

TEMPO PRIMARY SCHOOL



Bringing Dogs into School

The Governors will monitor the implementation of this policy and evaluate and review regularly.

Signed Chair of Governors; _____

Date; _____

Principal; _____

Date; _____

Statement of ethos – Tempo Primary School

At Tempo Primary School, we welcome families from all backgrounds. Our Christian values are the foundation upon which we build caring and inclusive relationships within our school community. We provide high quality teaching and learning through a nurturing, child-centred approach. We encourage everyone to achieve their full potential within a supportive learning environment.

Vision

We will promote positive relationships (within a supportive and caring environment) and strive to inspire a love for learning. We will encourage every child to achieve their full potential and become effective contributors to their community in the future.

Mission Statement

- To provide an environment where children feel safe, happy and secure.
- To provide high quality teaching experiences designed to include everyone and help us succeed as a school community.
- To provide effective leadership on all levels and promote positive relationships based on core values.
- To work alongside parents and governors and external agencies to deliver the agreed aims of the school.

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance for the school whose policy is to allow dogs into the school either for educational reasons or while parents are picking up their child(ren).

Children can benefit educationally and emotionally, increase their understanding of responsibility and develop empathy and nurturing skills through contact with pets. In addition to these benefits, children take great enjoyment from interaction with dogs and puppies. As dogs are one of the most popular pets, it is more than likely that children will have some exposure to a dog while still at school.

Additionally, dogs are often brought into schools from outside agencies e.g. Guide Dogs for the Blind, as well as animal rescue charities such as the Dogs Trust and occasionally by pupils, parents or teachers. Only rarely does a dog bite without warning.

Is there a risk in bringing a dog into a school environment? Of course there is, though there are a variety of accidents which can happen within the school environment which far exceed the number of injuries or incidents caused by dogs. Therefore, it is just another risk that can be successfully managed. We should not lose sight of the fact that nearly all biting accidents are preventable and very often depend on the behaviour of the child prior to the accident.

The objective of this document is to ensure that schools develop a written policy and adopt practices which minimise the risk of accidents or injuries between children and dogs.

Legislation

The primary applicable legislation is the Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 and where risk assessment is required, the Management of Health and Safety Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000. In respect of the dog(s), it is the Dogs (Northern Ireland) Order 1983 and as amended.

Bringing dogs into the classroom

It is important that suitable arrangements are in place prior to any dog being brought into the school. These arrangements should be in the form of a written school policy on Dogs in School, which should be based on the following guidance:

- Agreement should be sought from the school principal and parents should be notified of the intention to bring a dog into the classroom.
- A [risk assessment](#) should be carried out prior to the visit of any dog into the classroom.
- Allergic reactions cannot be discounted from handling dogs, or just from being near them. Children known to have allergic reactions to dogs must have their access restricted.
- Consideration should be given to the temperament and characteristics of the breed of dog being brought in, including the size of the dog and its age. You may wish to [consult the kennel club breed standards](#) if you have any concerns as to the suitability of a particular breed of a dog.
- A puppy will not have its adult teeth and will be unlikely to cause the same degree of damage as an adult dog. Thought should also be given to the environment that the animal has been brought up in. Dogs and puppies which have been brought up in a family home environment should be well used to the behaviour and sounds of children.
- Dogs that are ill must not be brought into schools.

- Dogs with young puppies (those under the age of 8 weeks) must not be brought into school as there is the risk of the mother becoming overprotective, which may cause her to react out of character.
- Dogs must be kept on a lead at all times and under the full control and supervision of their owner.
- Children must never be left alone with dogs and there must be appropriate adult supervision at all times.
- Prior to the visit, pupils should be reminded of what is appropriate behaviour around dogs. Children are likely to become excited and it is important that they react calmly and carefully around the dog(s). They should not make sudden movements and must never stare into a dog's eyes as this could be threatening for the dog. Children should be told not to put their face near a dog and should always approach it standing up.
- Children should be told never to go near or disturb a dog that is sleeping or eating.
- Children must not be allowed to play too roughly with the dog.
- Consider the number of children who would be patting/stroking or meeting the dog. A large number of children could cause the dog to become nervous and agitated. On-going monitoring of the situation is vital. Since dogs cannot speak, the only way they can be understood is through their body language. Growling or baring of teeth indicate that the dog is feeling angry or threatened. Flattened ears, tail lowered or between their legs, hiding behind their owner, whining or growling are signs that the dog is frightened or nervous. Dogs displaying any of these warning signs should be immediately removed from the environment.
- Children should not feed, or eat close to the dogs.
- Children should always wash their hands after handling a dog.

Parents bringing dogs into school grounds

Dogs are not allowed on the school site.

This information will be circulated to parents through the school newsletter and through the school website.

Stray dogs on school property

If there is a stray dog in the school grounds, the local Council Dog Warden will be contacted who will come and remove the dog from the school.

Dog owner walking or exercising their dog(s) in school grounds

School playgrounds are private property and should not be used for the purposes of exercising dogs. In the first instance, if it is safe to do so, the principal should approach the dog owner and ask them to leave. If the practice continues or you feel unable to approach the dog

owner, the Council dog warden or the police should be contacted. If this is a particular problem for the school, the principal should ensure the playground is inspected prior to use for evidence of dog fouling.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Board of Governors has a responsibility to ensure that the school has a written policy for dogs in School.

The principal is responsible for developing this guidance into a school policy and implementing it.

Teachers and staff are required to abide by this policy.

The Health and Safety Officer is responsible for providing information, advice and guidance as and when required.

Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

The Kennel Club – A club established for the registration of pedigree dogs in the UK.

Associated Documents

Dogs Trust 'Be Safe Be Kind' Learning about dogs and how to be safe around them.

[Dog Trust: Be Safe Be Kind](#)

[Dogs Trust Resources for Teachers](#)

The Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978

The Management of Health and Safety Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000.

The Dogs (Northern Ireland) Order 1983 and as amended.