



## Harrow Gate Primary Academy – Wellbeing dog in school Policy / Risk assessment

### Introduction

The value of pet 'therapy' is widely accepted as a powerful aid to stimulation and communication. Studies have shown that the presence of companion animals can improve the wellbeing of children (and staff) and lower the rate of anxiety, simply by making the environment happier, more enjoyable, and less forbidding.

The rationale behind this decision was as follows:

- For the school to have a pet that was able to live as naturally as conditions would allow.
- For the animal to be properly cared for outside of the school day.
- To have a pet that the children could interact with, and be of benefit to, the children's social and emotional development.

It is accepted that interacting with animals is not appropriate for all children but for some it has the potential to provide many positive benefits. Any parent who does not want their child to interact with the dog is invited to write to Mrs Galt and inform them of their wishes. There are no diseases associated with the puppy as her vet will be responsible for vaccinations completing regular health checks and necessary treatment. A copy of the dog's health records will be updated and kept in school.

The dog will also be insured.

### **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 a dog. Therefore, it is just another risk that needs to be managed.

### **School Policy**

The dog will be owned by **Karen Gibbon**. The dog is a Cockapoo chosen for its very mild temperament and non-moulting coat. She will be responsible for 'Queenie's' regular visits to the vets, injections and inoculations.

The Trust, and the Principal have both agreed that the school can have a dog.

Staff have been informed, through staff briefing, that the school will have a dog. Parents have been informed by letter that a dog will be in school. At the start of each academic year there will be lessons around the school dog and parents will be given an opportunity to speak to the Principal with regards to the school dog. Mrs Galt has produced a risk assessment and this will be reviewed annually. The risk assessment is attached.

In the event of an emergency evacuation the adult supporting Queenie, will accompany her to the Fire Evacuation point.

Staff, visitors and students known to have allergic reactions to dogs must remain at a manageable distance. Parents are able to inform the school of any allergies on admission.

If the dog is unwell she will not be allowed into school.

The dog will normally be kept on a lead and harness until fully trained when moving between classrooms or on a walk and will be under the full control and supervision of an adult.

There may be occasions when the dog is working off lead, but this will only happen in an enclosed space and under the control of an adult. Before removing the lead, all present will be consulted

Students must never be left alone with the dog and there must be appropriate adult supervision at all times when the dog is present with students.

Students should be reminded of what is appropriate behaviour around the dog. Students 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. Students should not put their face near a dog and should always approach it standing up. Students should never go near or disturb the dog that is sleeping or eating. Students must not be allowed to play too roughly with the dog.

If the dog is surrounded by a large number of students, the dog could become nervous and agitated. Therefore, the adult in charge of the dog must ensure that s/he monitors the situation.

Dogs express their feelings 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. If the dog is displaying any of these warning signs he should be immediately removed from that particular situation or environment.

Children should not feed or eat close to the dogs.

Children should always wash their hands after handling a dog. As a school we will provide anti-bacterial gel.

Any dog foul will be cleaned immediately and disposed of appropriately by an adult.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Governing Body has a responsibility to ensure that the school has a written policy for dogs in School.

The Principal is responsible for implementing this policy.

Teachers and staff and children are required to abide by this policy.

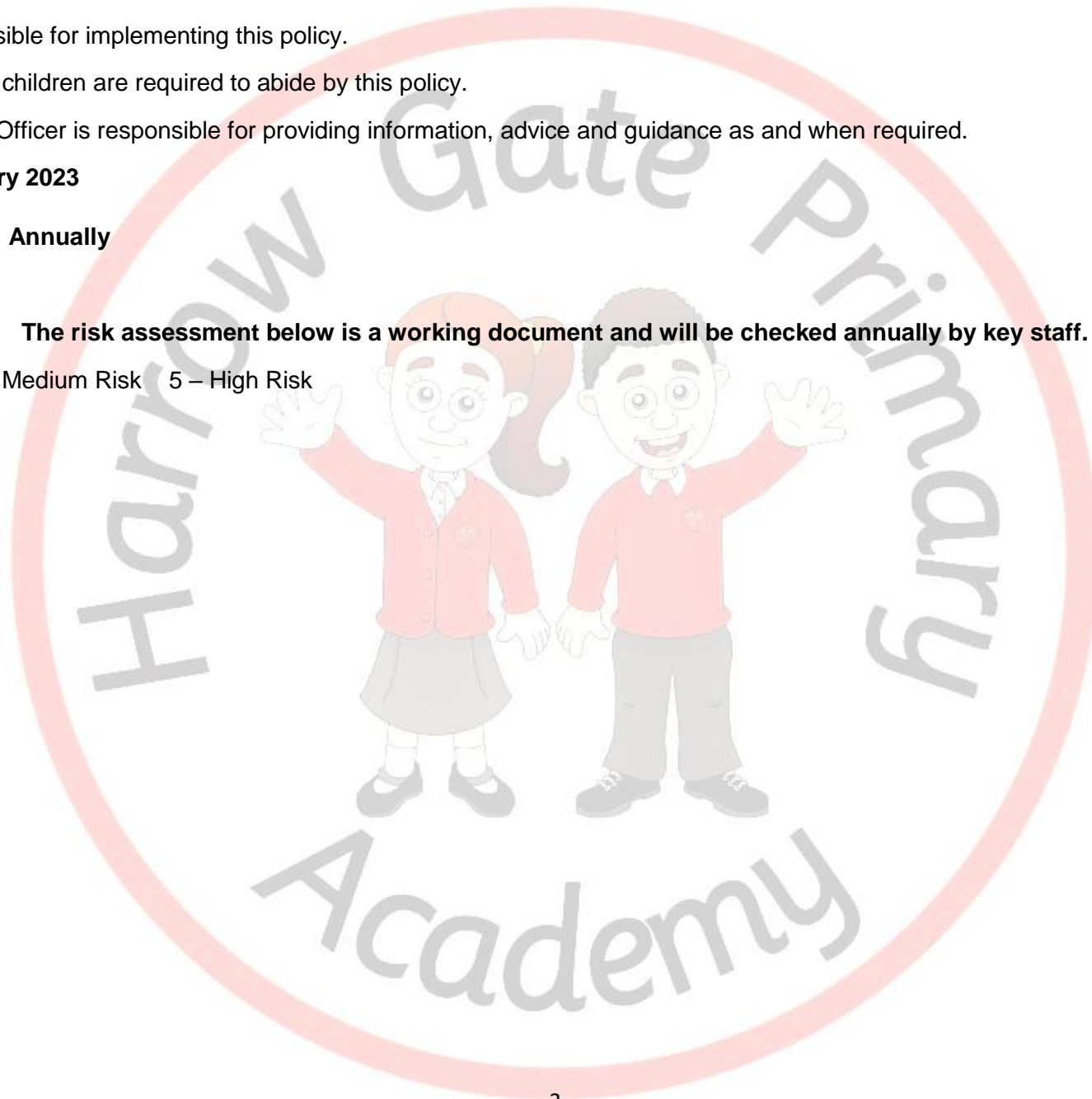
The Health and Safety Officer is responsible for providing information, advice and guidance as and when required.

