



Pets in School Policy

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Summary of changes and reviews

Version	Date	Summary of amendments	By
1.0	26 Feb 20	Initial version	SB
1.1	10 Oct 22	Update on guidance and rules for pets, particularly dogs in school	NR
1.2	24 Feb 23	Clarification of renewal due date	SB
1.3	1 st June 23	Making the expectations clearer	NR



Contents

Introduction.....	3
Permission to bring pets into school	3
Risk assessment	3
Staff pets.....	3
Visitors' pets	3
Rules for bringing pets into school	3
Liability for damage	4



PETS IN SCHOOL POLICY

Introduction

Pets are a welcome part of Hatherop life. As a family-friendly organisation, we are supportive of the choices of resident families to have pets. There are also positive benefits of children interacting with pets, particularly where they do not have that opportunity at home. However, there are health and safety implications that must be considered.

Permission to bring pets into school

Verbal and/or written permission to bring any pets into school is to be sought from the Headmaster in advance.

- For staff, this includes resident pets (even if they do not intend to leave the confines of the accommodation), pets coming into school routinely and occasional visits by pets.
- For parents and visitors, this may also be permitted. Typical examples include parents walking their pets through the grounds, bringing pets with them when watching sports matches, or bringing a litter of puppies to show children in a class.

Permission is conditional upon the pets' good nature and good behaviour and staff adherence to the rules laid out below, and permission can be withdrawn at any time by the Headmaster or School Business Manager.

Risk assessment

Staff pets

A risk assessment is required for all pets in school, which is to be reviewed at least annually. For resident and staff pets, this is to be a bespoke risk assessment, considering the specific risk mitigations for that pet (such as where they will reside during the day, and considering in particular the pet's nature). This is required both for routine and occasionally visiting pets. Where a dog's nature is not known to the Headmaster or School Business Manager, the default requirement will be for dogs to wear leads at all times unless shut in an office. Once their nature is known and if it deemed appropriate, the requirement to be on a lead may be relaxed.

Visitors' pets

A generic risk assessment has been produced for visitor's (including parents') dogs; when any visitors request to bring dogs into the school, this is to be shared with them. The focus of this risk assessment is occasional visits by parents, either walking their dog in the grounds or bringing dogs with them whilst watching sports fixtures. In these circumstances, the dog is to be kept on a lead at all times. If that is not appropriate (for example a parent bringing a litter of puppies to show to a class), a bespoke risk assessment is to be written.

Rules for bringing pets into school

1. Pets are not permitted in the science laboratory, kitchen or dining room, or on sports pitches. When watching sports matches, they may be on the touchline, but on leads.
2. Dogs must be on leads where specified in the relevant risk assessment.
3. When dogs are moving through the school i.e in corridors they must be on leads. Dogs must not be allowed to wander around the school off the lead.
4. If a dog is in an office or classroom, the owner must respect the fact that other children or staff may not want the dog in the room and so must have alternative places to keep the dog in school.
5. The pet's welfare must not be given priority over the children's learning or welfare. If this is considered to be the case then the pet will need to be kept at home or in an alternative location at school.



6. Owners must take full responsibility for their dog/s when they are loose outside. It is suggested that if a member of staff is on duty the dog is on the lead and under control so the staff member can give their full attention to the supervision of the pupils.
7. Owners must be responsible for watching their dogs at all times to ensure the dog is behaving well and appropriately around the children. This is also important to ensure they know when their dog has been to the toilet. All dog/pet mess must be cleared up and disposed of immediately.
8. Unless part of a scheduled activity specifically related to the pet, pets must not be a distraction to children whilst in lessons or in other activities outside. If the pet resides in the classroom in a crate or on a bed, the owner/class teacher MUST not allow the pet to be a distraction to the children's learning. If concerns are raised regarding this, the pet will need to be based in an alternative location.
9. While it is accepted that dogs will bark from time to time, it is expected that the owner of the dog will ensure the barking is kept to the minimum and not repeatedly directed at visitors or children. The same must be said with regards to the dogs jumping up at children or adults. The owner of the dog must be fully aware that some staff, children and visitors are anxious around dogs and control their dog accordingly.
10. Owners must always clear up and dispose of all mess immediately.
11. Owners must know which children have allergic reactions to dogs or pets and ensure their dog/pet does not come into contact with them at any time. It is also important for the owner to have an awareness of any member of the community who may be scared or anxious around dogs.
12. Pet owners must follow the advice and regulations regarding leaving dogs in cars and this can be found at www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/pets/dogs/health/dogsinhotcars.

Liability for damage

Owners bringing pets into the school accept liable for any damage caused by their pets, either to school property or that of other parents. It is therefore strongly recommended that their household insurance covers pet damage on the school premises.

