



# **Talbot Primary School**

## **School Dog Risk Assessment**

**Includes:**

**Purpose and introduction**

**Interaction with pupils and staff**

**Pupils and staff interaction with the school dog**

**Hygiene/Health**

**Activities involving the school dog, including walking**

**Current Risk Assessments completed: February 2021**

**Risk Assessments to be reviewed: February 2024**

**Review date: February 2024**

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# School Dog Risk Assessment

## Purpose

1. **Dogs teach children responsibility.** Having to remember to feed, provide water and show support for a dog can give children a sense of importance and satisfaction that they can't get from school or other chores. The relationship that develops can be life-changing for a child and a great support system as they themselves continue to grow and develop.
2. **Dogs teach children patience.** Dogs do not always do as they are told first time!
3. **Dogs teach children compassion.** Just like humans, dogs feel emotion and pain. They are prone to injuries and the infirmities of age during their relatively short lives.
4. **Dogs teach children about socialisation.** Like most of us, dogs are social animals who enjoy and need attention and affection. By learning how to interact with a dog, children can learn how to better socialise with other children. If they can learn the social cues of a dog, then interacting with humans who can talk will be a walk in the park (pun intended).
5. **Dogs are fun.** Last, but certainly not least, dogs are a lot of fun. They greet you with a wagging tail every day and can cheer you up even on your worst day.

Many people have studied dogs in attempts to decipher their behaviour, and the theories abound. However, you just have to witness the interactions between dogs and children to realise the potential for greatness. Dogs can sense when children with Epilepsy are about to have a seizure, they can sense when a diabetic child's sugar is low, and they can help children with severe physical disabilities find happiness in life. With the proper training and supervision, a dog can enrich a child's life. After all, dogs are basically four-legged children who never grow up!

## Introduction

The Talbot Primary School Dog 'Maia' lives with our School Principal, Ms Barnes. Maia will become a very caring and well behaved dog, being a purebred Golden Retriever she will have the right temperament to become a real asset to Talbot Primary School.

Maia will regularly visits the vet for check-ups and to ensure her immunisations are up to date and receives a monthly flea and worming treatment.

In addition to the 5 key reasons for Maia joining us outlined in the purpose we also believe she will improve the children's abilities within the school and help to improve and secure higher attendance levels.

## Area: Interaction with pupils and staff

Reason: To ensure the school dog interacts appropriately at all times

Step 1 Identify the hazards	Step 2 Who might be harmed & how?	Step 3 What are you already doing?	Risk Rating Trivial / low / medium / high / stop	Step 4 Is anything further needed?
School dog biting a child or adult	Child or adult could be hurt if the school dog bites	The school dog is being trained not to bite. When the dog is approached in the correct way there is very limited danger. Maia lives with Ms Barnes who handles her all the time to ensure that she is used to interaction with children and animals	Low	Ensure that children and adults do not interact with the school dog without supervision Ensure that all interaction with the school dog is completed in the agreed way
Jumping up / scratching	If the school dog becomes excited there is a danger that he could jump up and knock a child over or leave a scratch mark	The temperament of Maia and by participating in the agreed training program will involve not jumping up with praise/rewards being given when successful.	Medium	Ensure that children and adults do not interact with the school dog without supervision. The school dog Can be locked in Ms Barnes office if the students or the dog become too excited
Running loose	If the school dog was to run loose he could hurt members of the school community/public and/or damage property	The school dog will be contained at all times either in an office or within school grounds with the external doors closed and on a lead during outside play.	Low	Monitor that the equipment used to contain the school dog is not faulty and ensure that the dog cannot escape
Direct interaction with children/ staff	If the school dog is allowed to interact when not in the correct frame of mind children/ staff could be scratched	No interaction is allowed without authorisation. Interaction will be cancelled if the school dog shows signs of incorrect behaviour. Rewards/praise will be given to reinforce the desired behaviour	Medium	Ensure that the dog is approached in the agreed manner.
Destruction of materials	If allowed the school dog may chew/destroy some school materials/resources	The school dog will be contained at all times. The school dog will have his own toys to play with and normal school resources will be removed	Low	Monitor that the equipment used to contain the school dog is appropriate and Effective and the school resources are stored appropriately