**Policy written : January 2023**

**Policy to be reviewed: Annually**

**The risk assessment below is a working document and will be checked annually by key staff.**

Key: 1 – Low Risk 3 – Medium Risk 5 – High Risk



HAZARD	RISK	RISK 1-5	CONTROLS IN PLACE	REVIEW DATE
<p>Dog getting over excited when interacting with children.</p>	<p>Child knocked to the ground. Child scratched by dog. Child bitten by dog</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>The dog will always be in the care of the designated handler or a “responsible adult”. “Responsible adult” shall mean any member of staff who has read the policy fully, received appropriate training and is aware of the risks and responsibilities to both children and staff.</p> <p>The dog will never be left unattended.</p> <p>The dog will never be allowed to roam freely around the school premises.</p> <p>The dog must not be passed to any member of staff not deemed a “responsible adult” as defined above.</p> <p>Children will not be left unsupervised with the dog.</p> <p>The dog will always be on a lead when moving between classrooms or on a walk by the designated handler or “responsible adult” while the children are in school.</p> <p>Pupils have been and will continue to be taught about the consequences of their actions.</p> <p>Education of this nature is continually given to children, and often to the whole school, through assemblies and PSHCE sessions.</p> <p>Pupils will be taught what to do to prevent the dog from chasing them.</p> <p>The dog will undergo puppy training at 8 weeks and formal training from the age of 14 weeks with an experienced dog trainer. Evidence must be recorded and kept in school.</p> <p>The dog will also undertake Pets As Therapy training.</p> <p>Risk of scratching and biting will reduce, and the risk assessment will be reviewed, as the dog progresses through her weekly training. Evidence must be recorded and kept in school.</p>	<p>Summer 23</p>

HAZARD	RISK	RISK 1-5	CONTROLS IN PLACE	REVIEW DATE
			<p>All staff will have been introduced to the dog and expectations of having a school dog.</p> <p>The designated handler will ensure the dog attends the vets regularly to ensure she is in good health and that her claws are kept short. Evidence must be recorded and kept in school.</p> <p>The room where the dog is kept will have a sign on the door to inform others that the dog is present.</p> <p>The room where the dog is kept must have a lock on it out of the reach of children, and the door must be locked if the dog is in there on their own.</p>	
The dog causing allergies.	Children or staff have an allergic reaction.	1	<p>Parents have been asked to inform the school of any known allergies before the introduction of the dog to the school.</p> <p>If required, a list of children and/or staff who should not interact with the dog will be kept in school.</p> <p>The children will have the opportunity to interact with the dog under the supervision of the designated handler or “responsible adult” and those with allergies will be able to opt out of interaction.</p> <p>Children will be taught to wash their hands after active participation with the dog.</p>	Summer 23
Children getting germs from the dog.	Children or staff will contract diseases that can be carried by dogs.	1	<p>Should the dog defecate on the school site, a member of staff will clear this up immediately and dispose of it in a safe way</p> <p>The dog will be trained to toilet in an area of the grounds that children have limited access to. The area will be disinfected as required.</p> <p>All immunisations will be kept up to date in accordance with the European Pet Passport Scheme and a record will be kept of this. Evidence must be recorded and kept in school. Flea treatment is carried out at 4-week intervals and is recorded. Evidence must be recorded and kept in school.</p>	Summer 23

HAZARD	RISK	RISK 1-5	CONTROLS IN PLACE	REVIEW DATE
			<p>The dog will not be allowed in the school dining hall at meal times, and never in the food preparation area.</p> <p>The dog will be regularly wormed. Evidence must be recorded and kept in school.</p>	
Noise/barking	Some children unable to cope with the noise	1	<p>The dog is being introduced into the school environment from an early age so will be used to a noisy environment so is less likely to bark.</p> <p>Extra orientation sessions in place for specific children.</p> <p>Ensuring some children have ear defenders if needed</p>	Summer 23
Financial cost of the dog's upkeep.	School unable to afford the ongoing cost of the dog's day to-day upkeep or medical bills.	3	<p>The dog will be insured by the school for Public Liability Insurance.</p> <p>All veterinary fees are covered by 'Pet Plan' under the dog's insurance.</p> <p>The school's budget has been adjusted to include the costs of having the dog.</p>	Summer 23