



# School Dog Policy

Approved by:

Board of Management

Date: 10/11/2021

Next review date: May/June 2022



**Rosie**



## **Introduction**

Children, teenagers, and adults 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, teenagers, and adults take great enjoyment from interaction with animals.

Our school dog is well cared for and responsibly owned by the school, living with a member of staff.

### **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.

## **Context**

- Our dog Rosie is owned by the school and lives with a specified handler.
- Veterinary costs will be covered by the school.
- The dog has been chosen for the general characteristics of her breed - great with children/teenagers, very sociable, unaggressive, and low shedding.
- The risk assessment will be reviewed annually.
- Visitors and new students will be informed of the dog on arrival.

## **Day-to-day management**

The dog will:

- Not be allowed in school if she is unwell
- Be always under the full control and supervision of an adult
- Will be kept in a specified room with a quiet area for resting during breaks
- Be fully trained to a crate/cage
- Have had all injections



Our students will:

- NOT have sole responsibility for, or be left alone with, the dog
- Be reminded of what is appropriate behaviour around the dog every time they meet her
- Always remain calm
- Be gentle
- Do not put your face near the dog's
- Do not disturb a dog that is eating or sleeping
- Always approach the dog standing up
- Do not feed the dog

The students and adults will also 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**

Students and staff will always wash their hands or use hand-gel after handling the dog.

Any dog foul will be cleared up immediately and disposed of appropriately by the staff member in charge of the dog at the time. Students must never be allowed to do this.

Should a bite occur (even playfully):

1. Parents will be contacted immediately
2. The wound will be cleaned and covered with a sterile, non-stick dressing
3. The student/staff member will be released for medical attention
4. All staff will be informed
5. A full investigation will take place
6. The suitability of having a dog will be reassessed by the school.