



Holly Park School Dog Policy



Maisy

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- Education Act 1996

For the safety of the school community, Holly Park has taken the decision to not allow dogs on the school premises at any time, unless used to assist a person with a visual impairment, mental health or physical disability. The school will take all reasonably practicable steps to facilitate the use of an assistance dog on the premises in line with its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

There are 'No Dogs' signs at the school entrance.

For the purposes of this policy, an assistance dog is one which has been specifically trained to assist disabled people and which has been qualified by one of the organisations registered as a member of Assistance Dogs (UK) or an equivalent organisation.

Maisy is our second school dog and follows in the paws of Poppy who was our first school dog for seven years. Maisy will be in school for a specific purpose. Only Maisy and any other therapy dog that we introduce or an assistance dog (with prior agreement) will be allowed on our school site.

The governing body is responsible for:

- Ensuring the school's policies and procedures are compliant with its responsibilities under equalities legislation.
- Reviewing and approving this policy with the Headteacher as required.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Communicating to parents that the school operates a strict no-dog policy on its premises, excluding assistance dogs.
- Contacting the police or the LA Dog Warden, where necessary.
- Approving notifications from a parent regarding the need of an assistance dog on the school premises, e.g. when collecting their child.

The site manager is responsible for:

- Liaising with the Headteacher where necessary.
- Ensuring that appropriate reasonable adjustments are made when an assistance dog is expected on the school premises.
- Ensuring that any animal faeces present on the premises are removed as quickly as possible.

All staff members are responsible for:

- Reminding parents and visitors of the school's policy where appropriate.
- Reporting any issues to the Headteacher.

Parents and visitors are responsible for:

- Adhering to this policy and not bringing their dog on to the school premises.
- Notifying the school in advance when an assistance dog needs to be brought on to the school premises to allow the school to make suitable preparations.

Assistance dogs

School visitors (including parents) requesting to bring an assistance dog on site must do so in advance.

The Headteacher or another senior leader must meet the dog and owner in advance and discuss the protocols with the owner

The assistance dog must be correctly insured with public liability insurance. The paperwork for this must be shown. This may need to be annually.

The assistance dog must have evidence of health checks and vaccinations

The assistance dog must have undergone training. Evidence of completion of training must be shown

The owner of the assistance dog must show appropriate paperwork from an established organisation proving that the dog is an assistance dog with an approved organisation. This may need to be shown annually.

The assistance dog must wear a harness that shows that it is an assistance dog

The owner of the assistance dog must take full responsibility if the dog bites someone on the school site – the school is not responsible.

The owner of the assistance dog must retain control of the dog at all times so that the children's safety is never compromised.

The school retains the right to bar access to any dog at any time including assistance dogs should they not comply with the above

The school may need to make alternative collection points for children whose parent has an assistance dog at the end of the school day if the normal collection point is in an area known to be a bottle neck or is crowded.

When it is known that an assistance dog will be required on the premises, other pupils and parents will be informed to ensure they are not surprised by its presence.

Pupils in the class where an assistance dog will be brought on site will be instructed on how they should act in the presence of the assistance dog, and the importance of following these instructions.

assistance dogs must be kept on a lead at all times.

Flexibility will be required to make tweaks, adaptations and changes to procedures so that the presence of the assistance dog on site works effectively for everyone.

School Dog (Maisy)

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 school dog we want to encourage those children who are vulnerable, or those less confident at reading to have a friendly audience and look forward to reading as a treat. The breed of English Cocker Spaniel is carefully selected as suitable for this type of environment. English Cocker Spaniels are well-balanced dogs. They love to play, have a sweet temperament and are great as family dogs. They love to participate in group activities and can be trained easily. Loyalty is one of their main characteristics. Maisy is well cared for and responsibly owned by Emily Sampson one of our Assistant Headteachers.

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.

The chair of governors has agreed that the school can have a dog and parents have been informed by letter that the school will have a dog.

Reasons to have a School Dog

Numerous research studies have shown the benefits of dogs in schools. Dogs have been working in schools for many years across the UK with several integrated very successfully in Barnet schools. Dogs have been commonplace in schools in the USA and Australia for many years.

Evidence indicates that benefits include:

- Cognitive – companionship with a dog stimulates memory, problem-solving and game-playing. Reading to a dog can be very beneficial as dogs give unconditional acceptance and are non judgemental. Dogs make amazing listeners.
- Social – a dog provides a positive mutual topic for discussion, encourages responsibility, wellbeing and focused interaction with others. Attendance for some pupils has improved because of a school dog.
- Emotional – a school dog improves self-esteem, acceptance from others and lifts mood, often provoking laughter and fun. Dogs can also teach empathy, compassion and respect for other living things as well as relieving anxiety. This has been known to reduce the percentage of violent or aggressive behaviour in school.
- Physical – interaction with a furry friend reduces blood pressure, provides tactile stimulation, assists with pain management, gives motivation to move, walk and stimulates the senses
- Environmental – a dog in a school increases the sense of a family environment, with all of the above benefits continuing long after the school day is over.

Context

- Maisy will be owned by Emily Sampson
- Veterinary costs will be covered by the owner
- Maisy is an English Cocker Spaniel, chosen for her sweet temperament and loyalty.
- The risk assessment (attached) will be reviewed annually
- Visitors and new pupils will be informed of the dog on arrival.

