

School Therapy and Assistance Dogs Policy

Harrow Way Community School





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QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

The purpose of the guidance is to ensure that Harrow Way Community School provides a safe environment for students, staff and visitors allowing appropriate access under the Equality Act 2010.

1. It aims to minimise the restriction of access to animals such as Guide Dogs, Hearing Dogs, Pets as Therapy (PAT) Dogs and Assistance Dogs on the school premises. This also includes any of these dogs which are in training. If an animal is unwell or being treated for a veterinary condition they should not be given access to the school as a precautionary measure.
2. The guidance applies to staff and students.
3. Dogs referred to in this guidance are Assistance Dogs, that support their disabled owners with a specific disability, and dogs that provide therapy to students within the school.
4. The main reason for a Therapy Dog to require access to the school is because they act as a therapy tool to calm and regulate students. There are occasions where it is not appropriate for a dog to be permitted. Harrow Way Community School staff can prevent an Assistance or Therapy Dog from entering the area within the school on the grounds of Health and Safety.
5. It is the responsibility of all staff to be aware of the guidance and to ensure where permissible, animals are made welcome in the areas. The animals should be provided with water if required.

1. INTRODUCTION

Harrow Way Community School believes in providing equal access to all those using its services. Assistance Dogs can be used by people who have sight, hearing and other disabilities to give greater independence and part of that independence is that a person may have to bring a dog onto the school site.

The use of animals has been shown to have a beneficial outcome to some students' emotional, physical and social wellbeing. Animals may provide benefits to the mental health of students.

Guide Dogs, Hearing Dogs and Assistance Dogs are working dogs that have been trained as a mobility aid for people with visual or other disabilities. PAT Dogs have also been trained to provide therapy for students in school. The dogs are vaccinated, are checked by vets every six months, and groomed daily.

Animals may carry microbes and parasites which are normal flora for them but can be transmitted to humans. Similarly, animals can be carriers of infectious pathogens which they may contract from students. Immunosuppressed students may be at higher risk from these organisms.

Under the Equality Act 2010, Harrow Way is legally obliged to make reasonable adjustments to ensure equal access to services. Additionally the Equality Act 2010 requires that all reasonable efforts be made to accommodate people's needs as long as student and staff safety is not compromised.



2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Harrow Way Community School provides a safe environment for students, staff and visitors allowing appropriate access under the Equality Act 2010. Its aim is to minimise the risk and prevent cross contamination by establishing the processes that need to be adhered to if animals are coming into contact with students and/or their environment, while confirming the situations where access for Assistance and Therapy dogs and animals are accepted in the school.

3. SCOPE

The guidance applies to staff and students. It ensures that staff are fully aware of the content and the measures required for promoting access for the benefit of students.

4. DEFINITIONS

4.1 Assistance or Service Animal

An assistance or service animal is one which has been specifically trained to assist a person with a specific disability, and which has been qualified by one of the organisations registered as a member of the Assistance Dog UK (Guide Dogs for the Blind Association, Hearing Dogs for Deaf People, Dogs for the Disabled, Canine Partners, Support Dogs, Dog A.I.D.) These include:

- Guide Dogs
- Hearing Dogs
- Support Dogs/Dogs for Disabled People
- Seizure Alert Dogs

4.2 Pets As Therapy

Pets as Therapy (PAT) animals are trained to be used as student therapy.

4.3 Dogs in Training

These are any working dog which is undertaking their training in their individual roles.

4.4 Security Animals

These are animals that work for the Police, Border Control or security companies. This may include sniffer or security dogs.

5. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 Senior Leaders

It is the responsibility of the Senior Leaders to ensure that animal owners are made



welcome within their area. Whenever it is not permissible, the school needs to justify grounds for failing to make the suggested reasonable adjustment. They also have responsibility to ensure that any students or visitors who may have an allergy or dislike or phobia of specific animals are aware of where the animal will be.

5.2 Staff

All school staff have a responsibility to be aware of the guidance and ensure that an animal owner feels welcome upon arriving at the school. They also have responsibility to ensure that any students or visitors who may have an allergy or dislike or phobia of specific animals are informed of where they are.

5.3 Animal Owners

There should not be restrictions for the animal in accompanying its owner in corridors or classrooms.

6. PROCESS

6.1 Assistance Dogs

The minority of cases of animals visiting Harrow Way School will be Assistance Dogs accompanying their owners.

All Assistance dogs:

- Are instantly recognised by the harness they wear and the identification tag on their collar
- Handlers should carry an identification card that will display the name of the relevant Assistance Dog charity they are associated with
- Will undergo rigorous health checks on a regular basis, have a strict set diet and are monitored regularly to ensure they meet the criteria of an Assistance Dog
- Will not wander freely throughout the premises and its movement should be restricted by keeping it on a lead and in harness
- Are working whenever the harness is in place, when removed this would indicate a rest period for the dog

6.2 Pets as Therapy (PAT) Animals

PAT Dogs belong to volunteers who have trained them sufficiently to be passed by Pets as Therapy. PAT Dog visits will be pre-arranged by the Deputy Head Teacher for Welfare. PAT dogs should remain with their owners whilst on site and remain on lead at all times. These dogs can be stroked and interacted with, but should a member of staff feel the dog or students are stressed; the visit should be ended appropriately.

Appendix 1 shows the guidance all PAT animal owners must adhere to.

