 Dexter, School Dog -RISK ASSESSMENT

Completed by Lisa Harris in conjunction with advice from the Dogs Trust <https://www.learnwithdogstrust.org.uk/school-dogs/school%20dogs%20guide.pdf> Circulated to staff and made available on the School Website

Date: February 2025 Review Date September 2025

| Hazard | Who is affected/at risk  | Risk rating  | Actions/control measures | Person responsible |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Bites, scratches or illness caused by the dogDog excrement and urine | Staff, pupils, handlers and visitors |  | * Dexter has been chosen and trained to be sociable and good natured. He is a KC registered pedigree labrador retriever. <https://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/search/dog-profile/?dogId=df8accd6-3bcf-ef11-8eea-6045bd126785> His mother is a Therapy dog in children’s care homes and his father is a well-trained working farm dog.
* There should be no unsupervised contact with the pupils.
* Pupils and staff are made aware of the procedures and etiquette on meeting and handling Dexter.
* Dexter will be up to date with his vaccinations, and treatment for worms and fleas
* Dexter will be supervised by Lisa Harris and kept under control when out of her office.
* All staff and pupils are required to wash their hands after contact with Dexter
* Dexter’s faeces and urine will be cleared up promptly and disposed safely by Lisa Harris
* A bag containing poo bags/ plastic bags, kitchen roll, antibacterial spray, rubber gloves etc will be available.
* Dexter will not go near food preparation areas
 | Lisa Harris |
| Allergies | Staff and pupils |  | * Letter sent to all parents/carers requesting information about any allergies
* Staff are trained to recognise signs of allergic reactions and protocols in place should a situation arise
* Parental permission sought for children to interact with the dog
* Any room used for the dog and pupils to interact should be well ventilated
* Alternative activities are provided in a separate room for those with allergies
* Dexter to be kept clean and well groomed
* Signs up to warn visitors of a dog presence
* Dog bedding kept in office within play pen area. Dog bedding and equipment washed and kept to a high standard.
* Regular vacuuming and cleaning of the office.
* Hand cleaning facilities and first aid kit available near the office.
 | Lisa HarrisParents to inform the school of allergies |
| Phobias  | Staff and pupils |  | * Letter sent to parents/carers requesting information about any phobias towards dogs
* Contact with Dexter is optional
* Alternative activities are provided in a separate room for those with a phobia
 | Lisa HarrisParents to inform the school of allergies |
| Noise, barking | Pupils who dislike loud noisesDisruption to lessons |  | * As Dexter will be socialised and introduced to the school at an early age he will become acclimatised to a noisy environment so the risk of barking should be greatly minimised. Dexter will be removed from the situation if he continues to bark.
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| Activities and games involving the dog | Staff, pupils, dogs and handlers |  | * Lisa Harris to remain with the dog at all times
* Lisa Harris to set a limit for the number of pupils who can interact with a dog at one time
* Time limit will be set for how long Dexter will be involved in each session. It is advisable to keep this to no more than 30 minutes
* Lisa Harris to clean up urine and faeces using a pet-safe disinfectant
* School staff remove pupils who misbehave or upset the dog. The pupils in question will then be reminded about the code of conduct in relation to acceptable behaviour around the dog
* Any games played with the dog during sessions should be more cognitive based, such as scent games rather than high energy
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| Pupils misbehaving  | Dexter, Pupils and Adults |  | * Pupils and staff are required to complete a lesson on interacting safely with the dog. This should include understanding dog body language
* Pupils are told in advance what to expect and how to behave
* School staff are present at all times
* School staff are ready to remove any pupils who misbehave or upset the dog
* If Dexter is showing signs of distress, then the dog should be removed immediately
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| Damage caused to school materials, equipment and the school site | Dexter |  | * Dexter to remain on a lead at all times when in a session or being moved around the school site
* Dexter kept in secured rooms, with closed doors, but well-ventilated and not too hot or cold
* Lisa Harris to bring suitable toys if necessary
* Areas/classrooms are cleared as much as possible before the dog visits
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| Fire Drill, evacuation  | Dexter |  | * Clear evacuation exit available.
* Dexter will be under the supervision of Lisa Harris
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| Dexter becomes distressed  | DexterPupils and Adults |  | * Dexter will be trained and socialised using positive reinforcement approaches. He will be gradually introduced to children of different ages.
* Dexter will be given time to explore the school environment a number of times before being introduced to other children/ adults.
* Dog bed in office and play pen so Dexter has his own space to rest undisturbed.
* Dexter will be able to move away from a child, adult or situation if he chooses to.
* Dexter will not be approached by any pupil or adult whilst eating.
* If Dexter is showing signs of distress, worry or frustration, -looking away, lip licking, yawning out of context, baring teeth, growling, excessive barking- he will be removed to Lisa’s office.
* Dexter will be given time to adapt to and familiarise with the smell and presence of food during lunch times.
* When Dexter firsts comes into the school environment with children present, he will have a gradual introduction of one child at a time to reduce becoming overwhelmed. Time spent in school will be built up gradually.
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| Dexters welfare | Dexter |  | * Visit school in holidays and to introduce to sounds and smells without children present.
* Only one child should have physical interaction at any one time.
* Frequent monitoring of Dexter’s welfare for signs of distress
* Avoid periods of time where children behaviour may vary as this will be distressing for Dexter
* Set of clear rules for school staff, pupils and visitors on how to behave considerately around Dexter. This are to be revisited regularly
* Dogs Trust workshop for school staff and pupils.
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| Zoonosis |  |  | * Clean food and water bowls are supplied daily and separately from those used by people
* Food and water bowls are not shared with other animals on site
* No face-to-face contact
* Any cuts/open wounds are covered
* If Dexter has any cuts/open wounds, he should not be brought into school
* Dexter should receive regular vet check-ups and preventative treatments as directed
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