

GREAT CHART PRIMARY SCHOOL

DOG POLICY

September 2025



A Great Place to Discover and Learn

Vision Statement

A respectful community where we thrive and achieve our full potential as confident life long learners

Mission Statement

Preparing for life in our ever changing world, by providing opportunities to develop core values and a love of learning

Our core value is Respect

Our termly values: Team work, Ambition, Responsibility, Resilience, Kindness & Independence

Although it is our overall policy not to allow dogs onto our school site regardless of their age or whether they are on a lead or being carried, Great Chart Primary School recognises the many positive benefits to pupils to have controlled contact with some dogs.

NB: Registered assistance dogs are allowed but this must be made clear by their harness, jacket or lead slip.

Purpose

- Dogs teach children responsibility. Having to remember to feed, provide water and show support for a dog can give children a sense of importance and satisfaction that they can't get from school or other chores. The relationship that develops can be life-changing for a child and a great support system as they themselves continue to grow and develop.
- Dogs teach children patience. Dogs do not always do as they are told first time!
- Dogs teach children compassion. Just like humans, dogs feel emotion and pain. They are prone to injuries and the infirmities of age during their relatively short lives.
- Dogs teach children about socialisation. Like most of us, dogs are social animals who enjoy and need attention and affection. By learning how to interact with a dog, children can learn how to better socialise with other children. If they can learn the social cues of a dog, then interacting with humans who can talk will be a walk in the park (pun intended).
- Last, but certainly not least, dogs are a lot of fun. They greet you with a wagging tail every day and can cheer you up even on your worst day.

Although we recognise that not everyone likes dogs, we believe that no child should be scared and should know how to react around them.

Benefits

Many people have studied dogs in attempts to decipher their behaviour, and the theories abound. However, you just have to witness the interactions between dogs and children to realise the potential for greatness. Dogs can sense when children with epilepsy are about to have a seizure, they can sense when a diabetic child's sugar is low, and they can help children with severe physical disabilities find happiness in life. Dogs can help calm children who may be distressed or disruptive. Dogs can also help academically and help motivate children.

Introduction

We have not had a forest school dog on site used in this way before. Any dog used in school must be a very caring and well-behaved dog who has the right temperament and has been suitably trained for the role. The owner must ensure regular visits to the vet for check-ups and will be regularly treated against worms and fleas. The dog's owner has public liability insurance.

Dodger, Mrs Wirrall's dog, (Forest School teacher) will come with her for our Forest School sessions.

Permission for a school dog on site

Any dog coming into school will be approved by the school leadership team before coming in. Only well-trained dogs will be permitted and all dogs must have a traceable and clear assurance that they have never shown signs of aggression, ideally by the owner having kept the dog since a puppy.

Any dog selected to come into school as a school dog will have to meet the requirements listed in appendix A. The owner and the school will agree to abide by the standards set out in "Bark and Read – Standards of Practice of Animal Assisted Interventions in Schools" (A copy of this can be found in appendix B)

Guidelines to interaction with the School Dog

Under no circumstances will children have close interaction with the school dog unless the school has permission from parents/carers. Once permission has been given no child shall be forced into interaction with the school dog if this makes them feel unhappy in any way. At all times interaction with the school dog must be controlled and safe for adults, children and the school dog himself.

If the following guidelines are not followed, interaction with the school dog will be cancelled.

At all times of interaction there must be an authorised adult (Mr or Mrs Wirrall) who takes the leading role when interacting with the school dog. If children, or visiting adults, do not abide by the guidance given by the authorised adult the interaction will be cancelled.

The following guidelines must be followed when interacting with the school dog. These guidelines apply to all adults and children.

- There must be an authorised adult present during all interaction
- Always approach the school dog calmly (voice and movement)
- Always approach the school dog slowly
- Never run up to the school dog
- Keep noise levels low during interaction with the school dog
- All interaction must remain calm with the authorised adult staying in control at all times
- Only the authorised adult can move any of the school dog's resources, including food and treat
- Visiting children and adults can only handle equipment if the authorising adult gives permission
- Whilst the school dog is new to the school no visiting adult or children will give him any food/treats
- There must not be any interaction with the school dog whilst he is eating
- After all interaction with the school dog hands must be washed with soap and water
- When interacting with the school dog all children must remain on their feet and not kneel or lay down unless guided to by the authorised adult
- No children will ever be asked to pick up faeces
- If walking the school dog, an authorised adult must be present at all times. Children may hold the school dog's lead if they are confident to do so. The authorised adult remains in charge of the situation at all times and will take back the school dog's lead if necessary.

Parental Permission

We will inform parents when Mrs Wirrall will be in school. Parents can speak to a member of staff if they have any worries or concerns.

See Appendix B

Appendix A

Before a dog is allowed into school the owner must be able to answer yes to all of the following statements: What breed is the dog? / If mixed breed what are the parents? (Please provide evidence e.g. pedigree certificates, letter from breeder)		
	Y	N
Have you known the dog since it was a puppy?		
Have you met both parents of the dog?		
Can you confirm that the dog has never shown any signs of aggression?		
The dog has never been aggressive over food		
The dog has never been aggressive to other dogs or animals		
The dog is familiar with individual children		
The dog is familiar with individual children		
The dog is used to groups of children		
The dog is registered with a vet		
The dog is up to date with all vaccinations (please provide evidence)		
The dog is wormed in line with the vets' instructions		
The dog receives flea treatments in line with the vets' instructions		
The dog is insured and the cover includes them being covered in school. (The school accepts no liability for illness or injury caused to the dog in school. The owner must have adequate insurance cover) (Please provide a copy)		
The dog has third party liability insurance to be in school – Dogs Trust membership covers this for the dog to be in school. (Please provide a copy)		
The dog will receive suitable training before having contact with children (e.g. Kennel Club Good Citizen Scheme puppy training or equivalent)		
I understand that I must accompany the dog on its lead when moving around the school.		
I understand that the dog must not be walked through the school during break and lunchtime or when there are large numbers		

Appendix B

Frequently Asked Questions

Q How will the dog be toileted to ensure hygiene for all?

A In the interest of health and hygiene Dodger will be toileted when taken out for short walks in the grounds. Dodger's owners will clear this away appropriately leaving no trace on the ground, cleaning the area with disinfectant if needed.

Q How will this be managed where children have allergies?

A Children will not need to touch the dog, which will relieve the possibility of allergic reactions. 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, he is given a high quality food and regularly groomed to reduce any possibility of allergens.

Q My child is frightened of dogs; how will you manage this?

A Access to the dog is carefully managed and supervised and children do not need to have close contact with it. 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.

Q Has a risk assessment been undertaken?

A 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.

<https://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/media/1935/bark-and-read-standards-of-practice.pdf>