

DOG POLICY

Policy for bringing dogs on to Westbrook Hay site

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for staff, pupils, parents, visitors and contractors regarding dogs on the school site. This policy applies to:
 - Accompanying parents/guardians whilst dropping off and picking up their children;
 - Staff bringing dogs to school during the school day;
 - Dogs living in residential accommodation;
- 1.2. The school recognises that children can benefit from contact with pets and other animals, as this increases their understanding of responsibility and helps to develop their empathy and nurturing skills. The development of these skills is a fundamental part of the school's personal, health and social education curriculum. In addition to these benefits children take great enjoyment from interaction with pets and other animals.
- 1.3. With dogs being one of the UK's most popular pets, children are likely to have considerable exposure to dogs, in particular, outside school. Developing children's awareness of how to behave safely around dogs is therefore important.
- 1.4. Dogs may also be brought in to school by outside agencies, e.g. Guide Dogs for the Blind or animal rescue charities such as the Dogs Trust.

2. RISK OF DOGS ON THE SCHOOL SITE

- 2.1. The school recognises that there are risks in allowing dogs on to site, including biting incidents and barking which may frighten children. Parents and staff may understandably have concerns regarding dogs on the school site. However, it is the school's aim to control risks by asking staff, parents, guardians, visitors and contractors to follow some simple rules, exercise common sense and encourage the sensible behaviour of pupils around dogs.

3. LEGISLATION

- 3.1. The school is required to comply with all legislation including, and not limited to, the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. This legislation establishes the standards that must be met to ensure the health and safety of all employees and others (pupils, parents, guardians, contractors and visitors) who may be affected by any school activity, and is enforced by the Health and Safety Executive.

4. BRINGING DOGS ON TO THE SCHOOL SITE

- 4.1. Anyone bringing a dog onto the school site must ensure that they are on a lead, supervised at all times and controlled so that it does not scare children or adults, or negatively impact on children's welfare or learning at any time. Children must never be left alone in charge of the dog, unless permission is given by parents or guardians to do so.
- 4.2. It is imperative that dogs are not allowed to foul the school site. In the event of any dog foul, it should be removed immediately by the adult responsible and disposed of appropriately.

- 4.3. Consideration should be given to the temperament and characteristics of the breed of dog brought on to the school site, including the size of the dog and its age.
- 4.4. Thought should also be given to the environment that the animal has been brought up in. Dogs and puppies brought up in a family home will be more accustomed to the behaviour and sounds of children.
- 4.5. Large numbers of children could cause a dog to become nervous, over excited or agitated. Dogs displaying any warning signs that they are becoming agitated must be immediately removed from the environment by the adult in charge of the dog.
- 4.6. Aggressive dogs, or those with a history of aggression, must not be brought on to the school site. Dogs with young puppies (those under the age of eight weeks) should not be brought on to the school site as there is a risk of the mother becoming over protective, which may cause her to act out of character.

5. WALKING OR EXERCISING DOGS ON THE SCHOOL SITE

- 5.1. The school sports fields and play areas must not be used for the purposes of walking or exercising dogs. There is a public footpath around the school that may be used for this purpose.

6. STAFF BRINGING DOGS ON TO SITE

- 6.1. It is a privilege for staff to bring their dogs on to site, and with privileges comes responsibility. A member of staff wishing to bring their dogs in to school must seek prior approval from the Head Teacher, who may refuse permission or insist on a trial period, during which observations will be made.
- 6.2. The dog must be on a lead at all times when moving around the school site during school hours. Any fouling must be dealt with immediately and removed.
- 6.3. Residential staff are permitted to exercise their dogs on the school fields, but only outside of school hours, when there are no children on site, and providing the dog is under the care and control of their owner at all times.
- 6.4. The Animal Welfare Act 2006 introduced a duty of care for all pet owners to provide for their animals a suitable environment, a suitable diet, the ability to exhibit normal behaviour patterns, protection from pain, suffering, injury and disease and consideration of the animal's needs to be housed with, or apart, from other animals. Unfortunately, many people believe that it is alright to leave a dog in a car on a warm day if the windows are left open or they are parked in the shade, but in truth, it is still a very dangerous situation for the dog. A car can become very hot very quickly, even when it does not feel that warm. When it is 22 degrees outside temperature, in a car it can reach an unbearable 47 degrees within the hour. As a school we recommend dogs are not brought onto site to be left in cars during the school day.

7. DOGS IN THE CLASSROOM

- 7.1. A risk assessment will be undertaken prior to any dog being brought in to the classroom.
- 7.2. Pupils will not have unsupervised access to any dog and will be told how to behave around the dog and handle it safely. Where the school has been informed that a pupil has an allergy, they will be kept away from the dog as appropriate.
- 7.3. Children will wash their hands thoroughly after handling the dog.
- 7.4. Any dog whose presence is affecting children's learning in a negative manner in any way must be removed immediately as decided and instructed by any member of the School's Executive Group.