth open and relaxed, ears in natural position, wagging tail, eyes normal shape.
- Dog is inviting play with bottom raised, smooth hair, high wagging tail, eyes normal shape, ears in natural position, may be barking excitedly.
- Dog's weight is distributed across all four paws, smooth hair, tail wagging, face is interested and alert, relaxed and open mouth.

A worried dog



- Dog is standing but body posture and head position is low. Tail is tucked under, ears are back and dog is yawning.
- Dog is lying down and avoiding eye contact or turning head away from you and lip licking and ears are back.
- Dog is sitting with head lowered, ears are back, tail tucked away, not making eye contact, yawning, raising a front paw.

An angry or very unhappy dog



- Dog is standing with a stiffened body posture, weight forward, ears are up, hair raised, eyes looking at you – pupils dark and enlarged, tail is up and stiff, wrinkled nose.
- Dog is lying down cowering, ears flat, teeth showing, tail down between legs.
- Dog is standing with body down and weight towards the back, head is tilted upwards, mouth tight, lips drawn back, teeth exposed, eyes staring, ears back and down, snarling.

Appendix 6 – Letter to parents introducing dog/Permission Letter

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are very excited to let you know about a new member of staff who will be joining us at Christ Church CE Primary. During the coming weeks we will be welcoming a nurture dog called Ivy who will come to the school each day as an integral part of our school community.

The dog chosen will be a German Shorthaired Pointer which are a breed of dog that are known for their gentle and loving temperament, characteristically an affectionate dog that is co-operative and easily trained.

- The main reason for having a school dog is to work towards providing a means of helping the Pupils to develop and improve their positive welfare.
- Emotional – spending time with an animal, a school dog improves self-esteem, acceptance from others and lifts mood, often provoking laughter and fun. Dogs can also teach compassion and respect for other living things as well as relieving anxiety.
- Physical – interaction with a furry friend reduces blood pressure, provides tactile stimulation, assists with pain management, gives motivation to move, walk and improve fitness and stimulates the senses.
- Social – a dog provides a positive mutual topic for discussion, encourages responsibility, wellbeing and focused interaction with others.
- Learning – companionship with a dog stimulates memory, problem-solving and game-playing
- Reading – reading to dogs has been proven to help children develop literacy skills and build confidence, through both the calming effect the dog's presence has on children as well as the fact that a dog will listen to children read without being judgemental or critical. This comforting environment helps to nurture children's enthusiasm for reading and provides them with the confidence to read aloud.
- Environmental – a dog in a school increases the sense of a family environment, with all of the above benefits continuing long after the school day is over.

Some questions you might have:

My Child has/I have allergies:

Our dog will be subjected to the most thorough cleanliness and grooming regime. He will also only be allowed in situations with persons who voluntarily wish to work with him. Your permission will of course be sought in advance of him having access to, and working with, your child in the school/Your permission of course will be sought in advance of him working with you.

Will he be properly cared for?

The dog will be extremely well looked after. She will live with Mrs T Smith and her family and will come to the school daily. She will listen to our Pupils read and will take part in lessons where the focus is on emotional and mental wellbeing. The work she does will develop and involve as she grows and matures. She will undergo thorough and rigorous training (beginning with puppy classes and then The Kennel Club Good Citizen Award Scheme) so she will quickly learn to become extremely well-behaved. She will also be assessed by a 'Pets As Therapy' Assessor when she is the right age. When at school, the dog will have access to her crate in a quiet office area where she can relax during the day. She will visit the vet regularly for all her injections as well as regular check-ups. If she is unwell for any reason she will stay at home. A set of rules have been drawn up with the staff and will be shared with all Pupils via assembly as part of the build up to the dog starting at the school. These will be agreed by all staff and Pupils and the adults in the school will ensure that they are adhered to.

My child is/I am scared of dogs

Some people may have had upsetting experiences and thus have a fear of dogs (or another animal). Our dog will only be in direct contact with persons whose permission has been given. However, his training will help her to be calm and be gentle. With proper guidance and handling, you can learn to overcome a fear of animals and grow in respect and appreciation for them. Some people may never learn to love animals, but to learn to accept them within their environment is important in this age, where people come across dogs everywhere within our community.

The school has a 'no dogs' policy

Our nurture dog would be regarded as having similar impact as a member of staff, supporting the Pupil. For this reason, she would be an exception to this rule. Her documents and qualifications will be held on file in the office in the same way as staff members' documentation is kept. These would include:

- Full and up-to-date vaccination and professional health records
- Public liability insurance document
- Full risk assessment
- Record of 'qualifications' which he may be awarded at the appropriate time such as the Kennel Club Good Citizen Award Scheme accreditation.

The dog will be kept on a lead at all times when moving around the school site during school hours.

We hope you will join us in welcoming our new dog to the School family and embrace all the benefits that he has to offer the school. A letter to seek your permission regarding

contact with our nurture dog is attached. If you have any questions regarding our Nurture Dog, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Dear All

We are excited to introduce you to Ivy

Ivy will be joining us at the school on 2nd November 2020 as our Nurture Dog.

Ivy is a German Shorthaired Pointer , chosen for their gentle and loving temperament and ability to learn. Ivy will be attending the school daily to work alongside our staff members in the promotion of positive wellbeing.

We at the school are aware that some Pupils may have reasons on why they do not wish to have direct contact with Ivy. Please can you complete and return the below slip to the school office by 19th October 2020 to allow us to ensure that your wishes and feelings are known prior to Ivy joining us.

Although we will attempt to ensure that any Pupil who does not have permission to have contact with Ivy does not come into contact with her, this may be unavoidable when moving Ivy to different rooms around the school.

Yours sincerely,

Mr S Davies
Headteacher

I do/do not give permission for _____ to have contact with the Ivy the Nurture Dog during the school day.

My Child has an allergy to dogs Yes No

My child is allergic to dog hair? Yes No

Has your child ever been involved with cruelty to animals? Yes No

Has your child ever been hurt by an animal or dog? Yes No

Does your child feel scared or nervous around dogs? Yes No

Parent name: (please print) _____

Parent signature: _____ Date: _____