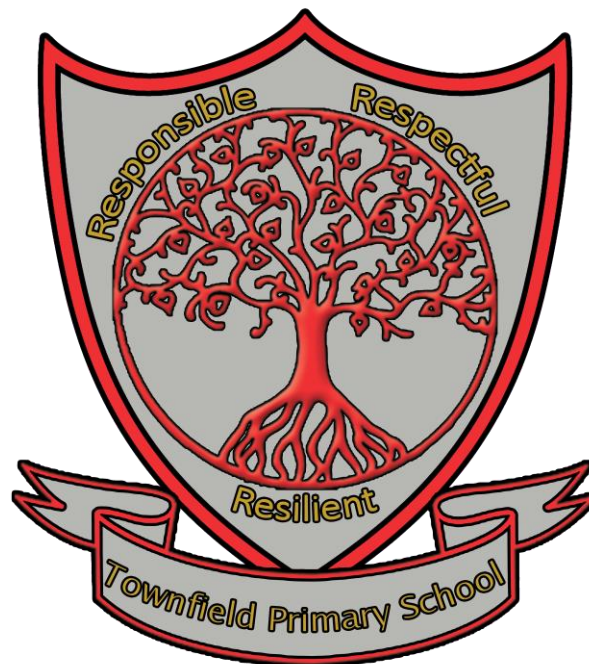


Townfield Primary School

School Dog Policy



This Policy was adopted Autumn 2021

This Policy is due to for review Autumn 2022

Responsible Respectful Resilient

Townfield Primary School School Dog Policy

“Mabel”



Benefits of having a school dog for our children:

- **To improve self-esteem.** When given age appropriate tasks to complete, such as helping with the care of a pet, children show an improvement in self-esteem.
- **To develop empathy.** Studies showed that children who owned or have regular contact with animals were more empathetic towards others.
- **To help children feel supported.** Several researchers found that children often name their pet when asked who they would go to with a problem.
- **To reduce stress.** Petting a dog has been proven to lower cortisol levels in both the person and the pet. Also, research has found that children's stress levels decrease when reading aloud to a dog.
- **To promote happiness.** Playing with a pet raises levels of serotonin and dopamine, which calm the mind and increase the mood.
- **To improve health.** Those children who would benefit from being more physically active have a reason to move, walk, run, throw a ball for, train a dog, and understand the need for this to happen on a regular basis and the impact of not doing so. Several studies have also suggested that children who have regular contact with dogs have a decreased chance of developing allergies. A current study is underway to determine if dogs could even have a probiotic-like effect on the human body.
- **To improve attendance and punctuality.** Settings that have a school dog have reported an improvement in attendance and punctuality.
- **To improve behaviour.** The reward of looking after the school dog will be a positive behaviour incentive for many children. Schools who have a school dog have reported a significant decrease in aggressive and violent behaviour.
- **To support transition into a new setting.** Children feeling shy or reluctant to enter school or a new class will be supported by the school dog.

- **To support friendships.** The school dog provides opportunities for children to have a common interest and shared experiences.
- **To improve cognitive skills.** Some research has suggested that children who talk to animals, whether by giving praise and commands or just babbling, show improved cognitive development.
- **To improve literacy skills.** When a child read with the school dog, she acts as a non-judgemental listener and offers comfort to the child who may find reading difficult or stressful.
- **To support children with a fear or uncertainty around animals.** School dogs help to build positive and fear free relationships with animals. These skills can then be transferred in the community.

Who is the school dog?

Mabel a cockerpoo has been chosen to be the school dog. A cockerpoo was chosen because it is an intelligent breed that will respond well to training and is also known to be good with children. Cockerpoos also sheds little hair and dander which will reduce any risk of allergies to children and staff.

Mabel's specific duties with include:

Waiting on the school gate in the morning and spending time with children who are reluctant attenders/poor attenders in school;

- Rewarding good behaviour. Children will be chosen to be the dog monitor for the week, taking Mabel for walks with a trained adult at lunchtime;
- Supporting children with emotional needs by spending time with children who visit the learning mentor;
- Spending time in classrooms. This could be the class with the best attendance, or to support a particular learning activity, or to develop a calm learning environment;
- Working with reluctant readers, listening to individuals or small groups of children read;
- Spending time with children in the Base. Mabel will be taught sign language so Base children can also communicate with Mabel;
- Spending time in the Forest School or accompanying children on school visits.

