

# TOWN CLOSE SCHOOL

## Risk Assessment

Area: School Dog – Bella

Reference: RA100

### Information resources:

Marsh insurance broking and innovative risk management solutions

Various School Dog Risk Assessments

## People Hazards Section

Categories of people who are at greater risk.

Assessment completed:  
November- 2019

Date of Review:  
September 2021

## Premises and Utility Hazards Section

Premises hazards are related to the building itself where the design or structure creates a risk.

## Tasks & Activities Hazards Section

### Hazards Section

Tasks & activities that could cause harm and present a risk.

<b>Town Close School</b>		
<b>Area: Whole School</b>	<b>Assessed by: Emma Boyt</b>	<b>Issue 2</b>
<b>Reference: RA107 School Dog – Bella</b>	<b>Reviewed by: Anna Linsmith</b>	<b>Assessment Date: 15/09/21</b>

## **Introduction:**

Town Close School have (in the summer 2019 ready for the end of the autumn term), purchased a school dog to work with children in the school, particularly the Learning Support Department. The value of pet ‘therapy’ is widely accepted as a powerful aid to stimulation and communication. Studies have shown that the presence of companion animals can improve the well-being of children and lower the rate of anxiety, simply by making the environment happier, more enjoyable and less forbidding.

The team at Town Close had been considering obtaining a dog as a school therapy pet for some time and the decision was made to go ahead with the project.

Bella’s handler is the Head of Learning Support, Mrs Emma Boyt and the School Counsellor, Mrs Audrey Jolliffe.

The rationale behind this decision was as follows:

- To have a pet that the children could interact with and also be of benefit to the children’s social and emotional development.
- It is accepted that interacting with animals is not appropriate for all children but for some it has the potential to provide many positive benefits.
- To have an animal in the staff common room will have a positive impact on staff moral
- Any parent who does not want their child to interact with ‘Bella’ are invited to write to Mr Wilson and inform him of their wishes.

The risk assessment below is a ‘live’ working document, which will be developed as the School and handler learn more about Bella, the interactions between Bella and the children. The risk assessment will be reviewed on an annual basis or when required.

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Hazard	Hazardous event	Who is at risk	Risk Control Measures			
			What is to be done	Who is to do it	When is it to be done	Where is the supporting documentation located
<b>Physical Hazards</b>						
A.1. Dog	Personal Injury	All/ Dog	1.1. Bella will be fully vaccinated, including rabies. 1.2. Bella will complete regular health checks and have any necessary treatments. 1.3. Bella will be fully insured under pet insurance and covered within the school's public liability insurance. 1.4. Bella's breed has been specifically chosen due to the temperament and being hypoallergenic and non-shedding. See C.1. For information on allergic reactions.	Handler  Handler  Handler/ Bursary  Breeder/ Handler/ Bursary	Prior to arrival at school  Ongoing when required  Ongoing  Prior research Completed	Handler records will stay with Bella Pet plan insurance records  Bursary records  NA.
A.2. School Grounds	Personal injury	All users	2.1. To ensure there are 'safe' spaces for those who do not wish to interact with the dog there are a number of exclusion zones. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No access to the cricket field or front lawn to ensure there is an area children can be assured Bella will not visit.</li> <li>The dining hall during food service</li> <li>Never to enter the food preparation areas</li> <li>Never onto poolside or the pool changing rooms.</li> </ul> 2.2. Bella will use a specific area for toileting, this will be decided in due course when she is on site. 2.3. This area will be disinfected if required regularly.	Handler  Handler  Grounds staff	Always  Always  Regularly or when required	NA  NA  NA
A.3.Cars/Traffic	Traffic accident	Dog and Car passengers	3.1 Bella will remain on a lead at all times when moving around the grounds.	Handler	Always	NA
A.4. Hygiene	Dog defecation	All	4.1. Should the dog defecate on the school site a member of staff will clear this up immediately and dispose of it in a safe way.	Handler	When required	NA

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			4.2. Bella will be trained to toilet in an area of the grounds that children have limited access to. The area will be disinfected as required.	Handler	Always	NA
			4.3. All immunisations are kept up to date in accordance with the European Pet Passport Scheme and a record will be kept of this.	Handler	When required	NA
			4.4. Flea treatment is carried out at 6 week intervals.	Handler	When required	NA
			4.5. Bella will be groomed regularly to reduce any hair or dander.	Handler	When required	NA
			4.6. The dog will not be allowed in the school dining hall at meal times; and never in the food preparation area.	Handler	Always	NA
			4.7. Bella will never go into the pool changing rooms or onto poolside itself as chlorine does not defend against Cryptosporidium. Cryptosporidium can be carried by dogs.	Handler	Always	NA

