



NORTHUMBERLAND HEATH PRIMARY SCHOOL

DOGS IN SCHOOL
RISK ASSESSMENT

Ignite the spark, reveal the champion

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 well-being of children 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 also 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 (Treacle) is invited to write to Ms Indresano and inform them of their wishes. The vet will be responsible for vaccinations, completing regular health checks and necessary treatment. A copy of Treacle's health records will be updated and kept in school. Treacle will also be insured.

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

Hazard	Risk	Risk 1 - 5	Controls in place	Review date
Dog getting over excited when interacting with children.	Child knocked to the ground. Child scratched by dog. Child bitten by dog.	1 2	Treacle will always be in the care of a responsible adult and will never be allowed to roam freely around the school premises. Children will not be left unsupervised with Treacle.	July 2025

			<p>Treacle will always be on a lead when she is being walked around the 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 PSHE sessions.</p> <p>Pupils will be taught what to do to prevent Treacle from chasing them.</p> <p>Treacle will undergo formal training from the age of 14 weeks with an experienced dog trainer.</p> <p>Risk of scratching and biting will reduce and the risk assessment will be reviewed as she progresses through her weekly training.</p> <p>All staff will have been introduced to Treacle and expectations of having a school dog.</p> <p>She will attend the vets regularly to ensure she is in good health and that her claws are kept short.</p>	
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<p>The dog causing allergies.</p>	<p>Children or staff have allergic reactions</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Parents have been asked to inform the school of any known allergies before the introduction of Treacle to the school.</p> <p>If required a list of any children/staff who should not interact with Treacle will kept in school.</p> <p>The children will have the opportunity to interact with Treacle with the permission of the sole carer (Mrs Bruce), or through visits which are on Treacle's timetable.</p> <p>Children will be taught to wash their hands after active participation with Treacle.</p>	<p>July 2025</p>
<p>Children getting germs from the dog.</p>	<p>Children or staff will contract diseases that can be carried by dogs.</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Should Treacle defecate on the school site, the member of staff responsible for her at that time will clear this up immediately and dispose of it in a safe way.</p> <p>Treacle will be trained to toilet in an area off the grounds that children have limited access to. The area will be disinfected if required.</p> <p>All immunisations are kept up to date in accordance with the European Pet Passport Scheme and a record will be kept of this.</p> <p>Flea treatment is carried out at 4 week intervals and is recorded. Treacle will be regularly wormed.</p>	<p>July 2025</p>

			Treacle will not be allowed in the school dining hall at meal times; and never in the food preparation area.	
Noise/barking	Some children unable to cope with the noise	1	Treacle has been introduced into the school environment from an early age so is used to a noisy environment so is less likely to bark. Extra orientation sessions in place for specific children. Ensuring some children have ear defenders if needed.	July 2025
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.	1	Treacle will be insured by the school, for Public Liability Insurance. All vets costs are covered by 'Pet Plan' under her private insurance paid for by the school. The school's budget has been adjusted to include the costs of having Treacle.	Annually

Key: 1 Low risk 3 medium risk of injury 5 high risk of injury