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| **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. **Background** : Under new Leadership, the Head, introduced the rationale for having a school dog to the SLT team and provided evidence to support all the positive benefits to support pupils struggling with their Social, Emotional and Mental Health, aswell as the positive wellbeing on all pupils and staff. The Head had previously purchased a cockapoo, Bailey, which was a hypoallergenic breed with a gentle, loving nature. Over the past 2 years, Bailey, has been well trained and responds well to commands. Bailey is registered at ‘Pets at Home’ veterinarian practice and was neutered as a puppy. He is thoroughly checked annually for any illnesses and Mrs Makin is fully responsible for his vaccination programme. There are no diseases that could be caught from him as he will be kept up to date with immunisations and his worming and flea treatment is in line with European vet guidelines. Both the school and vets’ surgery will keep a register of his annual health check. 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 Bailey is invited to inform the school of their wishes. This risk assessment will be reviewed annually and the school senior leadership team will evaluate the impact of a school dog on a regular bases. |
| **Hazard** | **Risk** | **Risk Level****Low, Med, High** | **Controls in place** |
| Dog getting over excited when interacting with children. | Child knocked to groundChild scratched by Dog Child bitten by Dog | Med | 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. The dog will always be on a lead when he is walking around the school. The dog will be trained not to jump up or mouth the children. Pupils have been, and continue to be, taught the impact of their actions. Education of this nature is continually given to children, and often to whole school during assemblies, form time and PSHE lessons. The dog has been fully trained and is not starting school until he is over 2 years old. The dog will also undergo conditioning to the school environment and this area of training with allow future reading or nurture intervention to involve the school dog in a calming/therapeutic manner. ALL staff have been introduced to the dog and the expectations (does and don’t) of having a school dog. The dog will attend the vets’ /groomers regularly to make sure his claws are kept short and that he is in good health. |
| The dog gets loose from the Heads Office or from his lead. | As above | Med | The dog’s will be kept in the Heads office during the day and if he escapes through the doors, into the main school building have codes on them, therefore he is in an enclosed space. He will always have his harness on him which makes it easier to grab hold of him, in the event of an escape. When walking round the school, he will kept on a lead and is trained to walk by the side of the owner. |
| Child scared of dogs | Nervous, high levels of anxiety | Low | All children have been asked if they are nervous and a note made of any children who have high levels of anxiety. Staff are aware of their worries and work is undertaken to alleviate these anxieties. |
| Dog hair causing allergies | Children have allergic reactions | 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 on the school recording system 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 have been taught to wash their hands after active participation with the dog. |
| Children getting germs from the dog. | Children/s taff will contract diseases that can be carried by dogs | Low | Should the dog defecate on the school site a member of staff will clear this up immediately and dispose of it in a safe manner. The dog will be trained to toilet in an area of the school that our pupil’s don’t have access to on a regular basis if required the area will then be disinfected with an appropriate animal disinfectant. All immunisations are kept up to date and the Head Teacher keeps a register of this. Flea treatment is carried out at 4 weekly intervals. Worming treatment is carried out in line with European Vet guidelines, at 3 monthly intervals The dog will not go in the school dining hall at meal times; he will not be permitted into the food preparation area of the kitchen. Financial cost of the dog’s upkeep School unable to afford ongoing cost of the dog’s day to day upkeep or medical bills. The dog is the responsibility of Mrs Makin. |
| Claim is made against school re: behaviour of the dog. | School not adequately covered financially | Low | The dog is fully insured with public liability insurance and has not become a school dog until he is older (2+) and his behaviour is calm. Measures are put into place to try and keep the dog calm at all times and not put in a situation to over stimulate and become too excitable. |
| **Review date & signed** | 17.11.22 |

