



THE  
**WALDESLADE  
& GREENACRE**  
SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

# Animals in School Policy

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# Statement of Equality

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for student with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

## Purpose

The Walderslade & Greenacre Schools Partnership (WGSP) recognises that the presence of animals in our school can provide a valuable learning experience but animals cannot be allowed to endanger student safety or disrupt learning. For that reason, there should be a clear educational purpose for an animal to visit the school.

WGSP recognises that a visiting animal offers the potential for a very positive learning experience for children to learn about taking care and showing responsibility for animals as well as developing an understanding of the importance of the humane treatment of living creatures.

WGSP is particularly keen to support the introduction of service animals such as hearing dogs, therapy dogs or seeing dogs and this reflects the school's ethos of celebrating diversity and promoting inclusion. WGSP has introduced school dogs to enhance students' wellbeing. These dogs have been risk assessed and information shared to staff and students.

## Animals Brought to School for Short Term/Day Visits

Before bringing an animal on to the school premises during school hours, staff and visitors must seek prior authorisation and a risk assessment carried out. Staff and visitors will obtain authorisation from the Headteacher.

Staff or visitors must ensure that the animals are in good health and have had all the necessary immunisations or vaccinations. Where possible, evidence should be provided. Any animal brought to school must remain under control of the responsible adult at all times (member of staff the animal belongs to or the authorised visitor who wants to bring an animal in). The animal should be restrained on a lead (An exception would be made for dogs brought in to school for therapeutic purposes where the owner can demonstrate ongoing training and/or certification for the role) or in a suitable carrier. This applies to days when school is in session, prior to the start of school and for any time after the school day, whenever the animal is on the school premises.

Transportation of animals to and from school will be the responsibility of the member of staff/visitor. No wild animals or protected animals will be purposely brought to the building or on school grounds by anyone other than an authorised or licensed animal handler.

There will be no physical contact between the animal and students unless it is an integral part of the learning with prior approval received from the Headteacher. Any phobias the students have will be addressed beforehand with the Class teacher.

Should any student or adult be scratched or bitten by an animal at school, first aid must be administered immediately and in the case of a student, parent/carers will be called.

## **Animals which Remain in School**

When a school decides to have a school/class pet which predominantly remains in school this is by decision of the Headteacher. A risk assessment will be produced that considers how the animal is handled, the risk of allergies/phobias, the health of the animal, how the animal is housed and its environment, and who/how/when it is fed, cleaned and maintained (including whose responsibility it will be). A sample risk assessment can be found as Appendix A.

## **Children with Medical Concerns**

Health issues must be considered when assessing the appropriateness of animals in the classroom. Prior to the consideration of the introduction of an animal to the classroom, the teacher should review the medical notes of the student in their class to ensure there is no conflict.

It is the policy of the school to consider the safety, health and well-being of every student when making decisions regarding the introduction of animals to the classroom. When there is a conflict in this area, the Headteacher will confer with the staff member to find an agreeable solution to the matter in consultation with others, e.g. the parent/carers and students, school and others as appropriate. If students have petted an animal, it is essential that they wash their hands after the activity and that this is supervised to ensure that it is thorough.

## **Responsibility**

The owner or handler of any animal, including a service animal, is responsible for the animal at all times and must take responsibility in the event of any harm accidentally or otherwise that befalls a child. All staff must complete a risk assessment form prior to the introduction of an animal in the classroom which must be signed off by the Headteacher.

## **The Care and Humane Treatment of Animals**

Animals within the school will be handled, treated, and cared for in a humane manner. Enclosures must be appropriate to the animal and it is the responsibility of the staff member to ensure that the animal has sufficient food, water and a comfortable environment to reduce the stress for the animal. Habitats must be maintained and cleaned by staff, not students.

## **Guidance on Bringing Animals into School**

Children can benefit educationally and emotionally, increase their understanding of responsibility and develop empathy and nurturing skills through contact with pets. In addition to these benefits, children take great enjoyment from interaction with all animals.

Animals are often brought into schools from outside agencies, e.g. Guide Dogs for the Blind, as well as animal rescue charities such as the Cats Protection, Dogs Trust and occasionally by staff or visitors.

- Animals that are unwell must not be brought into school.
- Dogs with young puppies (those under the age of 8 weeks) must not be brought into school as there is the risk of the mother becoming overprotective, which may cause her to react out of character.
- Dogs must be kept on a lead at all times and under the full control and supervision of their owner (an exception would be made for dogs brought in to school for therapeutic purposes or where the owner can demonstrate on-going training and/or certification for the role).
- Students must never be left alone with animals and there must be appropriate adult supervision at all times – this should be the animal’s owner.
- Prior to the visit, students should be reminded of what is appropriate behaviour around the specific animal. Students are likely to become excited and it is important that they react calmly and carefully around the animal.
- Students should be told never to go near or disturb an animal that is sleeping or eating.
- Students must not be allowed to play too roughly with the animal.
- Consider the number of students who would be patting/stroking or meeting the animal. A large number of students could cause the animal to become nervous and agitated. On-going monitoring of the situation is vital.
- Students should not feed, or eat close to the animals.
- Students should always wash their hands after handling an animal.

## Roles and Responsibilities

The Local Governors Board (LGB) have a responsibility to ensure that the school has a written policy for animals in school.

Teachers and staff are required to abide by this policy.

The Health and Safety Officer is responsible for providing information, advice and guidance as and when required.

## Appendix A

Sample Risk assessment:

### RISK ASSESSMENT

Reason for Risk Assessment: Labrador Dog in School

Potential Risks	Risk Category	Who is at Risk	Mitigation Measures	Who is responsible
Heath	Physical Health	Staff / Students	Ensure only a small number of students with the dog at any one time. This will ensure Teacher is able to supervise properly.	Teacher / Lead
Behavioural	Aggression	Staff / Students	Ensure only a small number of students with the dog at any one time. This will minimise and stress to the dog which could lead to aggression.	Teacher / Lead
Hygiene	Contamination	Staff / Students / Animal	Ensure anyone coming into contact with the dog washes their hands before and after. Ensure the dog is taken for regular toilet breaks.	Teacher / Lead
Environmental	Accidents	Staff / Students / Animal	Ensure first aider is aware that an animal is on school premises.	Teacher / Lead

# Equality Impact Assessment

Who is the policy or process intended for?	Students	Employees	Govs/ Trustees	Volunteers	Visitors
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Status of the policy or process:	New policy or process			Existing policy or process	
	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Analysis					
Protected Characteristic	Impact analysis			Explanation of impact analysis	
	Positive	Neutral	Negative		
Age:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Disability:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Sex:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Gender reassignment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Race:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Religion or belief:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Sexual orientation:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Marriage or civil partnership:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Pregnancy and maternity:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Student groups (PP/SEN/CLA):	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Evaluation and decision making					
Summary of action taken:					
Final decision:					

