



# DANES HILL SCHOOL

## Dogs on School Sites Policy

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### Contents

1.	Aims .....	2
2.	Policy Context .....	2
3.	Code of Conduct.....	2

## **1. Aims**

1.1 To ensure the safety and well-being of pupils, staff and visitors to the school and to minimise the risk of accident or injury to people or animals within the school grounds.

## **2. Policy Context**

2.1 Governors and staff recognise that dogs are an important part of life for some families and, as such, are often included in day-to-day activities such as walking children to and from school. In our teaching we promote the relationship between people and their pets and accept and encourage the idea of pets as 'family members'. We see pet ownership as a valuable educational experience for children. It also recognises that some staff are dog owners.

2.2 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.

2.3 The school also acknowledges the views of families who have chosen not to have dogs or other pets. It also recognises that bringing dogs onto school premises might pose a health and safety risk to pupils and others on site and could be unsettling for them as they arrive and leave school. There are added risks of dogs fouling, dogs biting or showing aggressive, unpredictable behaviour.

2.4 The School acknowledges that even well-behaved dogs can behave unpredictably when placed in an unfamiliar, busy, noisy and crowded school environment and that this can lead to unexpected behaviour in even the best-behaved pet. Children can also behave unpredictably when in the presence of dogs, especially when they are not used to being with them.

2.5 It is in considering this context, that this Policy and Code of Conduct has been drafted.

## **3. Code of Conduct**

3.1 The School requires that all staff, parents and any visitors intending to bring their dogs onto the school premises, adhere to this Code of Conduct which states:

- All visiting dogs must be kept on a non-extendable lead that keeps the dog close to the adult who is control of them;
- No dogs accompanying children to and from school are allowed inside any school buildings, only dogs resident on the School site or assistance dogs are allowed inside school buildings;
- Visiting dogs must not be left unsupervised on the school premises and must not be left in the sole care of anyone under the age of 18. No dog can be tied up and left unattended on or near the school sites at any time - dogs should be kept away from entry ways so that children have a choice whether they want to come in direct contact with dogs;
- If any parent or pupil objects to a dog's presence, then arrangements must be made to ensure that it is kept away from them. If necessary, the dog may need exclusion from specific areas;
- In any event, no dogs are allowed on the Pre-Prep site other than *Bella and Bertie, owned by the*

*Head of Pre-Prep.*

- The adult bringing the dog on site is responsible for cleaning up and removing from site any soiling by their dog on the school grounds and failure to do so will mean the dog will no longer be allowed on the school grounds (N.B. dog waste must not be put into the general school bins);
- All dogs coming onto school grounds must be properly vaccinated and treated for fleas and other parasites, regularly groomed and checked for signs of infection or other illness;
- Claws should be kept trimmed to reduce the risk of scratches;
- Pets that are ill should be diagnosed and treated by a vet and are not allowed on the school premises until their health is restored. All pets should have their coats cleaned regularly.
- When bringing dogs on to the site, dog owners do so with an absolute understanding that their dog has no issues around children, has never displayed any aggression towards children or others and that the owner believes the dog is fully trustworthy in a school environment;
- It is understood that bringing dogs to school is a privilege, not a right and is done at the absolute discretion of the Head.
- During holiday periods staff may bring their dogs into the Prep School with them after gaining permission to do so from the Head. The dogs must be supervised at all times and adhere to the rules for the school site when there are children present at holiday clubs.
- A risk assessment is completed for all residential dogs that come in close contact with pupils inside the school buildings.