



Poverest
Primary School

School Dog Risk Assessment

Includes:

Purpose and introduction
Interaction with pupils and staff
Pupils and staff interaction with the school dog
Hygiene/Health
Activities involving the school dog, including walking

Current Risk Assessment Completed February 2026

Risk Assessment to be reviewed February 2029 (Or sooner if required)

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 importance and satisfaction that they can't get from school or other chores. The relationship that develops can be life-changing for a child and a great support system as they themselves continue to grow and develop.
2. **Dogs teach children patience.** Dogs do not always do as they are told first time!
3. **Dogs teach children compassion.** Just like humans, dogs feel emotion and pain. They are prone to injuries and the infirmities of 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 the social cues of a dog, then interacting with humans who can talk will be a walk in the park (pun intended).
5. **Dogs are comforting.** Dogs can help to reduce anxiety and calm children/adults who are upset.
6. **Dogs are fun.** Last, but certainly not least, dogs are 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 the theories abound. However, you just have to witness the interactions between dogs and children to realise the potential for greatness. Dogs can sense when children with epilepsy are about to have a seizure, they can sense when a diabetic child's sugar is low, and they can help children with severe physical disabilities find happiness in life. With the proper training and supervision, a dog can enrich a child's life. After all, dogs are basically four-legged children who never grow up!

Introduction

The Poverest Primary School Dog 'Buddy' has been living with Mr Haylock since April 2020. Although he was bought with the aim of becoming a school dog, he is firstly a family dog. Buddy is a miniature labradoodle which is a breed known to have the right temperament for being around children and having the intelligence to be successfully trained as a therapy dog.

Buddy's Mother is a miniature labradoodle and his Father is a toy poodle. Buddy's auntie, mother's sister, is a therapy dog working in Essex schools.

Buddy regularly visits the vet for check- ups.

In addition to the 5 key reasons for Buddy joining us outlined in the purpose we also believe he will improve the children's abilities within the schools values and after successful training will be a fully trained and qualified therapy dog for the children in both the main stream and autistic provision.

Area: Interaction with pupils and staff					Assessment Date: February 2026		
Reason: To ensure the school dog interacts appropriately at all times					Review Date: February 2029		
Step 1 Identify the hazards	Step 2 Who might be harmed & how?	Step 3 What are you already doing?	Risk Rating Trivial/ low / medium / high / stop	Step 4 Is anything further needed?	Step 5 Action & Review		
					Action required	Responsible person	Date completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School dog biting a child or adult 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child or adult could be hurt if the school dog bites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school dog has been trained since April 2020 not to bite. When the dog is approached in the correct way there is very limited danger. The children will see posters on the rules and these will be shared with all children. 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that children and adults do not interact with the school dog without supervision Ensure that all interaction with the school dog is completed in the agreed way 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jumping up/scratching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the school dog becomes excited there is a danger that he could jump up and knock a child over or leave a scratch mark 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training involves not jumping up with praise/rewards being given when successful. No interaction will be made with any children if parents have informed the school that they are not happy for this to occur. 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that children and adults do not interact with the school dog without supervision The school dog will be enclosed in a play pen when people come to interact with him or under lead control by an authorised adult 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Running loose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the school dog was to run loose he could hurt children/adults or damage property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school dog will be supervised at all times, but sometimes allowed to roam around the office area of the school. When taken for a walk Buddy will always be on a lead, risk will be assessed on each occasion 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor Buddy's interaction with the new level of freedom. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct interaction with children/staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the school dog is allowed to interact when not in the correct frame of mind children/ staff could be scratched 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No interaction is allowed without authorisation Interaction will be cancelled if the school dog shows signs of incorrect behaviour Rewards/praise will be given to reinforce the desired behaviour 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the school dog is approached in the agreed manner 			

Area: Pupils and staff interaction with the school dog					Assessment Date: February 2026		
Reason: To ensure the school dog is effectively supported to interact appropriately at all times					Review Date: February 2029		
Step 1 Identify the hazards	Step 2 Who might be harmed & how?	Step 3 What are you already doing?	Risk Rating <small>Trivial/ low / medium / high / stop</small>	Step 4 Is anything further needed?	Step 5 Action & Review		
					Action required	Responsible person	Date completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorrect / inconsistent interaction with the school dog 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a child/adult interact with the school dog in the incorrect or inconsistent way this will affect the school dogs training and have a negative impact on future interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are agreed guidelines that must be followed at all times when interacting with the school dog There cannot be any interaction with the school dog without authorisation 	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If there are any inconsistencies in approach with the school dog the adult/child will have the interaction stopped 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of rewards/treats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and adults could be harmed if the school dog is over excited when receiving a reward/treat Children/adult must clean their hands after handling treats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alcohol gel will be available to all adults and children. There is a toilet next door to the room the school dog will be in and children must wash their hands (if they haven't used alcohol gel) Treats will only be given to the school dog with authorisation 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reminders to the children to wash hands after handling treats Treats to be locked away to ensure they can only be used after authorisation 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupil/staff knowledge of interaction with a dog 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If adults and children have limited knowledge of how to interact correctly this could result in harm to the school dog or themselves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children are regularly reminded by the responsible adult. 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There will be an agreed format for how to interact with the school dog 			

