



**'Teddy'**

## School Dog Policy

Approved by Headteacher	Summer 2022
Next review date	Summer 2023

### Our Vision Statement

Children are at the heart of everything we do and Christ is the light that guides us. [John 8:12](#) "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life." We are committed to ensuring children encounter and achieve the highest possible standards through partnership with our entire school community. We provide a happy, stimulating environment rooted in Christian values. Our aim is to equip individuals with the Christian Values (courage, love, friendship, hope, forgiveness, and respect) and life skills needed to "Live in peace with each other" (Romans 12:16-18), to take their place in the wider world and to make a contribution to it. Mark 9:37 "Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me."

- Christian values and compassion are cherished and are the heartbeat of our actions.
- Every aspect of school life is centred around how to make a positive impact on every child.
- Children are nurtured to help them feel safe and happy.
- Everyone in our school is valued and respected
- We intend for every child to be able to grow, reach their full potential and develop a lifelong love of learning
- Everyone's efforts and achievements are celebrated
- We help each other to make healthy lifestyle choices.
- Everyone is encouraged to make a positive contribution to their future in a diverse world.

### Our Christian Values

COURAGE      LOVE      FRIENDSHIP      HOPE      FORGIVENESS      RESPECT



### **Introduction:**

There are many benefits to having a School Dog. Children can benefit both educationally and emotionally. A school dog is known to have a calming effect on pupils, reduce stress, improve behaviour and foster a sense of responsibility. In addition to these benefits, children take great enjoyment from interaction with animals.

The breed, Cockapoo, has been carefully selected due to its temperament and hypoallergenic properties.

This policy shows how we have thought carefully about school life with a pet dog and how, through careful management, there is a very low risk of harm.

### **Context:**

- The dog will be owned by Miss Beattie.
- Veterinary costs will be paid by Miss Beattie.
- The dog is a Cockapoo, chosen for its mild temperament and low shedding coat.
- The Head Teacher and Governors have agreed that a dog will bring many benefits to Lostock Gralam Church of England Primary School.
- The vast majority of pupils are very keen to have a dog on site. Where there are any concerns or fears expressed by individuals, control measures will be put in place.
- The risk assessment will be reviewed annually.
- When visitors and pupils arrive at school they will be advised of the presence of a dog.
- The dog will receive training from a professional dog trainer.

### **Day-to-day Management:**

#### **The dog will:**

- not be allowed in school if unwell.
- be kept on a lead when moving between classrooms or when on a walk.
- be under the full control and supervision of an adult at all times.
- have had all injections prior to joining Lostock.
- never be taken off the site by pupils.

#### **Pupils will:**

- NOT have sole responsibility for, or be left alone with, the dog.
- meet the dog in small groups.
- be reminded of what is appropriate behaviour around the dog every time they meet him:
  - always remain calm around the dog
  - do not make sudden movements/do be gentle
  - do not put your face near the dog
  - do not disturb the dog when it is eating or sleeping
  - do not eat close to the dog and never feed the dog.



- learn about how dogs express their feelings through their body language.
- Follow appropriate health and safety principles (see below).

### **Health and Safety Principles:**

- **Children will always wash their hands after handling the dog.**
- **Any toileting accidents will be cleaned up immediately and disposed of appropriately by the dog's owner or an appropriate member of staff. Children must never attempt to do this. Children will be removed from the area until it has been thoroughly cleaned.**
- **Should a bite (even playful) occur:**
  - Parents will be contacted immediately.
  - The wound will be cleaned and covered with a sterile, non-sticky dressing.
  - The child/adult will be released for medical attention.
  - All relevant staff will be informed.
  - A full investigation into the circumstances will be led by the Head Teacher.
  - The suitability of the dog will be reassessed by the Governors.

### **Reasons for having a School Dog:**

- School dogs are known to have a calming effect on pupils, particularly those with behavioural or learning difficulties. They can improve behaviour, reduce stress and improve self-esteem.
- Schools dog foster a sense of responsibility and teach children to nurture and respect life.
- In many schools, dogs are used to encourage struggling readers to practice reading aloud. Children who might be embarrassed to read aloud to the class or even adults are likely to be less scared to read to a dog. Research suggests that students who read to dogs show an increase in reading levels, word recognition, a higher desire to read and write and an increase in intrapersonal and interpersonal skills. *"It might be less stressful for a child to read aloud to a dog than to a teacher or a peer. After all, a dog won't judge or correct you."*
- Dogs in school offer an opportunity for improving social development. They are especially useful for teaching social skills and responsibility. With a dog in the classroom, pupils have the opportunity to learn how to care for the animal. This includes walking and grooming. Researchers report that involving students in the daily care of classroom dogs is a positive experience, promoting their own daily care.
- Dogs will be gentle and loving, but at the same time full of fun and enjoyment for the pupils. Those pupils who have performed incredibly well during the week or those who have achieved tasks set for them, will be rewarded with spending time during lunch or break-time to interact with the dog.
- Dogs can work with pupils on a one-to-one basis and will especially help those pupils who are going through upsetting/difficult times or are even scared of dogs. The dog will bring much joy and help to all the pupils they meet. Pupils who struggle with social interaction can find a reassuring friend in a dog.