



Therapy dog - risk assessment

The value of pet 'therapy' is widely accepted as a powerful aid to stimulation and communication. Studies have shown that the presence of therapy dogs can improve the well-being of students and lower the rate of anxiety, simply by making the environment happier and more relaxed. This also helps with their social and emotional develop.

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

HAZARD	WHO IS AFFECTED/AT RISK	RISK RATING (LOW, MEDIUM, HIGH)	ACTIONS/CONTROL MEASURES	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
Bites and scratches	Staff and students	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The dog is vaccinated, wormed, and treated for fleas• All staff and students are required to wash their hands after contact with the dog• The member of staff in charge of the dog clears up urine and faeces promptly and dispose of this safely• Dogs are not taken anywhere near food preparation areas	

Allergies	Staff and students	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We seek parental permission for students to interact with the dog • The dog is an Australian Poodle. Australian poodles are hypoallergenic dogs who are usually non-shedding. https://hypoallergenicdog.net/are-aussiedoodles-hypoallergenic-dogs/ 	
Phobias	Staff and students	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All parents are regularly notified that we have a dog in school • The dog is kept in the Heads office when not on a lead around school 	
Dog getting over excited when interacting with students.	Staff and students	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The dog will always be in the care of a responsible adult and will never be allowed to roam freely around the school premises. • Students will not be left unsupervised with the dog • A responsible adult will clean up urine and faeces • School staff will remove students who misbehave or upset dogs • The dog attends training sessions every week to ensure he remains calm at all times. 	
Students misbehaving	Students and dog	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The dog attends training sessions every week • Students are told in advance what to expect and how to behave • The dog is always supervised by an adult when he is interacting with students • School staff are ready to remove students who misbehave or upset the dog 	
Damage caused to school materials, equipment and the school site	Dogs	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The dog remains on a lead at all times • The dog remains in the Head's office most of the day. 	