Mabel's duties will increase as she matures.

Is there a risk in bringing a dog into a school environment?

Yes 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 a dog. Therefore, it is just another risk that needs to be managed. A thorough risk assessment has been carried out and this is attached to this document.

Dogs are not allowed anywhere on the school site at any time unless specifically authorised by the headteacher. This includes drop off and collection times. This policy outlines measures put in place to allow the school dog to be present.

School Policy:

Costs

- The dog is legally be owned by Mrs Durham and she is responsible for Mabel and her wellbeing.
- Mrs Durham is responsible for all costs associated with owning the dog. The school budget supports insurance and supported some initial training costs, including staff training

Risks

- A thorough risk assessment has taken place and this will be reviewed annually. Some key points:

Awareness of Mabel and permissions

- Staff, parents and children have been informed by letter that a dog will be in school.
- All visitors will be informed about the dog and related protocols on arrival and office staff will relay visitor issues (including allergies) to a member of SLT asap.
- Parents will be made aware of Mabel through the school admission process and will be asked to identify whether their child has a dog allergy or if they have any other concern about their child having contact with Mabel. Regular communication with parents will ask for updates about their child's allergies or concerns with Mabel
- No child or adult will be forced to have contact with Mabel if they do not wish to.

Training

- Mabel has been trained following the methods set out by Erica Peachy. Erica has a BSc (Hons) in Psychology and has worked at the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies in Edinburgh, as a Research Associate. She is a member of the both the Association of Pet Behaviour Counsellors and the Association of Pet Dog Trainers. She is registered with the Animal Behaviour and Training Council as both a Clinical Animal Behaviourist and also an Animal Training Instructor. Erica has provided training through one to one training sessions, puppy classes as well as training relevant school staff. Mabel will working through the 'Good Citizen Dog Scheme'.
- Updates about training methods and advice about handling Mabel will be regularly updated to staff via meetings and emails.

Interactions between Mabel and the children

- Children should be reminded of what is appropriate behaviour around the dog. Children will be informed and reminded regularly through assemblies and information posters displayed around the school:
 - Children should only approach Mabel one or two a time.
 - Children should ask the adult in charge if they are allowed to touch Mabel.
 - Children should remain calm around the dog.
 - 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 not put their face near Mabel and should always approach her standing up.
 - Children should never go near or disturb Mabel when she is sleeping or eating.
 - No adults or children are allowed to play roughly with the dog.
 - Everyone must wait until Mabel is sitting or lying down before touching or stroking her.
 - Children must be taught to stroke her body rather than head or tail.
 - Children are not allowed to feed the dog and Mabel will not be allowed in areas where food is being eaten.
 - Children should always wash their hands after handling a dog.
- Mabel will be kept on a lead when moving between classrooms or on a walk and will be under the full control and supervision of a trained adult.
- Children must never be left alone with the dog and there will be appropriate adult supervision at all times.
- If the dog is surrounded by a large number of children, the dog could become nervous and agitated. Therefore the adult in charge of Mabel must ensure that s/he monitors the situation.
- Dogs express their feelings through their body language. Growling or bearing 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. If the dog is displaying any of these warning signs he should be immediately removed from that particular situation or environment.
- Mrs Durham will know the whereabouts of the dog and which staff are supervising at all times.
- The dog will be included in the fire evacuation procedure under the supervision of Mrs Durham or a trained adult Mabel has been assigned to.
- If someone reports having an issue with the dog, this information must be passed to the headteacher or a deputy as soon as possible. All concerns will be responded to by the headteacher.

Mabel and hygiene

- Any dog foul will be cleaned immediately and disposed of appropriately. Mabel will have a designated toileting area that will be fenced off from the children. All adults supervising Mabel will carry a bag containing poo bags, hand gel, gloves, blue roll and treats.

