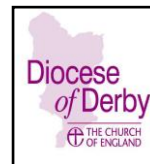


Langley Mill Church of England (Controlled) Infant School and Nursery



Pastoral Dog Policy

‘Always our best for God, each other and ourselves’

This policy has been impact assessed in the light of all other school policies including the Equality Act 2010.

Written / Reviewed by	Date	Changes Made		New Policy/Version		Next Review Date
		Yes	No	Yes	No	
S Gardner	March 2026	Yes	No	Yes	No	March 2027

At Langley Mill Infant and Nursery school we believe there are many benefits to having a school dog which include helping children with their social development, and are especially useful for teaching children social skills and responsibility e.g.

- improved behaviour and concentration, reduced stress and improved self-esteem
- encouraging expression and participation in more withdrawn children
- fostering a sense of responsibility
- motivating pupils to think and to learn, as children have a high level of natural interest in, enthusiasm for and enjoyment of animals
- encouraging respect and thereby improving pupils' relationships with each other, parents and teachers
- teaching children to nurture and respect life
- helping work undertaken with the most vulnerable children, and educational improvements with low achievers
- helping children build confidence in reading - reading programmes with dogs are doing wonders for some students. Research has proved that children 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 students they mix with.

(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 than a teacher – dogs don't correct mistakes)

Dogs give unconditional acceptance, as they are non-judgemental. The dog also provides confidence, but above all they make amazing listeners, providing the children with a sense of comfort and love.

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

By having a 'Pastoral/Therapy Dog' we want to encourage those children who are vulnerable, or those less confident to have a friendly audience. The breed of cockapoo, is carefully selected as suitable for this type of environment. The dog will be cared for and the responsibility owned by the Head Teacher.

Is there a risk in bringing a dog into a school environment?

This policy shows that we have thought carefully about school life with a dog and how, through careful management, there is a very low risk of harm.

1. The dog will be owned by Mrs Gardner. Veterinary costs will be cover by the owner It will be a cockapoo, chosen for his very mild temperament and non-moulting, hypoallergenic coat.
2. A Risk Assessment will be carried out and reviewed annually.
3. Visitor and new pupils will be informed of the dog on arrival.
4. The dog will:
 - Not be allowed in school if it is unwell
 - Be kept on a lead when moving between classrooms or on a walk
 - Be under the full control and supervision of an adult at all times
 - Have had all injections prior to coming into school
5. Pupils will:
 - Not have sole responsibility for, or be left alone with the dog
 - Be reminded of what is appropriate behaviour around her every time they meet her
 - Always remain calm
 - Be gentle
 - Do not put your face near his/her
 - Do not disturb a dog that is eating or sleeping
 - Always approach it standing up
 - Do not feed the dog

Children will learn about how dogs express their feelings through their body language: Growling or baring of teeth indicates that the dog feels threatened or angry. Flattened ears, tail lowered or between their legs, hiding behind their owner, whining or growling are signs that the dog is frightened or nervous. If the dog is displaying any of these signs, she should immediately be removed from that particular situation or environment.

Health and Safety Principles

Children will always wash their hands or use alcohol gel after handling the dog.

Any dog foul will be cleared up immediately and disposed of appropriately by the adult in charge of the dog a the time. Children must never be allowed to do this.

Should a bite occur (even playfully):

- Parents will be contacted immediately
- The wound will be cleaned and covered with a sterile, non-sticky dressing
- The child/adult will be released for medical attention
- All staff will be informed
- A full investigation will take place

The suitability of having a dog will be reassessed by the Headteacher.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher, in consultation with the SLT and **Governors.**