

Urchfont C. E. Primary School

Dogs on School Grounds

1. Rationale

There are four key issues to be considered:

- Dogs being brought onto school grounds by parents/guardians when dropping off or picking up pupils;
- Guide/Service dogs being brought onto schools grounds and/or into schools buildings by parents/guardians/pupils;
- Dogs being brought into the school as an interactive educational activity for pupils;
- Members of the public using the school grounds to walk their dogs.

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

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 stressful, even frightening particularly with younger children, and even well-behaved dogs can behave predictably when placed in a busy, noisy and crowded environment or when unattended.

Consequently, dogs are not permitted onto the school site or grounds (including the adjoining school playing field area). Furthermore, dogs are not to be left tied up unattended to the fence adjoining the school driveway and field. The school's priority is the safeguarding of its children and staff.

3. Dogs being brought into the school as an educational activity for pupils

From time to time a dog might come into school as part of an educational activity. This could be linked to a curriculum topic on animals or pets, fund raising for Guide Dogs, workshops by the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) and/or Dog's Trust. In these cases, the following guidance should be adhered to:

- A risk assessment must be completed prior to the visit;
- The dog should be from a recognised organisation that can show evidence of the dog's nature and temperament;
- The relevant organisation must provide the school with copies of their public liability and indemnity insurance details;
- Parents/guardians to be informed of the proposed visit and provided with
 - details of the visit including how the activity will be conducted
 - the extent of interaction between dog and pupils
 - the relevant class contact information so that they can inform the activity leader of any relevant concerns or information that the school may not be aware of already in relation to animals
- Alternative arrangements are to be made for pupils that may not wish to or are unable to participate in the activity;

- All necessary arrangements, as agreed with the organisation responsible for the dog, must be put into place prior to the dog coming onto site. These should take into consideration:
 - Size;
 - breed of dog;
 - age group;
 - numbers of children;
 - possible contact with other pupils/staff within school
- Consideration taken of any allergic reactions or phobias to dogs/animals that pupils or staff may have;
- Enhanced hygiene and hand washing procedures to be continued to be implemented.

4. Guide/Service Dogs

Urchfont CE Primary School recognises that disabled people including guide dog owners and other blind or partially sighted people have important rights under the Equality Act 2010. The Equality Act 2010 consolidates and replaces previous discrimination legislation including the Disability Discrimination Act in England, Wales and Scotland.

As such the school will actively work with blind and partially sighted pupils and parents/guardians to ensure they receive the same rights as other pupils and parents/guardians. In accordance with the school's accessibility plan, the school will make reasonable adjustments in accordance with the relevant individual's need which can include the use of a guide/service dog whilst on school grounds. Where it is deemed necessary for a guide dog to come onto school grounds the school will put into place a formal management plan which will also take into account the needs of the guide/service dog and other pupils/staff that may be affected by the dog's presence in school.

5. 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. As we cannot guarantee that dog walkers will not leave dog mess or dogs will not urinate where children may play, people are not permitted to walk their dogs on the school grounds. **'No Dog'** signs are clearly displayed around school.

When spotting a person bringing a dog on to school grounds, he/she will be approached by staff and/or a member of the Governing Body and asked to leave the school grounds explaining that it is private property. If this continues or staff feel they are unable to approach the dog owner the school will contact the local Council dog warden and/or the police.