Establishment:

Hildenborough CE Primary School

Risk Assessment

Activity/ Operation/ Event: Molly, the school dog- now that she is familiar with the school and the children are familiar with her (v5)

Assessment by: Ruth Ardrey	**Date**: 3rd November 2026	**Target Date for review**: November 2027
Approved by: Curriculum Committee	**Position**: Governors	**Date**: 11th November 2025

Significant Hazards and Associated Risks Those hazards which may result in serious harm or affect several people	**Those who might be harmed** Persons at risk from the significant hazards identified	**Control Measures (CM's):** Controls, including relevant sources of guidance (e.g. Generic Risk Assessments, Guidance from Provider, etc.). Specific CM's not included in the generic RA (e.g. briefings, actions by leaders / participants, qualifications / experience of supervisors)	**Additional CM's required?** If existing CM's cannot be met or circumstances have changed	**Residual Risk Rating (H / M / L)**
Dog getting over excited when interacting with children	Child knocked over Child scratched by the dog Child bitten by the dog	~~• The dog will always be in the care of a responsible adult and will never be allowed to freely roam the school premises~~ ~~April 2023: Doors will be closed in the office areas to allow Molly to roam around. Signs will be put up to alert school to this. Doors will remain closed. Sept 25: Molly will be able to move freely round the school, but not access classrooms unless accompanied & only when children who are new are familiar.~~ • Nov 26:Molly is generally free to move around designated areas of the school during the school day. Her behaviour and wellbeing are continually monitored by staff and she remains under the overall supervision of the Headteacher and designated staff. • Children are not left with the dog unsupervised. ~~• The dog will be on a lead or under close control when she is~~		L

		~~being walked through the learning environment or around children- playground, assembly, on the gate, etc.~~ • Nov 26:Molly may be both on and off lead within school. Staff monitor her interactions continuously and may place her on a lead or return her to her safe space whenever considered necessary. • The dog will only be taken round classrooms when she is calm ~~enough~~. • The dog will be trained not to jump up or mouth the children, children will be taught to wait for Molly to sit before she is petted. • Pupils have been, and continue to be, taught the impact of their actions. Education of this nature is continually given to children, and often to whole school during assemblies and PSHE lessons. • Sep 25: All new YR children to the school will access Molly care guidelines as an assembly. • ~~The Dogs Trust Charity have visited the children to teach them about suitable behaviour around a dog, how to be safe around dogs and how to treat dogs. This will be repeated bi-annually in school or sooner if required- to reach all cohorts as they join the school.~~ • Nov 26:Children receive ongoing reminders and teaching regarding safe and respectful interactions with Molly, including approaching calmly, respecting her personal space, recognising when she is resting and following staff instructions immediately. • Pupils will be taught what to do to prevent the dog from chasing them. (i.e. stand still, cross arms) • Some pupils will be involved in training and along with the schools' primary handlers, continue to reinforce positive training strategies in a controlled area throughout the week. • The dog will also undergo conditioning to the school classroom environment, this area of training with allow future reading or nurture intervention to involve the school dog in a calming/therapeutic manner. • ALL staff have been introduced to the dog and the		

		expectations (do's and don'ts) of having a school dog which can be found in the School Dog Policy. • The dog will attend the vets' regularly to make sure her claws are kept short and that she is in good health. She will be regularly wormed and flea treated.		
Dog urinating and/or soiling indoors. And/or urinating on a human	Children, adults, visitors	• Anyone entering the dogs safe place (Head's office/ office areas) will be warned about the dogs presence in advance. Visitor will be asked not to greet the dog until Molly is sat down rather than excitedly greeting or jumping. • Training will be undertaken and practiced continuously so that the dog does not get too excited with a visitor. • Jan 2023: Molly is toilet trained now, but if she urinates in excitement, then baby wipes will be at hand for the human • Carpet shampoo will be available if required	Consistency with sitting before greeting will be trained and practiced daily	M
Visitors to the Dogs area being unsure/ worried about the dog	Adults visiting Heads Office for meeting Children in Heads office	~~• All children joining the school are giving permission for close contact with Molly unless they otherwise state in writing~~ • Nov 26: Parents and carers are informed that Molly is a regular presence within the school environment. Any parent wishing their child not to have direct contact with Molly should notify the school, and suitable arrangements will be implemented. • If parents have chosen that their child will not be in close contact of the dog, then the child will not enter the Head's office or office areas if Molly is out. Or Molly will be placed in the office and the door will be closed first. • On arrival at the school, the office staff will make visitors aware of the dog and check how they feel about it. • If visitor does not like dogs, the dog will be removed and/or a suitable alternative to Head's office will be used for meeting.		L
~~The dog gets loose from her lead or office location~~ Nov 26: Molly enters an area where staff determine she should not be at that time	Child knocked over Child scratched by the dog Child bitten by the dog	~~• The dog's space is big enough for her to be happy and safe during the school day and the children are taught not to tease her.~~ ~~• The office is secured with a stair gate and the door will be shut when we need Molly to have restricted contact. When the children are in lessons, the doors between the offices and classrooms will be closed so that Molly has an extended play area outside of the office. Children can come through if they are confident to do so. If they are not, they inform a member~~	Now that all staff are familiar with Molly and all are comfortable handling her, anyone is able to act if needed.	L

