
To be reviewed Autumn Term 2021

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

*Is there a risk in bringing a dog into a school environment?*
Yes, there is. It is a risk that needs to be managed. A thorough risk assessment has been carried out (see Appendix 1).

2. **Policy**
- The dog is owned by Mrs Booth. During the school day Honey will be based in the back office in the Pupil Support Room. Students will not be allowed access to her unless consent is given by parent/guardian and it is for a specific pastoral intervention.
- Only the school dog is allowed on the premises.
- The dog is a Cavapoo. She was chosen because it is an intelligent breed that will respond well to training and which is known to be good with children. She is very sociable and friendly and she is also a hypo allergenic breed that is well known to be good for families with allergies.
- Staff, parents and children have been informed by newsletter, email and parentmail that a dog will be in school. A risk assessment has been produced and this will be reviewed annually.
- Staff, visitors and children known to have allergic reactions to dogs must not go near the dog. All visitors will be informed on arrival that there is a dog in school.
- If the dog is ill she will not be allowed into school.
- The dog will be kept on a lead when moving around the school site or on a walk and will be under the full control and supervision of an adult.
- Children must never be left alone with the dog and there must be appropriate adult supervision at all times.
- Children should be reminded of what is appropriate behaviour around the dog. Children should remain calm around the dog. They should not make sudden movements and must never stare into the dog’s eyes as this could be threatening for the dog. Children should not put their face near the dog and should always approach it standing up.
- Children should never go near or disturb the dog if it is sleeping or eating.
- Children must not be allowed to play roughly with the dog. Everyone must wait until Honey is sitting or lying down before touching or stroking her.
- If the dog is surrounded by a large number of children, the dog could become nervous and agitated. Therefore, the adult in charge of the dog must ensure that s/he monitors the situation.
- Dogs express their feelings through their body language. Growling or bearing of teeth indicate that the dog is feeling angry or threatened. 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 warning signs she should be immediately removed from that particular situation or environment.
- Children should not eat close to the dog.
• Children should be careful to stroke Honey on her body, chest, back and not by her face or top of head.
• Children should always wash their hands after handling the dog.
• Any dog foul should be cleaned immediately and disposed of appropriately, by the handler – see Appendix 1.
• Parents will be consulted on allowing their children access to the dog and will sign permission forms if they wish for this intervention to occur.
• All visitors will be informed about the dog and related protocols on arrival and office staff will relay visitor issues to the Principal asap.
• Appropriately trained staff will maintain records and anecdotal evidence of the work and impact of the school dog. This includes Mrs Booth, Mr Calmels, Mrs Doe, Mrs Chapman and Mrs Stevens.
• The office will know the whereabouts of the dog and which staff are supervising at all times.
• The dog will be included in the fire evacuation procedure under the supervision of Mr Calmels, Mrs Doe, Mrs Chapman and Mrs Stevens.
• If someone reports having an issue with the dog, this information must be passed to the Principal or Vice Principal as soon as possible. All concerns will be responded to by the Principal.
• The Governing Body has a responsibility to ensure that the school has a written policy for dogs in School.
• The Principal along with Mrs Booth, Mr Calmels, Mrs Doe, Mrs Chapman and Mrs Stevens is responsible for implementing this policy.
• Teachers, staff, students, parents and visitors are required to abide by this policy.
• The curriculum will support learning about dogs and how best to behave around our dog. This will include highlighting that not all dogs are well trained and that caution must be used around unknown dogs outside school.

Please see the following appendices for more information.
APPENDIX 1 – Risk Assessment
APPENDIX 2 – Benefits of having a dog in school.
APPENDIX 3 – Frequently Asked Questions

3. Monitoring and Evaluation

The effectiveness of this policy will be regularly monitored by the Pastoral Support Manager.

4. Implementation and Review

This policy will be circulated to all Academy staff and published on the Academy website for parent/carer information. The policy will be reviewed two yearly.