PAT animals;

- Must be fully trained



- Must be registered, and a copy of the registration of the PAT animal will be kept with the Risk Assessment in the School Business Manager's Office.
- Will be identifiable by an ID disc and their owners will have an identification label
- Will have had a temperament assessment
- Have owners with public liability insurance
- Must be regularly vaccinated, de-wormed and treated against fleas/other infestations.
- Must be house-trained and kept on a leash and accompanied by their owners at all times
- Must be excluded from Catering Departments and kitchens at all times
- Must be kept away from other staff and students with phobias or allergies
- Must not be excited or provoked and must only interact with students where permission has been sought. This must be recorded
- Must be discouraged from licking students/staff
- Toileting must be outside of the building and to have been to the toilet prior to entering the building
- If the animal passes urine, defecates indoors, this must be cleaned up by school staff, using a hypochlorite solution and wearing PPE
- Ensure that there is strict hand hygiene with soap and water, hands being dried by disposable paper towels, by students, staff and visitors that come in contact with the animal

6.3 Exclusions to Animal Visits

There are occasions where it is not appropriate for an animal to be permitted. Harrow Way School can prevent an assistance dog from entering the area within the school on the grounds of Health and Safety by proving:

- A genuine and reasonable belief that there is a risk of endangering a disabled person or others, e.g. infection control risk or if other students have an allergy to dogs
- The risk cannot be overcome by a 'reasonable adjustment', which the service provider has to consider making

6.4 Welfare of the Animal

- Should the animal be visibly ill, e.g. suffering from diarrhoea or vomiting, it should not be permitted to enter the school
- Animals should be provided with clean drinking water. Owners should be encouraged to bring a drinking bowl with them. Food should normally not be given to visiting animals



- Should any animal be showing signs of stress and agitation, it should be removed from the environment and taken to a safe place to calm down
- Should there be any concerns about the conduct or behaviour of the animal owner, this will be escalated to the DHT-Deputy Head Teacher.

6.5 Hygiene and Cleanliness

All students who come into contact with or handle a Therapy Dog should be encouraged to wash their hands. All areas where a Therapy Dog has been should be cleaned on a daily basis as part of the usual schedule. Any equipment that has come into contact with the Therapy Dog should be cleaned as per the cleaning policy.

6.6 Justifiable Separation

In the event that it is necessary that the owner and the dog have to be separated, that period should be kept to the shortest time possible. The dog should be left as near as possible to the owner.

6.7 Staff Member Working With an Assistance Dog

In situations where a member of staff is required to have their Assistance Dog at work to carry out their duties, this should be dealt with sensitivity and all reasonable measures should be explored to facilitate this.

6.8 Religious and Cultural Considerations

Harrow Way Community School does not consider religious objections as reasonable objections, as it does not consider that an objection on religious grounds would justify its failure to comply with its duty to make reasonable adjustments, in accordance with the limited justification defence set out in the Equality Act 2010.

6.9 Allergies and Phobias

Consideration must be given to the sensitivity some staff and students may have to dogs, including allergies and any personal anxieties. Actions should be taken to minimise the risk to all staff and students in the vicinity.

7. TRAINING REQUIREMENTS AND RISK ASSESSMENT

These will be available on the school website. Training requirements are part of the Risk Assessment and will be reviewed by the School Business Manager.

Details of Insurance & Liabilities are included in the Risk Assessment.



8. REFERENCES AND ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTATION

Pets as Therapy - <http://www.petsastherapy.org/>

The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association <http://www.guidedogs.org.uk/>
<https://www.guidedogs.org.uk/getting-support/information-and-advice/>

Open your doors to Guide Dogs:

<https://www.guidedogs.org.uk/how-you-can-help/campaigning/our-current-campaigns/open-doors/>

Hearing Dogs for Deaf People - <http://www.hearingdogs.org.uk/>

Equality Act 2010 - <http://homeoffice.gov.uk/equalities/equality-act/>

9. EQUALITY IMPACT STATEMENT

Harrow Way Community School is committed to ensuring that, as far as is reasonably practicable, the way we provide services to the public and the way we treat our staff reflects their individual needs and does not discriminate against individuals or groups on any grounds.

This policy has been assessed accordingly.

10. MONITORING COMPLIANCE WITH PROCEDURAL DOCUMENTS

This document will be monitored to ensure it is effective and to assure compliance.

Minimum Requirement to be monitored	Lead	Tool	Frequency of Report of Compliance
Staff are aware of the guidance and how to access it.	DHT Welfare	Visits to sessions	Termly
Assistance Dogs have appropriate access.	DHT Welfare		Termly
Pets as Therapy Dogs have appropriate access	DHT Welfare		Termly



Guidance for PAT Volunteers

Before your Visit:

- Ensure your pet is suitably washed and groomed before each visit
- Do not visit if your pet is/or has recently been unwell
- If inclement weather please brush and dry your pet before the visit
- Make sure your pet has been given the chance to go to the toilet before each visit
- Ensure you and your dog have your Pets as Therapy ID tags on you before entering the school premises
- Always wear your Volunteer badge with the school grounds
- Ensure your dog is fully registered and has been assessed by Pets as Therapy

During your Visit:

- On your first visit to the school with your dog you will need to attend a short induction around the school buildings to help your dog get used to the school environment
- Wash your hands often, and encourage students to use the alcohol gel before and after patting the pet. This is VERY important!
- Keep items you might need with you at all times, including biscuits, plastic bags, tissues etc
- Please ensure your pet is closely supervised at all times
- Please follow the Harrow Way Community School Code of Conduct
- Please note that this role can be emotionally challenging: If you see or hear anything that concerns you, please speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead Katy Woods or the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads, who are Johnathan Mongi, Julia McLachlan and Dawn German.
- Carry a dog poo bag in case your dog has an accident and alert a member of staff
- Please do not take personal photos of students/staff during your visit

Do not:

- Enter any areas of food preparation

You must avoid visiting students at mealtimes.

Harrow Way Community School Break Times:

Morning Break is 11.10am -11.30am

Lunchbreak is 1.30pm - 2.00pm



Committee Responsible for Review:	Students and Curriculum
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