Other dogs on the school site

- Only the school dog is allowed on the premises. All other dogs must not come on site unless they are a known therapy or assistance dog and the headteacher has been informed beforehand.

Other points

- The Local Academy Councillors have the right to refuse entry to the dog.
- If Mabel is ill, she will not be allowed into school.

Dog Welfare

- Mabel will be walked regularly and given free time outside.
- She will have regular rest breaks away from the children.
- Mabel will be kept in the DHT office and will only have supervised contact with children and visitors.
- She will have unlimited access to food and water.
- Her behaviour will be carefully monitored and if there are any concerns about her body language, she will be removed from the situation.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- The Local Academy Councillors have a responsibility to ensure that the school has a written policy for dogs in school.
- The Head teacher is responsible for implementing this policy.
- Teachers, staff, pupils, parents and visitors are required to abide by this policy.
- The curriculum will support learning about dogs and how best to behave around our dog. This will include highlighting that not all dogs are well trained and that caution must be used around unknown dogs outside school.

Annex 1 – School Dog Risk Assessment (LA)



Risk Assessment:

Location or Address:	TOWNFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL	Date assessment Undertaken:	30.9.21	Assessment undertaken By:	Alison Durham
Activity or Situation:	SCHOOL DOG - Mabel	Review Cycle:	Annually	Signature :	

(1) Hazard	(2) Who can be harmed and how?	(3) What controls exist to reduce the risk?	Risk Score Consequence X Likelihood	(4) Any further action
Dog biting or scratching a person.	Children, staff & visitors – Cuts, bruises, broken bones, lacerations.	<p>Mabel has been trained following the methods set out by Erica Peachy. Erica has a BSc (Hons) in Psychology and has worked at the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies in Edinburgh, as a Research Associate. She is a member of the both the Association of Pet Behaviour Counsellors and the Association of Pet Dog Trainers. She is registered with the Animal Behaviour and Training Council as both a Clinical Animal Behaviourist and also an Animal Training Instructor. Erica has provided training through one to one training sessions, puppy classes as well as training relevant school staff.</p> <p>Mabel will working through the 'Good Citizen Dog Scheme'. She has completed the 'Good Puppy and 'Good Dog' level. Staff supervising Mabel are trained to handle the dog. Qualified First Aiders on site. First Aid Kits.</p> <p>Mabel is always kept under supervision and when walking around the school will be on a lead and kept under control. Children are educated on how to behave around the dog. Contact for Emergency services is always available.</p>	3x2 = 6	Continued dog training program.

Dog jumping up at people.	Children, staff & visitors – scratches, bruises, cuts, broken bones.	<p>Mabel has been trained following the methods set out by Erica Peachy. Erica has a BSc (Hons) in Psychology and has worked at the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies in Edinburgh, as a Research Associate. She is a member of the both the Association of Pet Behaviour Counsellors and the Association of Pet Dog Trainers. She is registered with the Animal Behaviour and Training Council as both a Clinical Animal Behaviourist and also an Animal Training Instructor. Erica has provided training through one to one training sessions, puppy classes as well as training relevant school staff.</p> <p>Staff supervising Mabel are trained to handle the dog. Qualified First Aiders on site. First Aid Kits. Mabel is always kept under supervision and when walking around the school will be on a lead and kept under control. Children educated on how to behave around the dog. Contact for Emergency services. Mabel has undergone gradual conditioning to classrooms environments and moving around the school.</p>	3x2 = 6	Continued dog training program.
Allergies	Children, staff & visitors – asthma, skin conditions, anaphylactic symptoms.	<p>All staff and pupils wash their hands after handling Mabel. Dog training provided by accredited trainer (see above) Staff supervising the dog are trained to handle Mabel. Any accidental fouling/urination is immediately cleaned using proprietary cleaning products. Surfaces cleaned routinely to prevent the build- up of allergens. Qualified First Aiders on site. First Aid Kits. Mabel is regularly health checked & vaccinated.</p>	3x2 = 6	Regular requests for updated information from parents about children's allergies/concerns regarding Mabel.
Anxiety	Children, staff & visitors – Stress, panic attack.	<p>All visitors are made aware of Mabel as they enter at reception. No child, staff member or visitor will be asked to work with Mabel if they wish otherwise. Letters and website regularly inform parents of Mabel. Dog training provided by accredited trainer (see above). Mabel is always kept under supervision and when walking around the school. She is kept on a lead and kept under control. Mabel has undergone gradual conditioning to classrooms. Timetabled visits to classrooms.</p>	2x2 = 4	
Parasites, Fleas, Faeces, Associated diseases.	Children, staff & visitors – Infection, allergies, smell, bites.	<p>Fenced off area for Mabel to used for toileting that is cleaned immediately. Adults supervise Mabel during exercise and immediately clear up faeces and dispose of it. All staff and pupils wash their hands after handling the dog. Mabel is regularly health checked & vaccinated.</p>	3x2 = 6	

