

DOG IN SCHOOL

Risk Assessment - Wilf

School	Congerstone Primary School	Dog	Wilf
Dog owner / principal handler	Mrs Vernon	Assessment owner	Headteacher
Activity	Dog present on school site and supervised interaction with pupils/staff	Persons at risk	Pupils, staff, visitors and Wilf
Review	At least annually, and immediately following any incident, change in Wilf's health/behaviour, or change in school arrangements	Status	Live document

Purpose and scope

This risk assessment sets out the controls required for Wilf, Mrs Vernon's pet dog, to be present at Congerstone Primary School. The purpose is to enable safe, positive and carefully managed contact while protecting pupils, staff, visitors and Wilf's welfare. Wilf is not to be treated as freely accessible around school; all contact must be planned, supervised and capable of being stopped immediately.

Core principles

- No pupil is required to interact with Wilf. Fear, allergy, cultural or family preference will be respected.
- Wilf remains under the control of Mrs Vernon or another specifically authorised, competent adult at all times.
- Pupils are never left alone with Wilf and do not walk, feed or handle him without direct adult supervision.
- If Wilf appears unwell, anxious, over-stimulated or behaves unpredictably, interaction stops and he is removed to his designated quiet area or taken home.

Preconditions before Wilf attends school

- The school confirms that its insurance arrangements provide appropriate public liability cover for Wilf's presence and activities in school; Mrs Vernon should also hold appropriate pet insurance.
- Mrs Vernon provides confirmation that Wilf is appropriately vaccinated, routinely treated for fleas and worms, and receives veterinary care as required.
- Wilf must be in good health and of a suitable temperament for the planned school environment on each visit.
- Parents/carers are informed that Wilf may be on site and the school records relevant allergy, asthma, phobia or other access information. Direct interaction should only take place in accordance with the school's consent arrangements.
- A designated quiet/base area is identified for Wilf, away from food preparation/service and high-traffic areas, with water available and a clear 'do not enter / dog resting' arrangement when needed.
- Staff who may supervise Wilf are briefed on these controls, signs of canine stress, emergency procedures and agreed pupil interaction rules.

Risk assessment

Hazard / activity	Who may be harmed and how	Control measures	Initial risk	Residual risk	Responsibility
Bite, scratch or knock-over	Pupils, staff or visitors may be injured if Wilf becomes excited, startled, handled incorrectly or feels threatened.	- All interactions are directly supervised by Mrs Vernon or an authorised competent adult. - Wilf remains on a lead when moving through shared areas unless secured in his designated base. - Pupils are taught to approach calmly, avoid hugging, grabbing, chasing, crowding, waking or disturbing him while eating/resting. - Numbers interacting at one time are limited and matched to Wilf's response. - Any growling, cowering, lip-licking, repeated yawning, tucked tail, avoidance, barking, snapping or other sign of stress ends the interaction immediately. - Any bite/scratch is treated as an incident: first aid, parent/carer contact where relevant, incident recording, and review before Wilf returns.	High	Low	Mrs Vernon / supervising adult / Headteacher
Allergy, asthma or sensitivity	Pupils, staff or visitors may experience allergic or respiratory symptoms from fur, dander or saliva.	- Known medical information is checked before planned direct contact. - No person with a known significant allergy is expected to have direct contact; alternative arrangements and routes are provided as necessary. - Hands are washed with soap and water after contact and before eating. - Wilf is kept away from food preparation, kitchen and food service areas. - Rooms are cleaned appropriately and soft furnishings/equipment are managed to reduce accumulation of fur/dander.	Medium	Low	Headteacher / class staff / Mrs Vernon
Fear, phobia, anxiety or cultural concern	Pupils, staff or visitors may feel distressed, unsafe or unable to access an area.	- No one is required to interact with Wilf. - Pupils are told in advance where	Medium	Low	Class staff / Mrs Vernon / SENCO as appropriate

