



School Dog Risk Assessment

Includes:

1. Purpose and introduction
2. Interaction with pupils and staff
3. Pupils and staff interaction with the school dog
4. Hygiene/Health
5. Activities involving the school dog, including walking

Current Risk Assessment Completed November, 2025

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The key benefits of a dog in a school environment include:

- Emotional and Mental Health Support: Dogs provide unconditional support and a calming presence, which helps to reduce student and staff stress, anxiety, and cortisol (stress hormone) levels. They can also help with anger management and bereavement.
- Improved Behaviour and Social Skills: The presence of a dog encourages positive social behaviors, such as empathy, compassion, and respect. In some studies, the presence of dogs was linked to a significant decline in violent and aggressive behavior in participating students and fewer disciplinary referrals.
- Enhanced Learning and Literacy: Dogs can serve as non-judgmental "reading buddies," which has been shown to increase confidence, fluency, and motivation in reluctant readers. They also help motivate children to participate and engage in a broader range of learning activities.
- Developing Responsibility: Involving students in the dog's daily care (e.g. feeding, walking) can teach valuable life skills and foster a sense of responsibility and self-efficacy.
- Increased Attendance and Engagement: The excitement and positive environment created by a school dog can increase students' enjoyment of school and improve attendance rates, especially for those with emotionally based school avoidance.
- Positive Perception of Teachers: Teachers working with a school dog are often perceived by students as happier, fairer, and less strict, which can lead to a better overall classroom atmosphere and stronger student-teacher relationships.

Introduction

Jango has lived with Mr Jamieson since 2016 and has been part of the family ever since. Jango is a Hungarian Vizsla, a breed that is known for their friendly attachment to people and a calm manner. Jango has regular health checks with the Vets and receives vaccinations and immunisations to keep him healthy.

Jango's character assessment carried out by:

Tricia Mann

Membership Liaison Officer

Canine Concern

Registered Charity No 1177334 (CIO)

On 5.12.25

Temperament assessment

[Research on the benefit of reading to dogs](#)

[Guardian article on reading to dogs in school](#)

The children took part in an assembly on 16.12.25 to introduce Jango, how to interact with him and how not to if they do not wish to



Concern: Interaction with pupils and staff					
Reason: To ensure the school dog interacts appropriately at all times					
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"> · 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"> · Jango will always be in the presence of an adult when meeting with children. There will be a limit to how many children visit Jango at a time and he will always have the space to retreat away from children. 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. Jango will remain on a lead when near children, they will only be invited to touch or stroke him when an adult assesses that he is calm. 	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 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 within the Headteacher's office when the door is closed. When taken for a walk Jango will always be on a lead, risk will be assessed on each occasion. Jango may occasionally run off lead on the field when no children are present 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Monitor Jango's interaction with the new level of freedom. 			

· Direct interaction with children/staff	· If the school dog is allowed to interact when not in the correct frame of mind children/ staff could be scratched	· 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	· Ensure that the school dog is approached in the agreed manner			
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Concern: Pupils and staff interaction with the school dog							
Reason: To ensure the school dog is effectively supported to interact appropriately at all times							
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
· Incorrect / inconsistent interaction with the school dog	· 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	· 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	· If there are any inconsistencies in approach with the school dog the adult/child will have the interaction stopped			
· Use of rewards/treats	· 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	· 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	Low	· Reminders to the children to wash hands after handling treats · Treats to be locked away to ensure they can only be used after authorisation			

		the school dog with authorisation					
· Pupil/staff knowledge of interaction with a dog	· If adults and children have limited knowledge of how to interact correctly this could result in harm to the school dog or themselves	· Children are regularly reminded by the responsible adult.	Low	· There will be an agreed format for how to interact with the school dog			

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Concern: Hygiene/Health							
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							
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
· Worms/fleas	· If the school dog is not treated for worms there is a danger that germs can be transferred to humans	· The school dog is treated monthly. The vet ensures he is correctly treated for worms and fleas	Low	· Monitor that vet visits happen promptly and take actions suggested by the vet			
· Faeces	· If a child/adult come into contact with the school dog's faeces some germs could be transferred	· 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 -Any faeces will be bagged and binned	Low	· 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.			

· Allergies	· If a child is allergic to dogs they could become unwell	· 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				
· Children's access to school dog's resource	· If a child has access to the school dog's treats/food and eats some they could become unwell	· All of the school dogs resources will be locked away · No child will be allowed to enter the school dog's concern without authorisation	Low				
· Contact with food preparation concerns	· If the school dog enters a food preparation concern this could be unhygienic	· He will never enter the school kitchen or canteen. · He will not enter the school's staffroom	Low				

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· Cleaning hands after interacting with the school dog	· If hands are not cleaned children/adults could become unwell	· All adults and children will clean their hands after interaction with the school dog	Low	· Remind children and adults to clean their hands			
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Concern: Activities involving the school dog, including walking							
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

· Walking the dog on and off site	· 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	· 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	· 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 any interaction are around. Initially all walks would be during lesson time.			
· Visits to classroom	· If the school dog visits a class and the children do not follow the correct procedure he may become over excited	· The school dog will initially only make classroom visits with Mr Jamieson · The children in classrooms will follow the agreed procedure or interaction will stop	Medium	· 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			
· Being fed	· If a child tries to interact when the school dog is eating he may respond aggressively	· Children may prepare the food for the school dog (washing their hands afterwards) · All feeding will be supervised	Low	· Reminders to the children feeding the school dog to not interact when he is eating			

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· Other dogs (on and off site)	· If the school dog encounters another dog he may become boisterous	· 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	Low	· Monitor the school dogs reaction when out walking			
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Signature: 	Review Date: November, 2026
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