



Godalming Junior School

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. If you have any concerns you should contact our Designated Safeguard Lead, Adam Samson, Jonathan Poole or Karen Sutton

School Dog Policy

This policy was created: May 2019

This policy will be reviewed next: May 2020

This policy will be reviewed by: The Safeguarding Committee

SENCo: Kate Wilkinson

This policy will be reviewed annually. A copy of the policy can be found on the school's website and paper copies can be requested at the school office.

Introduction:

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance and procedure to ensure the introduction of Digby, as our school to Godalming Junior School, is done so in a safe and structured manner.

Digby's presence on school is to be of benefit to the whole school community and to serve a range of needs and activities throughout the school day. This policy will be expanded as Digby's role within the school day becomes more established.

Numerous research studies have shown the benefits of dogs in schools. These benefits include:

- **Cognitive** - companionship with a dog stimulates memory, problem solving and game playing.
- **Social** - a dog provides and positive mutual topic for discussion, encourages responsibility, well-being and focused interaction with others.
- **Emotional** - a school dog improves self-esteem, acceptance from others and lifts mood, often provoking laughter and fun. Dogs can also teach compassion and respect for other living things as well as relieving anxiety.
- **Physical** - interaction with a furry friend reduces blood pressure, provides tactile stimulation, assists with pain management, gives motivation to move and stimulates the senses.
- **Environmental** - a dog in school increases the sense of a family environment with all of the above benefits continuing long after he school day is over.

Digby:

Digby belongs to Mrs. Wilkinson and her family. He will attend school on the days that Mrs Wilkinson is present.

Digby is a Maltese terrier poodle cross. This breed has been chosen because of their low allergen levels and their sociable, gentle and playful nature. He has lived with Mrs. Wilkinson and her family since he was 8 weeks old.

Digby is fully immunized, has monthly flea, tick and worm treatments, attends training classes and is fully insured.

The ongoing costs of Digby's care will be met by Mrs. Wilkinson.

Interaction with Digby:

Under no circumstances will children have close interaction with Digby unless the school has permission from parents / carers.

Parents will receive a letter introducing Digby. This letter will include a permission slip allowing their child to interact with Digby. Once permission has been given no child will be forced into interaction with Digby if this makes them feel at all uncomfortable. Any parent can change their mind about interaction by informing the school office.

All interactions must be safe for children, adults and Digby himself. If the following guidelines are not followed interaction with Digby will not be allowed. All interaction must be under the guidance of an authorised adult.

The following guidelines apply to all interactions with Digby and must be followed by all adults and children:

- Never enter Digby's room without permission.
- Always approach Digby calmly and slowly.
- An adult must be present for the duration of the interaction.
- Start every interaction allowing Digby to sniff the back of your hand.
- If Digby needs to move around school this will always be with an authorised adult and on a lead.
- Never feed Digby unless told to by the adult present.
- Never lift Digby off the floor unless told to by the adult present.
- Always wash your hands with soap and water / sanitizing gel, after all interactions.

Authorised adults are:

- Mrs Wilkinson
- Mrs Munz
- Mrs Wright
- Mrs Farrow
- Mr Samson

Please see accompanying Risk Assessment for rationale behind these interaction guidelines.