Financial Risk – Claims, Medical Vet Bills.	School – Liability Claims and medical cover.	Mabel is fully insured for medical treatment, using Petplan, school liability & employers insurance cover.	2x1 = 2	
Fire Evacuation	School dog – Locked in room/cage	Mabel is supervised at all times. Certain staff given roles of responsibility for Mabel. Fire detection throughout site. Fire alarm monitored. Fire Extinguishers in-situ Mabel is signed in every time she is on site as a staff member, and part of emergency roll call evacuation plan.	4x1 = 4	

INCREASING CONSEQUENCE

5

4

3

2

1

INCREASING LIKELIHOOD

1

2

3

4

5

5	5	10	15	20	25	Risk Rating	Action Required
4	4	8	12	16	20	17 - 25	Unacceptable – stop activity and make immediate improvements
3	3	6	9	12	15		
2	2	4	6	8	10	10 – 16	Tolerable – but look to improve within specified timescale
1	1	2	3	4	5		
						5 – 9	Adequate – but look to improve at review
						1 – 4	Acceptable – no further action but ensure controls are maintained

Likelihood:

5 – Very likely

4 – Likely

3 – Fairly likely

2 – Unlikely

1 – Very unlikely

Consequence:

5 – Catastrophic

4 – Major

3 – Moderate

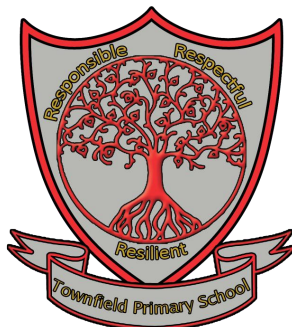
2 – Minor

1 – Insignificant

(5) REVIEW/ACTION PLAN

Review Date:	Action Plan:	Responsible Person:	Date Completed:
Review Date:	Action Plan:	Responsible Person:	Date Completed:
Review Date:	Action Plan:	Responsible Person:	Date Completed:

Townfield Primary School



School Dog

This is Mabel

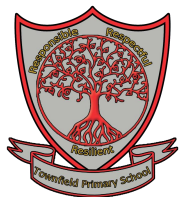


Mabel is very friendly, however we ask that you follow the guidance below:-

- Only one or two people at a time are allowed to say hello to Mabel;
- Ask, the adult with her, if you can approach Mabel;
- Do not put your face close to Mabel's face;
- Wash your hands after stroking Mabel;
- Only stroke Mabel on her back, not her face, top of her head or tail;
- Never disturb Mabel when she is eating or sleeping;
- Never give Mabel any of your food;
- Do not go into Mabel's toileting area.

If you are allergic to dogs or feel anxious about them please let a member of staff know.

Annex 3 – Withdrawal of Consent for Contact with School Dog / Dog Concerns Notification Form



Concerns Notification or Withdrawal of Consent for Contact with School Dog Form

If you have any concerns regarding your child having contact with the School Dog of any nature (e.g. allergies, personal fears/anxieties, cultural reasons, etc) please ensure School are made aware by completing the form below and submitting it to the School Office (Townfieldoffice@remat.org.uk).

Please be assured, no children will ever be left alone or be forced to interact with our School Dog.