## Area: Pupils and staff interaction with the school dog

**Reason: To ensure the school dog is effectively supported to interact appropriately at all times**

Step 1 Identify the hazards	Step 2 Who might be harmed & how?	Step 3 What are you already doing?	Risk Rating Trivial / low / medium / high / stop	Step 4 Is anything further needed?
Incorrect / inconsistent interaction with the dog	If a child/adult interact with the school dog in the incorrect or inconsistent way this will affect the school dogs training and have a negative impact on future	Agreed guidelines that must be followed at all times when interacting with the school dog. There cannot be any interaction with the school dog without authorisation	Medium	If there are any inconsistencies in approach with the school dog the adult/child will have the interaction stopped
Use of rewards/ treats	Children and adults could be harmed if the school dog is over excited when receiving a reward/treat. Children/adult must clean their hands after handling treats	Alcohol gel will be available to all adults (and children with written permission from parents). Treats will only be given to the school dog with authorisation	Low	Reminders to the children to wash hands / use alcohol gel after handling treats. Treats to be locked away to ensure they can only be used after authorisation
Pupil/staff knowledge of interaction with a puppy/school dog	If adults and children have limited knowledge of how to interact with animals correctly this could result in harm to the school dog or to themselves	The school will host a pet day where vets and animal handlers are invited into the school to talk and demonstrate to students the correct way to handle a pet. The school also uses the dog as a discussion and learning topic and so the children are always 'pet smart'	Medium	There will be an agreed format for how to interact with the school dog

## Area: Hygiene / Health

**Reason: To ensure that pupils, staff and the school dog do not have an increased risk of illness as a result of the school dog being in school**

<b>Step 1 Identify the hazards</b>	<b>Step 2 Who might be harmed &amp; how?</b>	<b>Step 3 What are you already doing?</b>	<b>Risk Rating</b> Trivial / low / medium / high / stop	<b>Step 4 Is anything further needed?</b>
Worms / fleas	If the school dog is not treated for worms there is a danger that germs can be transferred to humans	The school dog will be treated monthly worms and fleas	Low	Monitor that vet treatments happen promptly and monitor the dog's health by observing her.
Faeces	If a child/adult come into contact with the school dog's faeces some germs could be transferred	The school dog will only be walked under supervision. No child will be asked to pick up the dog's faeces, this will always be undertaken by the adult in supervision	Low	If a child finds faeces on the school field/playground they will report it to an adult
Allergies	If a child is allergic to dogs they could become unwell	Children will not be in contact with the school dog if we have received a negative response form from parents/guardians. If a child has an allergy the school dog will not carry out tasks near the child and the dog will be in her designated safe area	Medium	Monitor school records and new student's medical information to make sure new students don't have an allergy. Have an open line of communication with families and observe the children's health when around the dog.
Children's access to school dog's resource	If a child has access to the school dog's treats/food and eats some they could become unwell	All of the school dog's resources will be safely stored away and children will be educated on the possible danger. The dog will not be fed around children	Low	Remind children of the danger and ensure the dog is fed out of school hours
Contact with food preparation areas	If the school dog enters a food preparation area this could be unhygienic	The school dog is not allowed in food areas and all food preparation areas have doors that will remain closed when the dog is on the premises	Trivial	
Cleaning hands after interacting with the school dog	If hands are not cleaned children/adults could become unwell	All adults and children will clean their hands after interaction with the school dog	Low	Remind children and adults to clean their hands

## Area: Activities involving the school dog, including walking

**Reason: To ensure that the school dog has a meaningful and safe impact on the school community**

Step 1 Identify the hazards	Step 2 Who might be harmed & How?	Step 3 What are you already doing?	Risk Rating Trivial / low / medium / high / stop	Step 4 Is anything Further needed?
Walking the dog on and off the site	Children could be harmed during a walk offsite if they are not focused. Children might be harmed if they do not interact correctly when the school dog is on a walk	If the school dog is taken off site normal risk assessed procedure will take place. No children will remove the lead when the school dog goes for a walk unless authorised to do so by accompanying adult. No children will be allowed to interact with the school dog when he is on a walk unless permission is given	Medium	Careful consideration needs to be given to the amount of time the school dog is allowed to walk around school during play/lunchtimes
Visits to classroom	If the school dog visits a class and the children do not follow the correct procedure he may become over excited	The school dog will initially only make classroom visits with Ms Barnes present The children in classrooms will follow the agreed procedure or interaction will stop	Medium	Careful consideration will be given to when the school dog can visit classrooms and be under the control of the class teachers
Being fed	If a child tries to interact when the school dog is eating he may respond aggressively	No child will be allowed in the school dog's area when she is eating. This topic is covered by visiting animal handlers and in classroom learning	Low	Reminders to the children feeding the school dog to not interact when he is eating
School events	If the school dog is overwhelmed he may become aggressive or boisterous	The school dog will only attend school events if they are appropriate and he will be under the control of a supervising adult	Low	Monitor the school dog's reaction to school events. If the school events are too overwhelming the school dog might not attend school on that day
Other dogs (on and off the site with the exemption of an assistance dog)	If the school dog is overwhelmed he may become aggressive or boisterous	No other dogs will be allowed on the school premises. If another dog is seen this will be dealt with by the supervising adult	Low	Monitor the school dogs reaction when out walking