Hazard / activity	Who may be harmed and how	Control measures	Initial risk	Residual risk	Responsibility
		practicable when Wilf will be present. • A safe distance and alternative route/space are provided where needed. • Wilf is not taken unexpectedly into a room where a known phobia or significant anxiety has been identified. • Exposure is never used as a behaviour consequence or forced therapeutic approach.			
Hygiene and zoonotic infection	Contact with fur, saliva, paws or contaminated surfaces could spread infection or parasites.	• Wilf is kept clean and receives routine veterinary care, vaccinations and parasite control. • Hands are washed after touching Wilf, his toys, treats, bedding or equipment. • Licking faces, open wounds or food utensils is not permitted. • Wilf's bedding, bowls and toys are kept separate from pupil resources and cleaned regularly. • Any vomit, urine or faeces is cleared promptly by an adult using appropriate PPE and disinfectant; pupils do not clean animal waste.	Medium	Low	Mrs Vernon / site staff / supervising adult
Toileting and fouling	Slips, contamination and unpleasant contact may occur if Wilf toilets in pupil areas.	• Wilf is toileted before entering teaching areas and given regular outdoor toilet breaks. • A designated outdoor toileting area is used where practicable. • Waste bags and cleaning materials are immediately available and waste is disposed of safely. • Contaminated areas are isolated until fully cleaned and disinfected.	Medium	Low	Mrs Vernon
Food, treats and choking / guarding	Pupils could be nipped, Wilf could become over-excited or ingest unsuitable food; food guarding could occur.	• Only authorised adults decide whether treats are used. • Pupils do not feed Wilf unless this is a planned, directly supervised activity. • Wilf is not fed close to pupil eating areas and	Medium	Low	Mrs Vernon / supervising adult

Hazard / activity	Who may be harmed and how	Control measures	Initial risk	Residual risk	Responsibility
		- is left undisturbed when eating. - Human food, chocolate, grapes/raisins, onions, xylitol-containing products and other unsafe items are kept out of reach. - Treats are stored securely and hands are washed after handling them.			
Movement around school, entrances and corridors	Wilf may trip someone, escape, run into traffic, or become over-stimulated in crowded spaces.	- Wilf enters/leaves school under adult control and on a lead. - Busy transition times are avoided where reasonably practicable. - External doors/gates are managed to prevent escape. - Wilf does not roam freely around corridors, playgrounds or classrooms. - A clear sign is displayed when Wilf is resting in a room/base area.	High	Low	Mrs Vernon / office / site staff
Pupil handling, walking or play	A pupil may lose control of Wilf, be pulled over, or encourage unsafe behaviour.	- Pupils never walk Wilf independently. - Any pupil participation in walking is exceptional, planned, age-appropriate and with the lead physically controlled by the authorised adult. - Games that encourage chasing, grabbing, jumping up or rough play are not permitted. - Toys are used only under adult direction and are removed if Wilf becomes over-aroused.	High	Low	Mrs Vernon / supervising adult
Wilf's stress, fatigue, illness or welfare	Wilf may become distressed, unwell or defensive; prolonged contact could compromise animal welfare.	- Wilf has access to fresh water, rest and a quiet secure area. - The duration and frequency of interactions are limited and include breaks. - Children do not enter Wilf's rest area or disturb him when sleeping. - Mrs Vernon decides whether Wilf is fit to attend and may remove him from school at any time. - If Wilf is ill, injured, in pain, showing unusual behaviour or receiving	Medium	Low	Mrs Vernon / Headteacher

