



Animals On Site Policy

Title of Policy	Animals on Site Policy
Applies to	Whole School: Staff and Volunteers
Endorsed by	Bursar
Responsibility	Head of HR
Date reviewed	Michaelmas 2023
Next review	Michaelmas 2024

Animals on Site generally

Under section 89 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, Governing Bodies must keep land that is under their control and is open to the air, free from litter, refuse and animal excrement, so far as is practical.

The School covers a wide area of Wells City and adjoining fields (other than School playing fields) where animals owned by staff members and parents have been welcomed, provided that they are under their owners' control. The School recognises that dogs, cats and wild animals, including rabbits, foxes and badgers are part of the countryside and cannot be excluded from access to certain areas.

The School will take reasonable precautions to reduce risks to the health of pupils, parents, staff members and visitors which might be associated with animals whether companion or wild.

It is the School's policy **not to allow** animals including dogs and or other pets on School grounds in most circumstances and contractors are not allowed to bring dogs on site under any circumstances. However, exceptions are made as described below.

The School recognises that dogs are an important part of life for many of our families. 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. We also recognise that many staff who reside on site are dog owners.

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 School acknowledges the views of families who have chosen not to have dogs or other pets. The School also recognises that bringing dogs onto the site might pose a health and safety risk to our pupils and others on site and could also be unsettling. There are added risks of dogs fouling, biting or showing aggressive or showing unpredictable behaviour.

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

Code of Conduct

The School requires that all staff members, parents or visitors intending to bring their dogs onto the site must adhere to this Code of Conduct which states:

- Parents and visitors may not bring dogs onto the grounds for the purpose of exercising or dog walking. Dogs may, however, accompany parents and visitors when watching matches and may accompany parents/guardians when dropping off/collecting pupils and the following requirements must be adhered to
- All visiting dogs must be on a lead that keeps the dog close to the adult who is in control of them at all times
- Visiting dogs are not allowed inside any School buildings (assistance dogs or dogs belonging to resident staff may be allowed inside some buildings in specific circumstances)
- Visiting dogs are not allowed in play areas or on play equipment
- Visiting dogs must not be left unsupervised on the premises and must not be left in the sole care of pupils or anyone under the age of 18
- 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. (Note: dog waste must not be put into the School bins)
- No dog can be tied up and left unattended on or near the site at any time. Dogs should be kept away from entry ways so that pupils have a choice whether they want to come into direct contact with dogs
- All animals coming onto the site must be properly vaccinated, treated for fleas and other parasites, regularly groomed and checked for signs of infection or other illness. They must also carry a collar ID tag and must be microchipped.
- Claws should be kept trimmed to reduce the risk of scratches
- When bringing dogs onto the site, dog owners do so with an absolute understanding that their dog has had 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 granted at the absolute discretion of the Head Master

In addition to the conditions above, we acknowledge there are some people in the community who will be afraid or allergic to dogs and anyone bringing a dog on site needs to be cognisant of that and react immediately and without hesitation should any pupil, staff member or parent ask for the dog not to be near them.

In all circumstances, the Head Master, the Bursar or Head of HR have the right to ask any staff member or parent/guardian to remove their dog or other pets from the site if they fail to follow these guidelines. Staff should remind parents of these policy terms if they see them being flouted.

Animals in residential staff accommodation - responsibility of pet owners

Where a staff member has accommodation which is separate with its own facilities (not shared), pets will be permitted, subject to the conditions contained in the Animal Policy.

- All pets remain the responsibility of their owners at all times and as such the owners may be liable for any accident incurred by the pet. The School requires all owners to have appropriate pet insurance.
- Pets should be kept separately in the residential accommodation.
- Pupils should not ordinarily be left alone with pets. In some situations, where parental permissions have been sought and risk assessments conducted, a pupil may, for example, take a staff member's dog for a walk.
- Dogs and or other pets such as cats should not be allowed in House kitchens and

boarders' bedrooms.

- Dogs should not be left for long periods of time on their own.
- The School reserves the right to withhold permission for a pet to be kept in School accommodation, or to require a pet to be removed, in exceptional circumstances if there is an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of pupils, staff or others.

Trained Therapy dogs

- Therapy dogs are allowed on site provided their registration with the charity Pets As Therapy (PAT) is current. Every dog and handler has an identification number, which is always displayed on the dog's collar or jacket. As part of the annual re-registration process with the charity, the dog's most recent vaccination records are checked. Registered therapy dogs are allowed into School buildings/classrooms for specific educational purposes or by prior agreement with the Deputy Head, Head of the Prep School or Bursar.
- Registered therapy dogs are allowed to be walked in the School grounds by the pupils on a lead providing they are supervised and that the Estates team are made aware in advance.
- Any "mess" in classrooms or in the vicinity of Boarding Houses should be immediately removed and the area disinfected as appropriate. This is solely the responsibility of the person in charge of the dog/dog handler.
- Registered therapy dogs on site will have a designated area where they can be allowed to perform bodily functions. This will be in front of the Prep School, as this area is restricted to pupils. The removal of excrement is the sole responsibility of the person in charge of the dog/dog handler at the time and must be removed immediately and disposed of safely off-site.
- All pupils/staff members/dog handlers are reminded to wash their hands after being with the dog.

Working Companion Dogs

- Trained working companion dogs, who are accompanying someone who requires their support are permitted.. The use of a working companion dog should be indicated when signing in at reception.

Dogs in School buildings

- Staff member dogs in School buildings are only allowed under exceptional circumstances and by prior agreement from the Head of HR and fellow colleagues, working in the same office
- Other animals or pets are not allowed into School buildings (except for specific educational purposes or by prior agreement with the Deputy Head, Head of the Prep School or Bursar) and Boarding Houses (except access to private accommodation via a defined route or by prior agreement with the Head Master, Head of the Prep School or Bursar).