		~~of staff who will put Molly away.~~ ~~• If the dog does get loose from her safe space (into the classroom area/ or other space with children) the staff will call for a designated staff member who will come and put the dog back in the office.~~ • Nov 26:Molly's designated safe space is the Headteacher's office. Staff may direct Molly back to this space whenever her behaviour, excitement level or the circumstances of the school day require this. Staff are familiar with Molly and able to support her return to her safe space when needed. ~~There are designated members of staff who will be called upon in the event of the dog getting loose or if she needs attention at any other time, they are:~~ ~~1. Mrs Ruth Ardrey (Head Teacher).~~ ~~2. Miss Emma Welch (Deputy Head).~~ ~~3. Mrs Caroline Stone (Inclusion Manager)~~ ~~4. Mrs Steph Kenward/ Mrs Julie Brooks (Office Team)~~ ~~5.Lee Seal (Site Manager)~~ ~~6.Collette Wiseman Jones (Teaching Assistant)~~ ~~7.Sarah Smith (Rainbows Club Manager)~~ • Nov 26: All staff have received information regarding expectations for Molly within school and are confident in directing her towards her safe space or seeking additional support if required.	Nov 26:The Headteacher's office is Molly's designated safe space. When Molly is tired, overstimulated, unwell, overexcited or showing behaviour that is not consistent with the calm and respectful environment expected within school, she will be returned to this area immediately.	
Nov 26 Molly moving freely around communal areas	Child startled, trip hazard, inappropriate interaction	• Children are taught how to interact appropriately with Molly. • Molly is familiar with the school environment. • Staff supervise interactions. • Staff retain discretion to return Molly to her safe space at any time. • Children are taught not to run towards, crowd or chase Molly. • Molly's behaviour is regularly reviewed by staff		L
Dog hair causing allergies	Children/ staff have allergic reaction	• Parents have been asked to inform the school of any known allergies. These will be looked at prior to introduction of the dog to school. A list of any children who should not interact with the dog will be kept on the school recording system and		L

		shared with staff. Currently the list is 2. • Children will have the opportunity to interact with the dog as they wish and those with allergies will be able to opt out of interaction. • Children have been taught to wash their hands after active participation with the dog.		
Germs carried by the dog	Children/staff will contract diseases that can be carried by dogs	• Should the dog defecate on the school site a member of staff will clear this up immediately and dispose of it in an outdoor bin. • All immunisations are kept up to date and the Head Teacher keeps a record of this via Pennards Vet. • Flea treatment is carried out at 4 weekly intervals. • Worming treatment is carried out as required. • The dog will not go in the school dining hall at meal times; she will not be permitted into the food preparation area of the kitchen.		L
Financial cost of the dog's upkeep	School unable to afford ongoing costs of the dog's day to day upkeep and medical bills.	• The dog is the responsibility of Mrs Ardrey. She is financially responsible for the dogs care and day to day costs. • The dog is the responsibility of Mrs Ardrey outside of school hours. • Veterinary costs will be paid by the owner, with the exception of non-essential veterinary costs required by the school. • The annual public liability insurance, for the school dog specifically, will be of a cost to the school		L
Claim is made against school re: Behaviour of the dog.	School not adequately covered financially	• Mrs Ardrey, insures the dog via: Many Pets. This is a lifetime Cover. The school's public liability insurance is covered by Pet Business Insurance. • The certificate is kept in school office and is renewed annually.		L
After school club in close contact before and after school	Children at after school/ breakfast club	• If the children from after school/ breakfast club, then this will be done in the presence of ~~Sarah Smith and/or Ruth Ardrey (SS/RA~~) an adult. • The children are allowed to feed treats to Molly if permission is sought from Ruth Ardrey. • Nov 26: The children use Molly's dinner to feed her and train her, under supervision of an adult from Rainbow Club. • The children are able to take Molly for walks in the outdoor space, ~~but must be overseen by SS/RA.~~		L

		• Molly will remain in her safe space during the club opening times, unless accompanied SS is on site.		
Children scared of Molly/ other dogs	All children/ staff	• Children will be offered socialisation time with an adult and Molly to ensure that the trust is built and relationship/ bond between Molly and child is strong		L
Molly nipping/biting when being fed	Children	• A staff member will accompany Molly at all times, the children are not allowed in the presence of Molly if an adult is not around. • Children have all been taught to ask Molly to sit or go to your bed, before issuing a treat. Children instruct Molly to be gentle and Molly takes gently from hands. • Children will be asked if they are comfortable to do so and if so they can feed Molly. Molly will not be fed if she is too excitable. • First aid would be sought if accident occurred and parents informed.		L
Sep 25: Children leaving school site to walk Molly	Children Miss Lutwyche	• Children will always be in the presence of Miss Lutwyche or Mrs Ardrey • Molly is kept on a lead at all times while walking along the pathway. She is kept tight near the road • Children are selected if they are confident with Molly and give their consent to go. • See separate walking in the local environment risk assessment.	Upon returning to school, the children, if they wish, feed Molly a treat. Instructed 'gentle' which Molly knows. If she is over excited, then a treat would be given by an adult.	L

Date of review:	Reviewed by:	Actions needed (if applicable):	Action completed: by whom? When? Complete?
31st Jan 2023	Ruth Ardrey	None	
6th April 2023	Ruth Ardrey	None- some reviews made	
5th October 2023	Ruth Ardrey	None- new point added	
29th October 2024	Ruth Ardrey	Some wording amended from original R.A due to Molly's age and temperament maturing.	

2nd September 2025	Ruth Ardrey	A few new points added and crossed out based on Molly's age now. Molly has more freedom now that the children are familiar with her and Molly's behaviour is calm around the children. Leaving school site added.	
3rd November 2026	Ruth Ardrey	Further additions added and some removed, based on the fact that Molly is now free to roam at school as long as adults judge it safe for her to do so.	