Hazard / activity	Who may be harmed and how	Control measures	Initial risk	Residual risk	Responsibility
Safeguarding and supervision	Inappropriate unsupervised situations, distraction from supervision duties, or unclear accountability could arise.	treatment that affects temperament, he does not take part in pupil interaction until appropriate veterinary advice has been followed.	Medium	Low	Headteacher / DSL / Mrs Vernon / supervising staff
		• Wilf is never used as a substitute for adult supervision or pastoral staffing. • A pupil is never left alone with Wilf. • The adult supervising Wilf must remain able to fulfil safeguarding duties and must not allow the dog to compromise supervision of other pupils. • Existing school safeguarding, behaviour, first aid, intimate care and visitor procedures continue to apply.			
Emergency evacuation / lockdown	Wilf could impede evacuation, escape, or create additional risk in an emergency.	• Mrs Vernon or a nominated authorised adult is responsible for Wilf during an evacuation. • Lead/harness is readily accessible whenever Wilf is on site. • Wilf must not delay evacuation or emergency response; human life and safeguarding take priority. • The designated assembly / secure arrangements for Wilf are included in staff briefing.	High	Low	Mrs Vernon / nominated adult / Headteacher
Insurance, complaint or incident	Liability, reputational harm or uncertainty following an incident involving Wilf.	• Appropriate school insurance/public liability cover is confirmed before routine attendance. • Mrs Vernon maintains appropriate pet/veterinary arrangements. • All incidents, near misses, complaints or significant concerns involving Wilf are recorded and reported to the Headteacher. • This risk assessment is reviewed after any bite, scratch requiring treatment, escape, significant allergic	Medium	Low	Headteacher / Mrs Vernon / school business lead

Hazard / activity	Who may be harmed and how	Control measures	Initial risk	Residual risk	Responsibility
		reaction, behaviour change, veterinary concern or safeguarding issue.			

Incident and emergency response

Scenario	Required response
Bite or significant scratch	Separate Wilf and make the area safe; provide first aid; seek medical advice where indicated; inform parent/carer; record the incident; notify the Headteacher; Wilf must not resume pupil contact until the circumstances, controls and his suitability have been reviewed.
Allergic or asthma reaction	Follow the pupil/staff member's individual medical plan and school first-aid procedures; summon emergency help if symptoms are severe; remove Wilf from the area; review future access arrangements.
Wilf escapes	Keep pupils away from the search area and road risk; do not encourage groups of pupils to chase or catch him; Mrs Vernon/nominated adult leads recovery; inform the Headteacher and review how escape occurred.
Wilf becomes distressed or behaves unusually	End interaction immediately, create distance, move pupils away calmly and allow Wilf access to his quiet area. Mrs Vernon decides whether he should leave site and whether veterinary advice is required.
Wilf is injured or unwell	Stop all school-dog activity. Mrs Vernon takes responsibility for veterinary care. Pupils are kept away from an injured or distressed animal.

Pupil interaction rules

- Ask an adult before approaching or touching Wilf.
- Use calm voices and movements; allow Wilf to come to you.
- Stroke gently on the shoulder/back; do not pull ears, tail or fur.
- Do not hug, climb over, chase, crowd or wake Wilf.
- Leave Wilf alone when he is eating, drinking or resting.
- Do not give Wilf food or treats unless an adult specifically says to.
- Wash hands after touching Wilf or his equipment.
- Tell an adult straight away if you feel worried, are scratched, or notice Wilf behaving differently.

Risk rating guide

Rating	Meaning	Action
Low	Controls reduce the likelihood/severity to a level that can be managed through normal supervision.	Proceed with controls and monitor.
Medium	A foreseeable risk remains and requires active control and supervision.	Proceed only with stated controls; review if circumstances change.
High	Risk is significant without additional measures.	Do not proceed until controls reduce the risk.
Stop	Risk cannot currently be managed safely.	Activity must not take place.

Approval and review

Completed by	Miss Lawton, Headteacher	Date	_____
Dog owner / handler	Mrs Vernon	Date	_____
Approved by	_____	Review date	_____
Next review trigger	Annual review, or sooner following an incident, concern, health/behaviour change or material change to arrangements.	Document version	1.0

Reference points used

- West Grove Primary School - Risk Assessment: Dog in School (accessed September 2026).
- Clapgate Primary School - School Dog Risk Assessment 2023-25 (accessed September 2026).
- Copperfield Academy - Dog Risk Assessment 2024-25 (accessed September 2026).
- Animals Act 1971 - general responsibilities relating to keeping and controlling animals.