

St George's Primary School

Our School Dog

Policy and Rationale

Children 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 take great enjoyment from interaction with animals.

By having a dog in school, we also want to encourage those children specifically who are vulnerable, or those who are less confident with reading to have a friendly audience and to look forward to reading to Stanley as a treat!

Meet Stanley



Stanley is a 7 year old shih-poo (a cross between a shih-tzu and a poodle). He is friendly, affectionate and a fun-loving dog with a very kind nature. He has a gentle personality and has been brought up in a home with children. He is a hypoallergenic dog.

Stanley is suitable for this type of environment, is well-cared for and is responsibly owned by a staff member.

Is there a risk in bringing a dog into a school environment?

This policy shows how we have thought carefully about school life with a pet dog and how, through careful management, there is a very low risk of harm.

Context:

- The dog is owned by Mrs Chantrey
- The dog is a shih-poo chosen for its mild temperament and non-moulting coat. It is hypoallergenic
- The Headteacher and governors have agreed that a Reading Dog would bring many benefits to St George's Primary School
- The risk assessment (attached) is reviewed annually
- Visitors and children will be informed about the dog upon arrival

Management: day-to-day

Stanley will

- Not be allowed in school if unwell
- Be carried or kept on a lead when moving between classrooms or on a walk
- Be under full control and supervision of an adult at all times
- Be up to date with all injections
- Never be taken off site by pupils

Pupils will:

- Not have sole responsibility for or be left alone with Stanley
- Meet Stanley in a group of no more than 3 children
- Be reminded of what is appropriate behaviour around Stanley every time they meet him
- Not pick Stanley up
- Always remain calm around Stanley
- Not make sudden movements and be gentle
- Not put their face near to Stanley
- Not disturb Stanley if he is eating or sleeping
- Not eat close to Stanley and never feed him
- Learn about how dogs express their feelings through their body language. Growling or baring of teeth indicates a 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 Stanley is displaying any of these warning signs he should be immediately removed from that particular situation or environment

Health and safety principles

- Children will always wash their hands after handling Stanley
- Any dog foul will be cleaned up immediately and disposed of appropriately by Stanley's owner. Children must never attempt to do this

Should a bite (even playful) occur:

1. Parents will be contacted immediately
2. The wound will be cleaned and further medical attention sought if necessary
3. All staff will be informed
4. A full investigation into the circumstance will be led by the Head
5. The suitability of Stanley will be re-assessed by the Governors