



School Dog Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q Who is the legal owner of the dog and who pays for its costs?

A The legal owner of the dog will be Miss Jackson. She will bear the costs associated with owning the dog at home; the school budget will support and training costs and insurance. There is a school dog contract in place which identifies and sets out all therapy dog related costs. The school's public liability insurance covers a school therapy dog as long as stringent measures are in place including a robust risk assessment, the parental choice of accessing the dog for their child/children, a responsible owner trained alongside the dog and appropriate pet insurance.

Q Where is the dog from?

A The dog is a rescue from Cyprus. Miss Jackson, the school and Underdog International, where the dog was adopted from, discussed the appropriateness of the dog for this role. She was approximately 1 year old when adopted by Miss Jackson (July 2021). The dog is a Labrador mix who has a good temperament, intelligence and a short coat to try and eliminate any fur allergies.

Q Has a risk assessment been undertaken?

A Yes, we have carefully considered having a dog in school and sought advice from many sources, including other schools that successfully have a school dog.

Q Who is responsible for training?

A Miss Jackson will be the legal owner of the dog and as a result, will be responsible for her training, school will be funding the dog's training towards becoming the school therapy dog. Appropriate professional training will be obtained and the dog will work towards being trained as a therapy dog with a 1:1 trainer with advice from the Pets As Therapy charity, The Dogs Trust, and The Kennel Club.

Q How will the dog be toileted to ensure hygiene for all?

A In the interest of health and hygiene our school dog will be toileted when taken out for walks around the grounds.

Q Will the dog be a distraction to pupils' learning?

A The dog will be kept in Miss Jackson's office secured when needed with a baby gate. To enable the dog to have more space to roam when she is not working, she also has access to the Head Teachers office, Deputy Head's Office and Business Managers Office, all who will support Miss Jackson in caring for the school dog. This area is also contained within a baby gate to ensure the office can be accessed. The dog will also attend meetings with staff to support further socialisation, and support staff well-being, following consultation with staff beforehand.

Q What if my child is scared of dogs? Will they be forced to be in the same room as the dog?

A The dog will be kept in Miss Jackson's Office and Miss Jackson will ensure the school dog only comes into contact with children who are happy to have contact with her and where there has been no refusal of permission by parents, this will be under strict supervision. A pupil will not be forced to be in contact with the dog at any time against their wishes. We hope to work closely with parents of children who are fearful of dogs to alleviate their fear and to teach them how to manage this using evidence based interventions such as graded exposure.

Q How will the dog's welfare be considered?

A The dog's welfare will be carefully monitored. The dog will be walked regularly throughout the day and given free time outside of sessions to rest and play. The dog will be carefully trained over a period of time and will have appropriate access to food, treats, water and toys.

Q How will this be managed where children have allergies?

A Children will not need to touch the dog or be in the same room as the dog at any point which will relieve the possibility of allergic reactions. We already manage a number of allergies at school and this will be no different for children and adults that are allergic to dogs. Individual needs will always be met and we are happy to work with parents to put additional control measures in place for individual allergies. She will be regularly groomed to reduce any possibility of allergens. A letter will go out to all pupils at the start of each year to ask about allergies or where parents refuse to allow their child to access the dog.