

TOTTENHALL INFANT SCHOOL



DOGS ON SCHOOL GROUNDS POLICY JANUARY 2020

Overall aim of this policy

Our aim is to deal with issues relating to dogs on our school grounds.

There are four key issues to be explored:

- i. Dogs being brought onto school grounds by parents/carers when dropping off or picking up pupils;
- ii. Dogs being brought into the school as an interactive educational activity for pupils;
- iii. Members of the public using the school grounds to walk their dogs; and
- iv. Stray dogs on school grounds.

The Education Authority has recommended strongly to schools that dogs are only allowed on school premises for educational purposes or with pupils, staff or members of the public as a registered service dog. The Governors have considered this advice seriously and have agreed to accept this recommendation.

Advice to those bringing dogs to school at drop off and pick up times

It is recognised that dogs are an important part of family life for many in the school community, and as such are often included in day-to-day activities such as walking children to and from school. However, others may find the presence of dogs in the playground and school grounds stressful, even frightening particularly with younger children, and even well-behaved dogs can behave unpredictably when placed in a busy, noisy and crowded environment.

- Please be aware that if approached by a member of staff about having a dog on the grounds to be respectful. The staff member is working under instruction from the Governors to apply the agreed policy;
- For the safety of the dog, as well as for the benefit of others, do not tie your pet to the school gate and leave it unattended.

Dogs being brought in the school as an educational activity for pupils

Schools may wish from time to time to bring a dog into the school as part of an educational activity. This could include activities such as therapy dogs, Guide Dogs for the Blind and Dogs Trust Workshops, such as staying safe around dogs.

The following guidance should be adhered to:

- i. A risk assessment is completed prior to the visit.
- ii. The dog is from a recognised organisation that can show evidence of the dogs nature and temperament;
- iii. The organisation has public liability insurance;
- iv. Parents/carers have been informed of the proposed visit/how the visit will be carried out;
- v. The extent of interaction with the pupils and permission slips received;
- vi. Alternative arrangements for pupils that may not wish to participate in the activity;
- vii. All necessary arrangements have been put in place prior to the visit, as agreed with the organisation bringing in the dog. This should take into consideration size, breed of dog, age group and numbers of children;
- viii. Consideration taken of any allergic reactions to dogs that pupils or staff may have;
- ix. Pupils have been informed of the appropriate behaviour around dogs, prior to the visit. This should be done in the conjunction with the organisation bringing in the dog and guidance taken from them;
- x. Good hygiene and hand washing procedures in place for pupils.

Members of the public walking/exercising dogs on school grounds

School grounds are private property and should not be used for the purpose of exercising dogs. In the first instance, if safe to do so, the dog owner should be approached and asked to leave the grounds explaining that it is private property. If this continues or staff feel they are unable to approach the dog owner the school should contact the local Council dog warden or the police.

Stray dogs on school grounds

If there is a stray dog in the school grounds contact your local Council dog warden for advice and they will come and remove the dog from the schools grounds. Children should be kept indoors until the dog has been safely removed.

Reviewed January 2020