



Dog Visits

May 2026

Last Review Date	
Date Adopted by the Governing Body	May 2026
Review Date	May 2029
Headteacher – Mr. Joshua Jones	<i>J. J.</i>
Chair of Governors – Mr. Paul Croston	P. Croston



Dog Visits Review Sheet

Date of Review	Reviewer(s)	Comments



Introduction

Ysgol Sant Dunawd recognises that planned and well-managed interaction with dogs can provide educational, emotional and wellbeing benefits for pupils. Research and practice in schools demonstrate positive impacts on pupils' confidence, behaviour, reading engagement, emotional regulation and social development.

The Governing Body supports dog visits to school where they are carefully risk-assessed, voluntary for pupils, and managed with pupil safety and animal welfare as absolute priorities.

This policy applies to:

- Visiting dogs used for educational, wellbeing or therapeutic purposes (e.g. reading dogs)
- Any dog present on school premises during the school day
- It does not permit general access for dogs onto the school site.
- Dogs are not allowed on school premises unless specifically authorised by the Headteacher and operating under this policy.

Principles

- Pupil safety and welfare are paramount
- Participation by pupils is always voluntary
- The dog's welfare must be protected at all times
- Clear supervision, hygiene and safeguarding controls must be in place

Approval and Risk Assessment

All dog visits must be approved in advance by the Headteacher. A written risk assessment has been completed and is reviewed annually. Governors will receive assurance that risks are controlled to an acceptable level.

Suitability of Dogs

Only dogs that meet the following criteria will be permitted:

- Calm, well-socialised and suitable for working around children
- Fully vaccinated, flea-treated and wormed
- In good health and not attending if unwell or distressed
- Covered by appropriate public liability insurance
- Dogs must be accompanied at all times by a responsible and competent handler.



Supervision and Control

- Dogs must remain under adult supervision at all times.
- Dogs will be on a lead when moving around the school unless otherwise risk-assessed
- No unsupervised contact between pupils and dog
- Dogs positioned away from food areas, entrances and busy walkways

Pupil Interaction

- Pupils will be taught how to behave safely around dogs
- Calm behaviour expected at all times
- No pupil will be required to interact with the dog
- Interaction will be structured, supervised and age-appropriate

Allergies, Fears and Medical Needs

- Parents will be informed in advance of dog visits
- Written parental consent required for pupil interaction
- Records maintained of pupils or staff with allergies, phobias or medical needs
- Alternative arrangements provided so no child is disadvantaged

Hygiene and Infection Control

- Handwashing required before and after contact with a dog
- No face-licking or close facial contact permitted
- Dogs will not be present during meal times
- Toileting takes place off-site or in designated controlled areas only

Dog Welfare

- Visits will be time-limited and planned to avoid over-stimulation
- Access to water, rest and a quiet area provided
- Visit stopped immediately if dog shows signs of stress or discomfort

Safeguarding

- Normal safeguarding procedures apply
- Visitors/handlers must comply with school expectations
- Any concerns reported immediately to the Headteacher



Incident Management

- Any concern, incident or near miss will be reported to the Headteacher
- Appropriate action taken, including review of practice or suspension of visits if required

Roles and Responsibilities

- Governing Body
 - Approves and reviews the policy
 - Seeks assurance that risks are well managed
- Headteacher
 - Approves all dog visits
 - Ensures risk assessments and controls are in place
- Staff
 - Supervise pupils and follow this policy

Risk Assessment (Appendix 1)

There is a risk in bringing a dog into a school environment, though there are a variety of accidents, which can happen within the school environment which far exceed the number of injuries or incidents caused by a dog. Therefore, it is just another risk that needs to be managed. A thorough risk assessment has been carried out and is available in appendix 1.