Area: Hygiene/Health					Assessment Date: February 2026		
Reason: To ensure that pupils, staff and the school dog do not have an increased risk of illness as a result of the school dog being in school					Review Date: February 2029		
Step 1 Identify the hazards	Step 2 Who might be harmed & how?	Step 3 What are you already doing?	Risk Rating Trivial/ low / medium / high / stop	Step 4 Is anything further needed?	Step 5 Action & Review		
					Action required	Responsible person	Date completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worms/fleas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the school dog is not treated for worms there is a danger that germs can be transferred to humans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school dog is treated monthly. The vet ensures he is correctly treated for worms and fleas 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor that vet visits happen promptly and take actions suggested by the vet 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faeces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a child/adult come into contact with the school dog's faeces some germs could be transferred 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school dog will only be walked under supervision No child will be asked to pick up the dog's faeces, this will always be undertaken by the adult in supervision 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a child finds faeces on the school field/playground they will report it to an adult. School dog is walked to school and a short walk will occur before lunchtime off site if required. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allergies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a child is allergic to dogs they could become unwell 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a child has an allergy the school dog will not carry out tasks near the child or visit those parts of the school. 	Medium				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children's access to school dog's resource 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a child has access to the school dog's treats/food and eats some they could become unwell 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All of the school dogs resources will be locked away No child will be allowed to enter the school dog's area without authorisation 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remind children not to enter penned area 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact with food preparation areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the school dog enters a food preparation area this could be unhygienic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> He will never enter the school kitchen or canteen. He will not enter the school's staffroom or nurture room as kitchens are present in both. 	Low				

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cleaning hands after interacting with the school dog 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If hands are not cleaned children/adults could become unwell 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All adults and children will clean their hands after interaction with the school dog 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remind children and adults to clean their hands 			
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Area: Activities involving the school dog, including walking					Assessment Date: February 2026		
					Review Date: February 2029		
Reason: To ensure the school dog has a meaningful and safe impact on the school community							
Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Risk Rating	Step 4	Step 5 Action & Review		
Identify the hazards	Who might be harmed & how?	What are you already doing?	Trivial/ low / medium / high / stop	Is anything further needed?	Action required	Responsible person	Date completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walking the dog on and off site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children could be harmed during a walk offsite if they are not focussed Children might be harmed if they do not interact correctly when the school dog is on a walk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the school dog is taken off site normal risk assessed procedure will take place No children will take the lead when the school dog goes for a walk No children will be allowed to interact with the school dog when he is on a walk unless permission is given 	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Careful consideration needs to be given to the amount of time the school dog is allowed to walk around school during play/lunchtimes and whether children who do not want interaction are around. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visits to classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the school dog visits a class and the children do not follow the correct procedure he may become over excited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school dog will initially only make classroom visits with Mr Haylock The children in classrooms will follow the agreed procedure or interaction will stop 	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Careful consideration will be given to when the school dog can visit classrooms and be under the control of the class teacher or teaching assistant 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being fed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a child tries to interact when the school dog is eating he may respond aggressively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children may prepare the food for the school dog (washing their hands afterwards) All feeding will be supervised 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reminders to the children feeding the school dog to not interact when he is eating 			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the school dog is overwhelmed he may become aggressive or boisterous 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school dog will only attend school events if they are appropriate and he will be under the control of a supervising adult 	<p>Medium</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor the school dogs reaction to school events If the school events are too overwhelming the school dog might not attend school on that day 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other dogs (on and off site) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the school dog encounters another dog he may become boisterous 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No other dogs will be allowed on the school premises unless it has been pre-arranged and arrangements are put in place. At no time will the school dog be walked by a child and as a result if another dog is seen this will be dealt with by the supervising adult 	<p>Low</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor the school dogs reaction when out walking 			
<p>Signature:</p>	<p>Review Date: 25.2.2029 unless necessary before this date.</p>						