



Leigh Academy
Milestone

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Dog Mentors at Leigh Academy Milestone

Introduction

This SOP outlines the procedures for implementing a dog mentor program at The Leigh Academy Milestone. The program aims to provide a positive and supportive learning environment for students while promoting responsible pet ownership and animal welfare.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Dog Mentor Coordinator/ Team:** Oversees the program, ensures compliance with all regulations, and coordinates with school staff, dog owners, and students.
- **Dog Owner:** Provides a well-trained, friendly, and healthy dog for the program.
- **School Staff:** Supervise the interactions between students and dogs, ensure safety, and maintain the school environment. Class staff to highlight to Dog owners/handlers any known allergies, share consent forms with the Dog Mentor Coordinator, these are to be shared with dog owners. In the event that any students have a known fear of animals, in particular dogs, then the Dog Mentor Coordinator is to be informed and dog owners to be aware of fearful students.
- **Students:** Participate in the program respectfully and follow guidelines.

Dog Selection Criteria

- **Temperament:** Friendly, gentle, and patient with children.
- **Training:** Well-trained in basic obedience commands (sit, stay, come).
- **Health:** Current vaccinations and free of contagious diseases.
- **Age:** Typically, dogs between 1 and 8 years old are suitable.

Health and Safety Protocols

- **Dog Health:**
 - Ensure dogs are up-to-date on vaccinations and parasite control.
 - Check for any signs of illness before each visit.
 - Avoid bringing dogs with contagious diseases to school.
- **Student Safety:**
 - Supervise all interactions between students and dogs.
 - Teach students appropriate handling techniques (e.g. petting, feeding).
 - Establish rules for interacting with dogs (e.g. no pulling tails or ears).
 - Provide dog first aid training for school staff.
- **School Environment:**
 - Designate a specific area for dog visits.
 - Ensure the area is clean and free of hazards.
 - Implement a cleaning routine after each dog visit.

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Review: November 2026

Ownership: Dog Mentor Team

Dog Welfare Protocols

- **Comfort:** Provide dogs with shade, water, and a comfortable resting area.
- **Stress:** Minimise stress for dogs by keeping visits short and enjoyable.
- **Socialisation:** Ensure dogs are socialised with other dogs and people.
- **Consent:** Obtain consent from dog owners to participate in the program.
- **Sign in:** Dog owners must sign dogs in each visit so they can be accounted for during fire alarms
- **Provide:** dog first aid bags and grab bags for staff to access in the event of a fire alarm or emergency
- **Identify a contact person:** for each dog in the event that the owner is not available or is unwell
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Program Guidelines

- **Scheduling:** Establish a regular schedule for dog visits, considering the school's calendar and activities.
- **Activities:** Plan age-appropriate activities (e.g. reading aloud, petting, playing fetch) that align with The Leigh Academy Milestone's curriculum and values.
- **Supervision:** Ensure adequate supervision during all interactions, following The Leigh Academy Milestone's specific policies and procedures.
- **Evaluation:** Regularly evaluate the program's effectiveness and make necessary adjustments based on feedback from students, staff, and dog owners.

Emergency Procedures:

Bite Incidents: Follow the Leigh Academy Milestone's policies for handling bite incidents, as outlined in the school's risk assessment. If a bite occurs, immediately notify a First Aider or member of the school medical team for assessment and appropriate action.

Allergic Reactions: Have a clear plan in place for students with allergies, referencing the school's risk assessment. In case of an allergic reaction, immediately notify the school medical team and follow their guidance.

Medical Emergencies: Have emergency contact information readily available, including the contact details of the school medical team. In case of a medical emergency, immediately notify the school office, which will then contact the appropriate emergency services and the school medical team. Known allergy sufferers to be identified before interactions with dogs.