KENSINGTON PRIMARY ACADEMY

SAPERE AUDE

School Dog Risk Assessment

Introduction:

The value of pet 'therapy' is widely accepted as a powerful aid to stimulation and communication. Studies have shown that the presence of companion animals can improve the well-being of children and lower the rate of anxiety, simply by making the environment happier, more enjoyable and less forbidding. The team at Kensington Primary Academy have been considering obtaining a dog as a school therapy pet for some time and the decision was made in September 2021 to go ahead with the project. The rationale behind this decision was as follows:

- For the school to have a pet that was able to live as naturally as conditions would allow.
- For the animal to be properly cared for outside of the school day.
- To have a pet that the children could interact with and also be of benefit to the children's social and emotional development.

It is accepted that interacting with animals is not appropriate for all children but for some it has the potential to provide many positive benefits. Any parent who does not want their child to interact with 'Ada' is invited to write to the school office and inform them of their wishes. There are no diseases associated with the dog as her vaccinations will be up-to-date. Ada will also be insured.

The risk assessment below is a working document and will be checked annually by key staff and the governing body.

Hazard	Risk	Risk 1-5*	Controls in Place
Dog getting over excited when interacting with children	Child knocked to the ground Child scratched by dog Child bitten by dog	1 3 4	The dog will always be in the care of a responsible adult and will never be allowed to roam freely around the school premises. Children will not be left unsupervised with the dog. The dog will always be on a lead or under direct control of an adult. Pupils have been and will continue to be taught about the consequences of their actions. Education of this nature is continually given to children, and often to the whole school through assemblies and PSHE sessions. Pupils will be taught what to do to prevent the dog from chasing them. The dog will also undergo conditioning to the school classroom environment, this training will future therapy or reading sessions to involve the school dog can be done in a calming/therapeutic manner. All staff will have been introduced to the dog and expectations of having a school dog. She will attend the vets regularly to ensure she is in good health and that her claws are kept short. She will also be taken for a walk daily while at school.
The dog gets loose from the lead	As above	1	The dog will always be under direct control of a supervising adult. Children will be taught not to tease the dog.
The dog causing allergies	Children or staff have allergic reactions	1	Ada is a hypoallergenic breed but in the case of severe allergies parents have been asked to inform the school before the introduction of the dog to the school. A list of any children/staff who should not interact with the dog will kept on the school Arbor system. The children will have the opportunity to interact with the dog as they wish and those with allergies will be able to opt out of interaction. Children will be taught to wash their hands after active participation with the dog.

Children getting germs from the dog	Children or staff will contract diseases that can be carried by dogs	1	Should the dog defecate on the school site a member of staff will clear this up immediately and dispose of it in a safe way. She will be trained to toilet in an area outside of the grounds that children have limited access to. The area will be disinfected as required. All immunisations are kept up to date Flea treatment is carried out at 4-week intervals. The dog will not be allowed in the school dining hall at mealtimes; and never in the food preparation area.
Financial cost of the dog's upkeep	School unable to afford the ongoing cost of the day-to-day upkeep or medical bills	1	The dog is ultimately the responsibility of Miss Hitchins both in a well -being and financial aspect. Ada will be insured by the school.
Claim is made against school about the dog	School not adequately covered financially		Insurance will cover any claim. Certificate will be kept in office and renewed annually. Miss Hitchins aims to have Ada assessed as a Pets As Therapy dog once her training and adolescence are completed. This will greatly reduce the cost of insurance.