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<b>Tasks &amp; Activities</b>						
B.1. School dog duties	Poor health of dog/ over stimulated	Bella	<p>1.1. Bella will remain with her handler or a member of Town Close staff at all times.</p> <p>1.2. A rota will be devised for Bella's time to ensure she has ample rest periods throughout the day.</p> <p>1.3. Bella's remit is to do the below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Act as a therapeutic release for children who are hurt, upset, in need or comfort etc.</li> <li>• Be used as a reward for children who have worked hard</li> <li>• To be used as an incentive for children with more challenging behaviour</li> <li>• Increase staff well being</li> <li>• Potential in the future for listening to children read and used in whole class teaching</li> </ul> <p>1.4. Bella will be provided a crate in the Learning Support classroom where she can rest.</p> <p>1.5. Bella will have been extensively trained to ensure she knows to use this space as her safe space.</p> <p>1.6. Signage will be displayed for children on the door of the learning support classroom when Bella is resting or eating.</p> <p>1.7. There cannot be any interaction with the school dog without authorisation.</p>	<p>Handler</p> <p>Handler</p> <p>Bella</p> <p>Handler</p> <p>Training provider/ Handler</p> <p>Learning Support Team</p> <p>Handler</p>	<p>Always</p> <p>Prior to arrival onsite</p> <p>Always</p> <p>Prior to arrival onsite</p> <p>Prior to arrival onsite</p> <p>When required</p> <p>Always</p>	
B.2. Dog behaviour	Poor behaviour by dog	Children/ Staff	2.1 Bella was chosen specifically for her temperament; both in terms of breed and individually selected by a skilled trainer from a litter and has undergone an intensive training course	Trainer/ Breeder	Prior to arrival onsite	

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			<p>delivered with a specific school dog trainer, experienced in training this type of service dog.</p> <p>2.2 The breed Australian Labradoodle has been selected for its overall suitability for this purpose.</p> <p>2.3 The aspiration is that Bella will undertake further training to become a therapy dog.</p> <p>2.4 The dog will always be in the care of a responsible adult and will never be allowed to roam freely around the school premises.</p>	<p>Breeder</p> <p>Town Close School</p> <p>Handler</p>	<p>Prior to arrival onsite</p> <p>To be confirmed at a later date</p> <p>Always</p>	
B.3. First aid	Dog bite	All	<p>3.1. See First Aid Policy for full details on dealing with First Aid.</p> <p>3.2. The level of training Bella will receive makes a dog bite a low risk.</p>	<p>Qualified staff</p>	<p>Always</p>	
B.4. Child behaviour around dog	Overexcited children		<p>4.1. Children will not be left unsupervised with the dog.</p> <p>4.2. Pupils have been and will continue to be taught about the consequences of their actions. Education of this nature is continually given to children, and often to the whole school through assemblies and other group sessions. The below messages will be communicated:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children must not let Bella lick their faces</li> <li>• Children must not wake Bella if she is asleep</li> <li>• Bella must not be fed human food</li> <li>• Children should not put their faces too close to Bella's</li> <li>• Children should walk and play calmly when Bella is present</li> <li>• Children must wash their hands after contact with Bella</li> </ul> <p>4.3. The dog will also undergo conditioning to the school classroom environment, and she will be introduced slowly to the children in small groups. Her future training for therapy or reading sessions will enable her to work to calm children/ease anxiety.</p>	<p>Handler</p> <p>Handler/ Pupils</p> <p>Handler</p>	<p>Always</p> <p>Always</p> <p>Always</p>	

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<b>People Hazards</b>						
C.1. Allergic reaction	Individual developing an allergy	Any	<p>1.1. Bella's breed was selected for a number of factors, one of which was that she is hypoallergenic. A hypoallergenic dog, according to the American Kennel Club (AKC), is a dog that has a predictable, non-shedding coat which produces less dander. It is that dander that causes the annoying, itchy eyes and runny nose.</p> <p>1.2. Parents and staff are asked to inform the school of any pre-existing allergies when communication relating to Bella is sent out.</p> <p>1.3. If staff or pupils experience any medical issues that may have resulted from contact with Bella they should make the school aware.</p> <p>1.4. Trained first aiders are onsite at all times to deal with medical emergencies.</p>	<p>SMT</p> <p>Head</p> <p>Staff/ Parents</p> <p>SMT</p>	<p>Prior to dog arrival</p> <p>Ongoing review</p> <p>At the beginning each academic year</p> <p>Always</p>	<p>Breeders information held on file</p> <p>Copies of all letters held on file</p> <p>Medical records</p> <p>Training records in Bursary</p>
C.2. Visitors	Reaction or fear	Visitors	<p>2.1. Visitors to the school will be made aware that a school dog is onsite via signage at point of sign in.</p> <p>2.2. Bella will be with her handler or a designated adult at all times.</p> <p>2.3. Bella will be on a lead whenever moving around the site.</p>	<p>SMT</p> <p>Handler</p> <p>Handler</p>	<p>Always</p> <p>Always</p> <p>Always</p>	<p>NA.</p>