5. Author and Date

Author: Danny Calmels (Pastoral Support Manager)                      Approved by
Date: September 2020
## APPENDIX 1 – RISK ASSESSMENT

**Assessment conducted by:**
Helen Booth/ Danny Calmels.

**Job title:**
Class teacher/Pastoral Support Manager

**Covered by this assessment:**
All staff, students and visitors

**Date of assessment:**
19th April 2019

**Review interval:**
Annually

**Date of next review:**
19th April 2020

### Related documents
- Health and Safety Policy

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### Risk rating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likely impact</th>
<th>Risk rating</th>
<th>Probable</th>
<th>Possible</th>
<th>Remote</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Major</strong></td>
<td>Causes major physical injury, harm or ill-health.</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Severe</strong></td>
<td>Causes physical injury or illness requiring first aid.</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Minor</strong></td>
<td>Causes physical or emotional discomfort.</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
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### Issue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Risk rating prior to action</th>
<th>Recommended controls</th>
<th>In place?</th>
<th>Recommended further actions to be taken to reduce risks</th>
<th>By whom</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
<th>Risk rating following action</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health – diseases and parasites</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>- The dog has a designated handler who is in charge of feeding and caring for the dog while on school premises, ensuring there is a supply of fresh water available. - The handler is responsible for permitting people to touch the dog.</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>- The dog will go to the vet for a regular check-up, to identify whether the dog has any transmittable diseases. - On hot days, the handler will ensure there is appropriate.</td>
<td>HBH/DC/JC/TD</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>L</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The dog is permitted only in outside areas, Pastoral office or other areas of school for certain events and always with a handler. The area is kept clean and secure for the wellbeing of the animal, students, staff and visitors.</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>provision in place to keep the dog cool, and ensure the dog avoids too much activity during the hottest part of the day.</td>
<td>HBH/DC/JC/ TD</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>L</td>
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<td>Hygiene</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>The dog is suitably toilet trained.</td>
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<td>The designated area for the dog to defecate, (behind the pastoral block), is situated away from students and staff.</td>
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<td>All faeces are immediately picked up by the handler, using a clinical waste bag, and disposed of into the clinical waste bin.</td>
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<td>The handler immediately washes their hands with sufficient soap and water after picking up faeces.</td>
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<td>Any soiled dog bedding is immediately disposed of in sealed clinical waste bags, and into the clinical waste bin.</td>
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<td>The handler takes the dog’s bedding home regularly to wash it.</td>
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| Bites and scratches   | L                                | • The dog has grown up in the school environment and as such, has been trained well, and is used to coming into close contact with people. It has also undergone a training course for therapy dogs (when puppy/dog is an appropriate age).  
• Students/staff/visitors around the dog are closely supervised by the handler.  
• Students/staff/visitors are advised not to put their face close to the dog.  
• The dog is prohibited from roaming freely around the school without the supervision of the handler. | Y                | • Students/staff/visitors are only permitted to stroke the dog during allocated time-slots – break and lunchtime or when the dog is required for therapy for significant anxiety/depression  
• The dog is provided with a place it can go to get away from people.                                      | HBH/DC/JC/TD     | Ongoing  | L                                                              |
| Minor injuries related to dog housing | L                                | • All dog bedding/housing is regularly checked for defects.  
• All dog equipment is stored (in Pastoral Office) when not in use.                                           | Y                | • All dog bedding/housing is replaced annually.                                                                  | HBH/DC/JC/TD     | Ongoing  | L                                                              |
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| Allergies             | L                           | • The dog’s food and water bowls are kept out of the path of people to avoid any trips.  
                          |                                |                        |                                                    | HBH/LLN/DC/JC/TD     | Ongoing  | L                             |
|                       |                              | • Any spillages from the dog’s bowl are wiped up immediately.                         |                  |                                                       |                      |          |                               |
|                       |                              | • The dog breed is hypoallergenic and as such this will limit any allergic reactions to the dog dander.  
                          |                                |                        |                                                    |                      |          |                               |
|                       |                              | • Students and staff known to have allergies to animals have restricted access to the dog.  
                          |                                |                        |                                                    |                      |          |                               |
|                       |                              | • All students and staff are advised not to touch their face after touching the dog.  
                          |                                |                        |                                                    |                      |          |                               |
|                       |                              | • All students/staff/visitors are advised to wash their hands thoroughly after touching the dog.  
                          | Y                              | A supply of antihistamine tablets is kept in student services in the unlikely event someone has an allergic reaction.  
                          |                      |          |                               |
| Phobias               | M                           | • Students and staff known to have a phobia of dogs are given restricted access to the dog.  
                          | Y                              | During busy times, such as breaks and time between lessons when lots of students and staff will be coming past the dog, the dog will be kept in its area in pastoral or in a large space (field) so can easily be avoided.  
                          | HBH/DC/JC/TD              | Ongoing  | L                             |
|                       |                              | • The dog is prohibited from roaming freely around the school without the supervision of the handler.  
                          |                  |                                                       |                      |          |                               |