A copy of our School Dog Policy and Risk Assessment can be found on our School website)

Child's Name: _____ Class _____

WITHDRAWAL OF CONSENT NOTIFICATION

☐ I **do not** give consent for my above named child to interact with the School Dog *(complete info below)*

OR

PERSONAL CONCERNS / ALLERGY NOTIFICATION

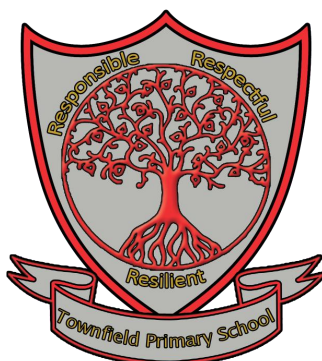
- ☐ My child has an allergy affecting their interaction with the School Dog *(complete info below)*
- ☐ My child suffers from fears/anxiety relating to dogs *(complete info below)*
- ☐ Other *(complete info below)*

Name: _____ (parent/carer)

Signed _____

Date _____












Annex 4 – School Dog Questions & Answers



School Dog Frequently Asked Questions

Q What is the purpose of a School Dog

A. There are many advantages to having a School Dog such as:-

- | | |
|---|--|
|  improve self-esteem |  improve behaviour |
|  develop empathy |  support transition into a new setting |
|  help children feel supported |  support friendships |
|  reduce stress |  improve literacy skills |
|  promote happiness |  improve health |
|  helping improve attendance |  support children with a fear or uncertainty around animals |

Q Who is the legal owner of the dog?

A. The legal owner of the dog will be Mrs Durham who will care for the dog out of school hours.

Q Is the dog from a reputable breeder?

A. Yes. We have researched breeders and have chosen a reputable breeder who has previously bred dogs to become school dogs and PAT dogs.

Q Will the dog be a distraction?

A. The dog will be kept in an office area. We will be careful to ensure that time spent with the school dog is shared among the children fairly. From observing school dogs in classrooms in other schools it is clear that the children become used to the dog being in the room and it actually supports a calm learning environment.

Q Has a risk assessment been undertaken?

A. Yes, we have carefully considered having a dog in school and sought advice from many sources, including other schools that successfully have a school dog. A School Dog Policy will be available to view on the Website.

Q Who is responsible for training?

An Appropriate professional training will be obtained. A trainer who works with the police dogs and guide dogs in Merseyside has agreed to help with the work. The children will also be educated on how to behave around the dog.

Q. How will the dog be toileted to ensure hygiene for all?

A. In the interest of health and hygiene our school dog will be toileted in a sectioned off area of the school site where children have no access. Thus there will be no chance of the children coming into contact with faeces. Our policy of no dogs in the playground is still applicable as we are unable to put effective control measures in place that guarantee temperament and safety when children come into unsupervised contact with unknown dogs.

Q How will the dog's welfare be considered?

A. As the puppy grows he will be walked mornings and lunchtime by school staff and the children. The dog will be kept in an Office area and will only have planned and supervised contact with children and visitors. The dog will be carefully trained over a period of time and will have unlimited access to water. We will work closely with other professionals to ensure the dog's welfare is always carefully considered.

Q How will this be managed where children have allergies?

A. We already manage a number of allergies at school and this will be no different for children and adults that are allergic to dogs. The breed of dog has also been chosen for its hypoallergenic properties. Individual needs will always be met and we are happy to work with parents to put additional control measures in place for individual allergies.

Q My child is frightened of dogs; how will you manage this?

A. Access to the dog is carefully managed and supervised and children do not need to have regular, close contact with it unless permission for this has been given. We hope to work closely with parents of children who are fearful of dogs to alleviate their fear and to teach them how to manage this.



Policy/Plan administration	
Version number	1.2
Details of any amendment(s)	Additions at paragraphs:- School policy points 1-3 Inclusion of Annex 1, 2, 3 & 4
Date of issue	Autumn 2020
Electronic copies of this plan are available from	The school office
Hard copies of this plan are available from	The school office
Date of next review	Autumn 2021
Person responsible for review	Updated by DH & CTGB