

POLICY:

DOGS ON THE SCHOOL SITE

Policy Aim:

- To permit well-behaved dogs belonging to parents/pupils/spectators on the school site during Saturday sports fixtures
- To permit dogs belonging to staff to visit at other times following prior agreement of the key leadership team
- To permit the use of specifically trained therapy dogs in support of pupil welfare and educational progress
- To promote the school's family ethos and recognising of the role of pets in supporting pupils' wellbeing
- To keep members of the school community safe and respecting others.

The school recognises pets are an important part of family life for many of our pupils and the recent increase in dog ownership has led to the decision to allow well-behaved dogs at Saturday sports fixtures and staff dogs to occasionally visit during the school day. The school appreciates the joy family dogs bring, and the importance to some families of having dogs involved in family weekend activities. We view pet ownership as a valuable educational experience for children which promotes physical and mental health benefits and social interaction. Pet ownership encourages children to take responsibility and also to respect other peoples' dislikes and fears.

The school appreciates that allowing dogs on-site can bring risks which need to be mitigated and managed with appropriate and measured controls. Risks could include those of safety, cleanliness and the enjoyment of sport fixtures.

Visitors are reminded that even well-behaved dogs can behave unpredictably when placed in an unfamiliar, busy school environment and ask that families give careful thought to whether their dog would enjoy the experience of a sports fixture. It is important that dogs are kept under control, grounds are mess free and there is no disruption to sports fixtures.

The welfare of the children and staff comes before that of a dog. Owners **MUST** be always mindful that dogs are potentially dangerous; they can be a health hazard and not all children and adults like them.

By bringing a dog to the school, owners accept that they will be held wholly liable for any accident for which the dog(s) is / are responsible while on the Claremont school site. The school strongly recommends that owners have valid third-party liability insurance for their dog.

When bringing dogs on to the site, dog owners do so with an absolute understanding that their dog has no issues around children, has never displayed aggression towards children or others and that the owner believes that the dog is fully trustworthy in a school environment.

Dogs under Section 1 of the Dangerous Dog Act 1991 (Pit Bull Terrier, Japanese Tosa, Dogo Argentino, Fila Brasileiro, XL Bully type) must never be kept or be on the school premises at any time. This applies even if the dog holds a certificate of exemption.

The school reserves the right to ask an adult to remove their dog from site at any time.

The presence of dogs on the school site is at the final discretion of the head and may be withdrawn at any time.

Code of conduct for Saturday fixtures

The code of conduct for allowing dogs on the school site is as follows:

- Well behaved dogs are invited to attend **Saturday sports fixtures only** and should not be on site at any other time (e.g. during the school day or at pick up/drop off)
- Dogs should be kept on a short lead at all times and kept under control at all times by an adult over the age of 18 years
- Dogs are not permitted inside the school buildings
- The adult bringing the dog to school is responsible for cleaning up and removing from the site any soiling by their dog on the school grounds
- Dogs must not be tied up or left unattended on the school site
- Please respect any parent or pupil who is uncomfortable around your dog, and keep your dog at a distance where they can feel at ease
- Dogs are not allowed in the junior school (Fan Court) school playground, in the JGC area or on any of the school pitches
- In no circumstances should an unwell dog be brought onto the school site
- Following the sports fixture and match tea, parents are asked to leave the site immediately and not walk the dog around the school site or allow the dog to roam or play freely
- The head and / or director of operations has the right to ask any member of staff or parent to remove his / her dog from the site.

Staff dogs on site during the school day

i. During term time

Well behaved dogs belonging to staff may be permitted to visit the school during the school day for wellbeing purposes or other reasons, by prior agreement of the head or key leadership team.

Any visiting dogs must not be left unattended around the school site and specifically in areas where children may approach the dog.

Dogs owned by staff should not normally be present when teaching or undertaking other pupil supervisory duties. The wellbeing of the dog is also important to consider when bringing it into a busy school environment.

Staff must remain in control of their dog at all times and remove them immediately if they become a distraction or if any child feels uneasy in the close proximity of a dog. Staff should also be mindful of pupils with allergies.

Therapy dog visits

A trained therapy dog can benefit pupils educationally and emotionally, increase their understanding of responsibility and develop empathy and nurturing skills. Many pupils also take great enjoyment from interaction with animals.

Trained therapy dogs may be invited to the school from time to time. All visits will be subject to an internal risk assessment, parents will be notified in advance, and evidence of endorsement from an external organisation (e.g. Pets as Therapy) will be required prior to the first visit.

ii. During school holidays

Well behaved dogs belonging to staff are permitted on site during holidays when pupils are not present and the relevant points from the above code of conduct apply.