The table above outlines the risk rating prior to action (H/M/L), recommended controls, and actions to be taken to reduce risks. The table also includes the responsible parties and deadlines for implementation.
APPENDIX 2

BENEFITS OF HAVING A DOG IN SCHOOL

In summary, having Honey working and helping in the school environment we would like to achieve the following:

- Improve academic achievement
- Increase literacy skills
- Calming behaviours
- Increase social skills and self-esteem
- Increase confidence
- Teach responsibility and respect to all life
- Help prevent truancy and improve attendance
- Motivate children who are often less attentive

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Having a dog will allow us to work towards section 3 of the: ‘Secure outstanding personal development, pupil behaviour and welfare for all in the school community’. She will help with ‘pastoral support and well-being to be the highest priority for the whole community (students and staff)’.

COGNITIVE

Companionship with a dog stimulates memory, problem solving and game playing.

BEHAVIOURAL

Behaviour problems occur in school and these can interfere with learning. We hope that by having Honey in school we will see a difference in the behaviour of students in terms of improved attitude toward teachers, and students also showed more confidence and responsibility. If students can identify with animals, and with empathy for the dog they can hopefully better understand how classmates may feel.

SOCIAL

Honey will provide a positive mutual topic for discussion, encourage responsibility, wellbeing and focused interaction with others. After experiencing unconditional love and trust from the dog we expect to see enhanced relationships with peers and staff. Dogs in school offer an opportunity for improving social development. They are especially useful for teaching student’s social skills and responsibility. Specifically, schools are using dogs to help build self-esteem; learn about positive and negative reinforcement, teach kindness, responsibility, and boundaries. With a dog in school, students have the opportunity to learn how to care for the animal. This includes walking and grooming. Involving students in the daily care of the school dog is a positive experience, promoting their own daily care. The students also learn about responsibility, caring, and sharing when helping each other take care of the dog at school.

EMOTIONAL
Honey will improve self-esteem, acceptance from others and lift moods, often provoking laughter and fun. Dogs can also teach compassion and respect for other living things as well as relieving anxiety. Students will learn how to express their feelings and enter into more trusting relationships. Students encouraged to gently pat or talk to the dog to teach sensitive touch and to help them to be calm and promotes provides tactile stimulation.

ENVIRONMENTAL
A dog increases the sense of a family environment, being part of something, another purpose for coming to school. Some of these benefits listed above will continue for the young person long after the school day is over. It will hopefully also boost the student’s connection to the school environment.

ACADEMIC
Reading to dogs has been proven to help children develop their literacy skills and build confidence in reading. 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. Dogs are used to encourage struggling readers to practise reading aloud. This activity can create a calming effect on the pupil, as well the dog will listen to the pupil read with no judgement or criticism and they make amazing listeners, providing the children with a sense of comfort and love. This in turn creates an environment where a student’s enthusiasm for reading can grow and also develop the confidence to read aloud. Honey will be able to support reluctant readers.

RESPONSIBILITIES
Students will have opportunity to walk the dog on school grounds with supervision from one of the pastoral staff. This would be on a rota basis. This in turn will allow for a potential improvement in student’s attendance as they have a responsibility to the dog.

ATTENDANCE
We will see an improvement in attendance for students given some additional responsibility regarding Honey. It is also another reason for the pupil to want to come to school.

