

Fairview Primary School



Guidance on Bringing Dogs into School

Date Ratified: December 2016

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To be Reviewed: June 2029

GUIDANCE ON BRINGING DOGS INTO SCHOOLS

The Board of Governors and Principal are responsible for determining the school policy on dogs, however, the EA would recommend 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.

2.0 GUIDANCE

2.1 Parents/carers bringing dogs into school grounds 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.

Fairview Primary School has a policy of not permitting dogs onto the school site and the following steps have been taken:

- Informing parents/carers of the school policy, through regular bulletins and information provided at the start of the school year and/or throughout the school year as required;
- Presence of school staff at school entrances at drop off and pick up times to reinforce the policy, if required; and
- It should also be requested that dogs are not tied up and left unattended at the school gates.

This policy applies to events off site, such as Sports Day at Hollinger Park

2.2 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.

Dogs should be from a recognised organisation that can show evidence that the dog has been tested in regard to its training and behaviour. This should take into consideration the dog's tolerance of rough handling, noise sensitivity, behaviour in stressful situations and being around large numbers of children.

The following guidance should be adhered to:

- A risk assessment is completed prior to the visit.
- The dog is from a recognised organisation that can show evidence of the dog's nature and temperament;
- The organisation has public liability insurance;

- Parents/carers have been informed of the proposed visit/how the visit will be carried out/the extent of interaction with the pupils and permission slips received;
- Alternative arrangements for pupils that may not wish to participate in the activity;
- 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;
- Consideration taken of any allergic reactions to dogs that pupils or staff may have;
- 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; and
- Good hygiene and hand washing procedures in place for pupils.

2.3 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 ANBCouncil dog warden or the police.

If this is a persistent problem the security of the school perimeter and site should be assessed as to how this can be improved.

2.4 Stray dogs on school grounds

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

2.5 Dog fouling

Any dog fouling should be cleaned immediately, direct skin contact should be avoided and appropriate protective clothing worn and good hygiene practices followed.

3.0 Further information

The EA Health and Safety Section

Dogs Trust provide interactive workshops to schools which includes topics such as staying safe around dogs, their Education Officer can be contacted on telephone 028 2566 1004 or you can visit their webpage: <http://www.learnwithdogstrust.org.uk/>

EA Guidance on Risk Assessment <https://www.eani.org.uk/publications/health-safety/keeping-animals-in-schools>