English Cocker Spaniel Characteristics

- A small dog
- Completely people-oriented
- Good with children

- Love to play,
- Have a sweet temperament
- Trained easily.
- Loyalty

Day to day Management

Maisy will:

- Not be allowed in school if she is unwell
- Be kept on a lead when moving between classrooms or on a walk
- Be under the full control and supervision of an adult at all times
- Be fully trained to a bed
- Have had all injections and these will be maintained annually

School Pupils will:

- NOT have sole responsibility for, or be left alone with Maisy
- Meet Maisy in a group of no more than three children
- Be reminded of what is appropriate behaviour around Maisy every time they meet her
- Always remain calm
- Be gentle
- Do not put your face near Maisy's
- Do not disturb a dog that is eating or sleeping
- Always approach Maisy standing up
- Do not feed the dog
- Never tease the dog
- Learn about how dogs express their feelings through body language. Growling or baring of teeth means that the dog feels threatened or angry. If Maisy is displaying any of these signs she will be removed from the situation immediately.

Health and Safety Principles

Children will always wash their hands or use alcohol gel after handling the dog.

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

Concerns

Our school does have a 'no dogs' policy, however Maisy will be the school dog and will be in school for a specific purpose. She will be on a leash at all times when moving around the school property and will always be accompanied by an adult. Maisy will also be fully insured to carry out her role thus allowing her to be on the school site.

Some children may have had upsetting experiences and thus have a fear of dogs (or another animal). Maisy will be calm and gentle around children; she has a very loving and gentle nature. Experience and research have shown that, with proper guidance and handling, children can learn to overcome their fear of animals and grow in respect and appreciation for them.

It is understandable that some of parents may be concerned about possible allergic reactions to a school dog. Maisy will be subjected to a thorough cleanliness and grooming regime. We will ask parents who are concerned to make the school aware if their child has an allergy.

Some parents may also be concerned for cultural or religious reasons about their child touching a dog. Please let the school know if this is the case for your child.

Any parent who does not wish their child to interact with the school dog is invited to write to Mrs Pelham to inform her of their wishes.

Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed biannually by the Staffing & Pupil Welfare Committee.

The impact of having a school dog will be monitored by the SLT.

Document Control

Revision History

Version	Revision Date	Revised By	Revision
1.0	September 2017	Ann Pelham	Policy written as a draft
1.1	September 2018	S&PW	Reviewed
1.2	September 2019	S&PW	Reviewed
1.3	Autumn 2020	S&PW	Ratified
1.4	Autumn 2021	S&PW	Ratified
1.5	Autumn 2022	S&PW	Ratified
1.6	March 2023	Ann Pelham & approved by governors	Reviewed to add clarity around the use of Assistance dogs on the school site
1.7	Autumn 2023	S&PW	ratified
1.8	Autumn 2025	S&PW	ratified

Signed by

	Name	Signature	Date
Headteacher	Ann Pelham		Autumn 2025
Chair of Governors	Clare Hegarty		Autumn 2025

Distribution

Version	Shared with
1.0	- Staff via school server - Parents via Website - Governors via meetings

Review

Date for next review
Autumn term 2027

Risk Assessment

Activity: Dog on school premises

Hazard & Risk	Who could be harmed	What precautions are in place?	What else can be done?
Animal Health, diseases and parasites	Pupils/Staff/Visitors	Dog to have necessary vaccinations before coming into school Dog to have regular veterinary checks Dog to be bathed weekly Dog to live with family and owner when not in school Dog will not be allowed to come into contact with wild rodents due to possibility of disease transmission	
Dog excrement & urine - illness and falls/slips	Pupils/Staff/Visitors	Dog will be wormed. Dog will be kept free of fleas, ticks. Any excrement or urine will be cleaned up immediately and thoroughly disposed of responsibly and hygienically by the owner or adult with responsibility at the time of the incident Hand washing facilities close to where the dog will be. A bag containing poo bags/plastic bags, kitchen roll and rubber gloves will be carried by the member of the staff walking the dog.	Dog will be exercised out of school daily.
Hygiene/Infection	Pupils/Staff/Visitors	Adequate provision for hand washing Do not allow children to touch any part of their face with their hands before hands are washed	Hand sanitiser also available in HT office, foyer and Orchard room

		Younger pupils should be seen washing their hands All wounds on exposed skin are suitably covered Dog Food stuff stored carefully to prevent contamination and infestation Dog to be bathed weekly	
Dog getting over excited when interacting with children and jumping up, scratching or biting.	Pupils/Staff/Visitors	The dog will always be in the care of a responsible adult and will never be allowed to freely roam the school premises. Children are not left with the dog unsupervised. The dog will always be on a lead when she is out of the Head's office. Pupils will be taught the impact of their actions. Pupils will be taught what to do to prevent the dog from chasing them. (i.e. stand still, cross arms) The dog will attend the groomers' regularly to make sure her claws are kept short and is also walked on concrete/tarmac to keep them trimmed	The responsible adult to remove the dog from the situation if she is over excited
Dog hair causing allergies	Pupils/Staff/Visitors	Parents have been asked to inform the school of any known allergies prior to introduction of the dog to school. A list of any children who should not interact with the dog will be kept in the welfare room. Children will be taught to wash their hands after active participation with the dog.	