



“Enabling life in all its fullness”

“I came that you may have life, life in all its fullness” (John10:10)

Our **Core Christian values** for our school are: *Perseverance, Creativity, Trust and Friendship.*

School Dog Policy

Policy Date: January 2026

Date of next review: January 2029

To be read in conjunction with our AKPS School dog risk assessment.

Introduction

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, though there are a variety of accidents, which can happen within the school environment which far exceed the number of injuries or incidents caused by a dog. Therefore, it is just another risk that needs to be managed.

A thorough risk assessment has been carried out and is available on request. Dogs are not allowed anywhere on the school site at any time unless specifically authorised by the Head Teacher. This includes drop off and collection times. There is a dog park area out front of the school to support parents who bring their dogs on the school run and children are advised to be kept clear of this space. We reinforce this with the children in school and would ask parents keep their children from this area too. This policy outlines measures put in place to allow the school dog to be present.

AKPS School Dog Policy

The dog will be owned by Mrs Saville (Headteacher).

- The Governors have the right to refuse entry to the dog.
- Only the school dog is allowed on the premises. All other dogs must not come on site unless they are a known therapy or assistance dog and the Head Teachers have been informed beforehand.
- The dog is a Cavapoochon chosen because it is an intelligent breed that will respond well to training and which is known to be good with children, which is hypo-allergenic so does not shed hair and is very sociable and friendly.
- The Chair of Governors, Michele Bromelow and the governing board agree that a school dog will benefit the children and staff of Ashton Keynes CE Primary School.
- Staff, parents and children have been informed by letter that a dog will be in school. A risk assessment has been produced and this will be reviewed annually.
- All visitors will be informed on arrival that there is a dog in school when it is in school. It will be regularly in on 'Ted Tuesdays' but this may change from time to time.
- If the dog is ill he will not be allowed into school.
- The dog will be under the full control and supervision of a trained adult.
 - Children in Year 6 will be trained as dog leaders and know how to walk the dog within the school grounds and the simple rules in place for that time together and not allow the dog to run freely off lead around the children
 - Children should be reminded of what is appropriate behaviour around the dog. A wider safety around dog training will be given to the children
 - Children should remain calm around the dog. They should not crowd the dog or try to lift him.
 - Children should not put their face near a dog and should always approach it standing up.
 - Children should never go near or disturb the dog that is sleeping or eating.
 - Children must not be allowed to play roughly with the dog.

The pupil leaders in Year 6 will avoid large groups of children crowding the dog and go to an adult outside if any problem with this.

- 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 he should be immediately removed from that particular situation or environment
- Children should not eat close to the dog.
- Children should always wash their hands after handling a dog.
- Any dog foul should be cleaned immediately and disposed of appropriately.
- Parents will be consulted that there is a school dog and that their children may have access to the dog under the guidance of Mrs Saville.
 - All visitors will be informed about the dog and related protocols on arrival and office staff will relay visitor issues to the Headteacher(s) asap.
- Mrs Saville will maintain records and anecdotal evidence of the work and impact of the school dog.

- 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 Mrs Saville.

Actions

If someone reports having an issue with the dog, this information must be passed to the Headteacher or Deputy Head as soon as possible. All concerns will be responded to by the Headteacher.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governors have a responsibility to ensure that the school has a written policy for dogs in school and a risk assessment is in place and reviewed. The Headteacher is responsible for implementing this policy. All staff, pupils, parents and visitors must follow 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.

Reasons to have a dog in school Research has shown that dogs in school can help to achieve the following:

1. Improve academic achievement
2. Increase literacy skills
3. Calming behaviours
4. Increase social skills and self-esteem
5. Increase confidence
6. Teach responsibility and respect for all life
7. Improve attendance
8. Motivate children who are often less attentive

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who is the legal owner of the dog and who pays for its costs? The legal owner of the dog is Mrs Saville; she will bear the costs associated with owning the dog; the school budget will support insurance and staff training costs where appropriate.
2. 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.
3. Will the dog be a distraction? The dog will be kept in the office area. The office is separate from classrooms and the playground to ensure that the dog only comes into contact with children who are happy to have contact and who have parental permission for this, under strict supervision. The dog will also have a space to spend time in classrooms, the library and in the garden where children can interact safely. The dog will also attend meetings with staff to support further socialisation, following consultation with staff beforehand.
4. 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.
5. Who is responsible for training? Mrs Saville will be the legal owner of the dog and as a result, will be responsible for its training.
6. 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 around the area. We will clear this away appropriately leaving no trace on the ground, cleaning the area with disinfectant if needed.
Our policy of no dogs in the playground is still applicable as we are unable to put effective control measures in place that guarantee temperament and safety when children come into unsupervised contact with unknown dogs.
7. How will the dog's welfare be considered? The dog will be walked regularly and given free time outside. Parents will be able to give permission in advance to allow their child to be able to walk with a member of staff and the dog during that time. This will also be used as a behaviour reward, in line with our behaviour policy. The dog will be kept in the admin area/HT office and will only have planned and supervised contact with children and visitors. The dog will be carefully trained over a period of time and will have unlimited access to food and water. We will work carefully to ensure the dog's welfare is always considered.
8. How will this be managed where children have allergies? The dog is hypoallergenic.

9. 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