

# Hunstanton Primary School



## School Dog Policy🐾🐾

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| <b>Approved by:</b>        | Governing body |
| <b>Approval date:</b>      | May 2025       |
| <b>Review cycle:</b>       | Every 3 years  |
| <b>Review date:</b>        | May 2028       |
| <b>Person responsible:</b> | Headteacher    |

## School Dog Policy🐾🐾

### Introduction

The Hunstanton Primary school dog, Jess, lives with Father James. Jess is a very caring and well-behaved dog who has the right temperament to become a real asset to the school. She has been trained and passed as a Pets as Therapy dog. She will be toileted in an area within the school grounds that is not accessed by any children. Jess will visit the vets for check-ups and they will provide preventative worm and flea treatments. Costs associated with owning Jess remain entirely the responsibility of her owner. We also believe that Jess's presence in school will improve children's enjoyment of school and secure good attendance levels. Letters with full details have been sent out to parents and permission slips received back.

### Purpose

1. **Dogs teach children responsibility** – having to remember to feed, provide water and show support for a dog can give children a sense of purpose and satisfaction that they cannot get from other school duties. The relationship that develops can be life-changing for a child and a great support as they themselves grow and develop.
2. **Dogs teach children patience** – dogs do not always do what they are told the first time!
3. **Dogs teach children compassion** – just like humans, dogs feel emotion and pain. They are prone to injuries and the infirmities of old age during their relatively short lives.
4. **Dogs teach children about socialisation** - like most of us, dogs are social animals who enjoy and need attention and affection. By learning how to interact with a dog children can learn how to better socialise with other children. If they can learn social cues from a dog then they can apply this to interaction with humans.
5. **De-stress** -Studies prove that dogs can reduce stress levels in school children
6. **Dogs are fun!** – Last, but certainly not least, dogs can be a lot of fun. They greet you with a wagging tail every day and can cheer you up even on your worst day. Many people have studied dogs in attempts to decipher their behaviour and theories abound. With proper training and supervision, a dog can enrich a child's life.

### Guidelines to interaction with the school dog

- Under no circumstances will children have close interaction with the school dog unless the school has signed consent from parents/carers
- Once permission has been given, no child will be forced into any interaction with the school dog if this makes them unhappy in any way
- At all times, interaction with the school dog must be safe and controlled for all staff, children and the dog herself. If this is not the case, interaction will be stopped

- At all times of interaction with the school there must be an authorised adult who takes the leading role. If children or visiting adults do not abide by the guidance given by the leading adult the interaction will be stopped.

The following rules must be followed when interacting with the school dog. These apply to all adults and children and are displayed in the area that Jess will sit as well as being shared with all classes.

**DO:**

- Ask the owner if it is OK to stroke their dog
- Let the dog say hello first
- Stroke the dog gently
- Sit down quietly beside the dog
- Be kind to all dogs
- Wash hands before and after interaction with the dog

**DON'T:**

- Sneak up and surprise the dog
- Run or shout at a dog
- Grab the tail or ears
- Tease with anything eg toys or food
- The welfare of the dog will remain of the utmost importance. She will be cared for, walked regularly and have unlimited access to food and water

As the school dog becomes more established there will be times where interaction will take place outside. On these occasions the following additional guidelines will apply

- No child will be asked to pick up faeces
- If walking the school dog, an authorised adult must be present at all times. The authorised adult remains in charge of the situation at all time.

**Roles and responsibilities**

The governing body has a responsibility to ensure the school has a written policy and risk assessment for dogs in school.

The head teacher is responsible for implementing this policy.

Teachers, staff, pupils, parents and visitors are required to abide by this policy.

Jess's owner can hand out sticker, bookmarks or certificates to children who have read with or spent time with Jess.