SPORTING
Honey will become a school mascot and attend some of the schools sporting fixtures.

TRANSITION
Honey will be part of the year 4/year 5 transition process. Students who need extra support and visits with regard to the step up would be able to spend time with her on their visits to Robert Bloomfield Academy (RBA).

SCHOOL & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
Honey will become part of the school and local community, she will be able to attend open evenings, parents evenings, winter and summer fayres as well as representing the school at local community events. Honey will be able to attend the Young Carers group that RBA run in conjunction with Central Bedfordshire Council. She will be part of the whole school photos. Honey will have her own section of the newsletter and possible social media account as a way of getting pastoral information out to parents and students.
REWARD SYSTEM
Those students 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 to interact with Honey. Walking, grooming, playing and training are some of the responsibilities students will be allowed to undertake. It will also be an incentive for positive behaviour or any form of pupil achievement.
Pastoral awards will be introduced for a variety of things, fundraising, helping out, effort, could be linked to random acts of kindness. These awards will be ‘from’ Honey.

OVERCOMING PHOBIAS
There are students who do have dog phobias, a school dog and careful de-sensitisation programme could help to reduce some of these fears.
APPENDIX 3
SCHOOL DOG FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

Who is the legal owner of the dog and who pays for its costs?
The legal owner of the dog will be Mrs Booth and her family. She will bear the costs associated with owning the dog; the school budget will support insurance and staff training costs where appropriate.

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?
When in school Honey will be based in the pupil support room. This is a separate building away from the main area of the school. She will have access to quiet space & in the back office of pupil support for some ‘chill’ time! Honey will always be accompanied by an adult and will never be on their own with a pupil. The dog 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 a dog in school and sought advice from many sources, including other schools that successfully have a school dog and a reputable dog behaviourist.

Who is responsible for training?
Mrs Booth, as the legal owner of the dog and as a result, will be responsible for its training. Appropriate professional training will be obtained and the dog will work towards being trained as a school dog through the www.petsastherapy.co.uk

How will the dog be toileted to ensure hygiene for all?
In the interest of health and hygiene our school dog will be toileted when taken out for short walks in the grounds. Only staff members will clear this away appropriately leaving no trace on the ground, cleaning the area with disinfectant if needed.

How will the dog’s welfare be considered?
Honey will be well looked after. She will live with Mrs Booth who will bring the dog in to school daily. She will undergo puppy training classes. Honey will be fully vaccinated will visit the vet regularly for all the necessary injections as well as regular check-ups. She will also be regularly groomed and is fully insured. If Honey is unwell for any reason she will stay at home with a babysitter! She will be walked fed, and hydrated during the day. She will have access to a quiet area in the back office of for pupil support where she will be able to have ‘quiet time’.

How will this be managed where children have allergies?
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 parents to put
additional control measures in place for individual allergies. The breed of dog is known for minimal moulting, she is given a high quality food and regularly groomed to reduce any possibility of allergens.

It is completely understandable that there will be some concerns about possible allergic reactions to a school dog. Honey will be subjected to a very thorough cleanliness and grooming regime. She is also a hypoallergenic breed that is well known to be good with families with allergies. Honey will only work with students who have voluntarily expressed an interest to do so and after discussion with the pastoral team as to whether it would be a beneficial intervention. Permission would be sought in advance to any contact. Honey will be based in pupil support which is separate from the main areas of the school.

My child is frightened of dogs; how will you manage this?
Access to the dog is carefully managed and supervised and children do not need to have close contact with it unless permission for this has been given. We hope to work closely with parents of children who are fearful of dogs to alleviate their fear and to teach them how to manage this.

Some children may have had upsetting or traumatic experiences and therefore be fearful of dogs (or indeed other animals). The dog will only come into contact with students whose parents have given their permission. The dog will be based in a secure room within the pupil support unit. This is away from the main part of the school. The dog will be a puppy and will grow up in the school environment surrounded by children. Experience and research have shown that, with proper guidance, handling and time, children can learn to overcome their fear of animals and gain a greater appreciation for them.