



Reading and Therapy Dog Policy

2024 - 2025

Chair of Governors	Signed	Date
Mr Darren Ankers	<i>DAnkers</i>	02/10/2024

Review Date	September 2025
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Introduction

Children can benefit educationally and emotionally, increase their understanding of responsibility and develop empathy and nurturing skills, through contact with suitable, calm dog. In addition to these benefits, children take enjoyment from interaction with animals. By having a 'Therapy/ reading Dog' we want to encourage those children who are vulnerable, or those less confident at reading to have a friendly audience and look forward to reading as a treat. The breed of a therapy dog is carefully selected as suitable for this type of environment.

Is there a risk in bringing a dog into a school environment?

This policy shows that we have thought carefully about school life with a dog and how, through careful management, there is a very low risk of harm.

Context

- Veterinary costs will be covered by the owner
- The therapy dogs have had full training with 'North Wales Therapy Dogs'
- They are chosen for their very mild temperament
- The risk assessment (attached) will be reviewed annually
- Visitor and new pupils will be informed of the dog on arrival

Management day-to-day

Dogs will:

- Not be allowed in school if he is unwell
- Be kept on a special lead with photo ID at all times in school and on a walk
- Be under the full control and supervision of an adult (owner) at all times
- Be fully trained to a mat
- Have had all injections prior to joining Ysgol Bryn Garth

Pupils will:

- Not have sole responsibility for, or be left alone with dogs
- Meet the dogs in a group of no more than four children
- Be reminded of what is appropriate behaviour around the dogs every time they meet them
 - Always remain calm
 - Be gentle
 - Do not put your face near them
 - Do not disturb a dog that is eating or sleeping
 - Always approach the dogs standing up
 - Do not feed the dog

- Learn about how dogs express their feelings through their body languages. Growling or barking of teeth indicates that the dog is feeling threatened or angry. Flattened ears, tail lowered or between their legs, hiding behind their owner, whining or growling are signs that the dog is frightened or nervous. If the dogs are displaying any of these signs, they should immediately be removed from that particular situation or environment.

Health and safety Principles

Children will always wash their hands or use alcohol gel after handling the dog.

Any dog foul will be cleared up immediately and disposed of appropriately by the adult in charge of the dogs at the time. Children must never be allowed to do this.

Should a bite occur (even playfully)

1. Parents will be contacted immediately
2. The wound will be cleaned and covered with a sterile, non-sticking dressing
3. The child/adult will be released for medical attention
4. All staff will be informed
5. A full investigation will take place
6. The suitability of having a dog will be reassessed by the Head teacher

This policy is reviewed annually by Mr O'Grady (Head Teacher).

It was adopted/ratified by our school's Governing Body on the 02/10/2022

Signature of Chair of Governors (Mr Darren Ankers) DAnkers

Signature of the Head Teacher (Mr M O'Grady) MOGrady

Review Date: 02/10/2022

Next Review Date: September 2025