



Iver Village Junior School

SCHOOL DOG

RISK ASSESSMENT

Written By	Rachel Bjorck
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INTRODUCTION

Hugo and Ralph are owned and cared for by Miss Bjorck, they are considered to be Iver Village Junior School's dogs. Hugo and Ralph are Maltese/Lhasa Apso cross dogs who are 5 and 4 years old respectively. They are very gentle, exceptionally friendly and love to be near people!

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 help children to develop care, consideration and empathy.

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 is much simpler!

Dogs will promote children's enjoyment at being in school. A greater enjoyment of being in the school environment and a greater willingness to learn and participate. In addition, they will hopefully improve attendance if used as an incentive.

Dogs promote wellbeing. A range of individual benefits for pupils working towards personal goals including developing social and emotional skills.

Dogs increase confidence, enjoyment and progress when reading. Research has shown the benefits of children reading aloud to dogs: reduced anxiety, increased fluency and improved confidence.

Dogs are fun. 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.

Many people have studied dogs in an attempt to decipher their behaviour and understand their abilities to improve learning and children's socialisation. However, you just have to witness the interactions between dogs and children to realise the potential for greatness.

RISK ASSESSMENT – INTERACTION WITH PUPILS AND STAFF

RISK/HAZARD	WHO MIGHT BE HARMED AND HOW	RISK RATING	CONTROL MEASURES
Biting a child or adult	Child or adult could be hurt if the school dogs bite	Low	<p>The school dogs have been trained not to bite. At 4 and 5 years old they have never bitten anyone previously. When the dogs are approached in the correct way there is very limited danger. The Dogs Trust to come and complete workshops to teach children correct behaviour around dogs both in school and outside of school as we have deemed Hugo and Ralph friendly and approachable compared with other dogs which are unknown to them.</p> <p>Children do not interact with the dogs without adult supervision.</p> <p>All interaction with the school dogs are completed in accordance with the guidelines.</p> <p>If the school dogs become extremely excited interaction will be immediately stopped by supervising adult.</p>
Jumping up/scratching	If the school dogs become excited there is a danger they could jump up or leave a scratch mark	Medium	<p>Training has involved not jumping up, with praise and rewards being given for 'all 4 on the floor'.</p> <p>No interaction will be made with any children unless the school has written permission from parents/guardians.</p> <p>Children do not interact with the dogs without adult supervision.</p> <p>During walks the dogs will be wearing harnesses and under lead control.</p>
Running Loose	If the school dogs were allowed to run loose they could hurt children or damage property	Low	<p>The school dogs will be enclosed in the headteacher's office behind a baby gate or wearing a harness and under lead control.</p> <p>Monitor that the equipment used to contain the school dogs is appropriate and effective.</p> <p>The dogs are not interested in chewing clothing/furniture.</p> <p>The dogs will be supervised by an adult at all times.</p>
Direct interaction with children/staff	If the school dogs are allowed to interact when not in the correct frame of mind (e.g. over excited) children/staff could be scratched	Medium	<p>No interaction is allowed without authorisation.</p> <p>Interaction will be cancelled if the dogs show signs of incorrect behaviour or distress.</p> <p>Rewards and praise have been given to the school dogs to reinforce the desired behaviour. This training is ongoing.</p> <p>All interaction with the school dogs is completed in accordance with the guidelines.</p>

Destruction of materials	If allowed the school dogs may chew/destroy some school materials/resources	Low	The school dogs will be enclosed in the headteacher's office behind a baby gate or wearing a harness and under lead control by an authorised adult. The school dogs will have their own toys/chews to play with. The dogs show little/no interest in chewing furniture or clothing. Monitor that the equipment used to contain the school dogs is appropriate and effective.
Incorrect/inconsistent interaction with the school dogs	If a child/adult interacts with the school dogs in the incorrect or inconsistent way this may affect the dogs training and have a negative impact on future interaction	Low	No interaction is allowed without authorisation. Children do not interact with the dogs without adult supervision. All interaction with the school dogs is completed in accordance with the guidelines. Interaction will be cancelled if there are any inconsistencies in the approach with the school dogs/if guidelines are not followed.
Use of reward/treats	Children and adults could be harmed if the school dogs get over excited when receiving a reward/treat	Low	Only authorised adults are permitted to give the school dogs treats at this time. Ongoing training and teaching is occurring.
Pupil/staff knowledge of interaction with a dog	If adults/children have limited knowledge of how to interact correctly this could result in harm to the school dogs or themselves	Low	The Dog's trust are visiting each year group to conduct a 'Be Dog Smart' workshops with each class – all children and staff to attend. There are agreed guidelines to interact with the school dogs.

RISK ASSESSMENT – HEALTH AND HYGIENE

RISK/HAZARD	WHO MIGHT BE HARMED AND HOW	RISK RATING	CONTROL MEASURES
Worms/fleas	If the school dogs are not treated for worms/fleas there is a danger that germs can be transferred to humans	Low	The school dogs are treated regularly at a local vet to ensure they are correctly treated for worms and fleas.

Faeces	If an adult/child comes into contact with the school dogs faeces some germs could be transferred	Low	The dogs will have an allocated area where they will go to the toilet – this area is not accessible to children. The school dogs will only be walked under supervision. No child will be asked to pick up the dogs faeces, this will always be undertaken by the supervising adult.
Allergies	If a child is allergic to dogs they could become unwell	Medium	They do not have an undercoat and therefore do not shed much, if at all. They are considered to be a hypoallergenic breed. No interaction will be made with any children unless the school has written permission from parents/guardians. If a child has an allergy the school dogs will not carry out tasks near the child.
Children’s access to the school dogs resources e.g. food	If a child has access to the school dogs treats/food and eats some they could become unwell	Low	No child will be allowed to enter the dogs area in the headteacher’s office without permission.
Contact with food/food preparation areas	If a dog enters a food preparation area this could become unhygienic	Low	The school dogs will be enclosed in the headteacher’s office behind a baby gate or wearing a harness and under lead control by an authorised adult. The school dogs will not enter the food preparation area in the hall
Cleaning hands after interacting with the school dogs	If hands are not cleaned children/adults could become unwell	Low	All adults and children will clean their hands after interaction with the school dogs.

RISK ASSESSMENT – ACTIVATED INVOLVING THE DOGS INCLUDING WALKING

RISK/HAZARD	WHO MIGHT BE HARMED AND HOW	RISK RATING	CONTROL MEASURES
Walking the dogs	Children may be harmed if they do not interact correctly when the school dogs are on a walk	Low	Children will be supervised in pairs when taking the school dogs for a walk. Only children authorised will be allowed to interact with the school dogs when they are on a walk.

Visits to classrooms	<p>If the school dogs visits a class and the children to not follow the correct procedure they may become over excited.</p> <p>Children may become over excited and lose learning time.</p>	Low	<p>The school dogs will only make visits to classrooms with a supervising adult.</p> <p>The children in classrooms will follow the interaction guidelines and the agreed procedure of continuing with the task in hand or the interaction will stop.</p>
School events	<p>If the school dogs are overwhelmed they may become nervous.</p>	Low	<p>The school dogs will only attend events if they are appropriate.</p> <p>The school dogs will be enclosed in the headteacher's office behind a baby gate or wearing a harness and under lead control by an authorised adult.</p>
Other dogs (on and off site)	<p>If the school dogs encounters another dog they may become boisterous.</p>	Low	<p>The school dogs training has included learning to ignore other dogs when instructed to do so.</p> <p>Other dogs are not allowed on IVJS school site.</p> <p>The school dogs will initially not be taken out onto the playground at home time when other dogs may be present.</p>