MABLETHORPE
PRIMARY ACADEMY

'Be inspired'

Mablethorpe Primary Academy Therapy Dog Policy

Start Date September 2026
Review Date August 2027

Created by:

One of the Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust Group of Academies



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Purpose

- Dogs teach children responsibility. Having to remember to feed, provide water and show support for a dog can give children a sense of importance and satisfaction that they can't from school or other chores.

The relationship that develops can be life changing for a child and a great support system as they themselves continue to grow and develop.

- Dogs teach children patience. Dogs do not always do as they told the first time!

- Dogs teach children compassion. Just like humans, dogs feel emotion and pain. They are prone to injuries and infirmities of age during their relatively short lives.

- Dogs teach children about socialisation. Like most of us, dogs are social animals who enjoy attention and affection. By learning how to interact with a dog, children can learn how to better socialise with other children.

- Dogs are fun. They greet you with a wagging tail every day and can cheer you up even on your worst day.

Introduction

- The Mablethorpe Primary AcademyTherapy dogs

Betty lives with Mrs Hickinbottom and has done since she was 8 weeks old. She is a well- behaved and sociable dog who loves being around all people and she is very used to being around children of all ages, and Mrs Hickinbottom has undertaken an accredited Dog Therapy course to support Betty's work in our Academy.

Molly lives with Miss Teale and has done since she was 9 weeks old. She is a well- behaved and sociable dog who loves being around all people and she is very used to being around children of all ages.

- Betty and Molly's Mum is a cocker spaniel and her Dad is a poodle which makes her a cockapoo.

- Betty and Molly regularly visits the vets for check-ups and they ensure that they are healthy, worm and flea free.

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• In addition to the reasons outlined at the beginning of the policy, we believe that Betty and Molly will help with the children's attendance, punctuality and have a positive contribution to the well-being of both pupils and staff.

Interaction with MPA Therapy dogs

• Under no circumstances will children have close interaction with the dogs unless the school has permission from parents/carers.

• Once permission has been given no child will be forced into interacting with the the dogs if it makes them unhappy in any way.

• At all times interaction with the dogs will be controlled and supervised by a member of staff. This will maximise safety for adults, children and the dog herself. If the following guidelines are not followed, interaction with the dogs will be cancelled.

• These guidelines apply to all adults and children.

Guidelines to be shared with children and parents:

• Never enter the room where the dog is based without an authorised adult.

• If the door to room where the dog is based is shut, make sure you knock and wait for the adult to let you in. Never let yourself in as the dog may not be ready.

• There must be an adult present at all times during interaction.

• Always approach the dog calmly (voice and movement)

• Always approach the dog slowly.

• To start interaction, offer the back of your hand first for the dog to sniff.

• Keep noise levels low at all times when interacting with the dog.

• Only the authorised adult can move any of the dog's resources, including food and treats.

• Whilst the dogs are new to the school no children will give them any food or treats.



- There must not be any interaction with the dog when they are eating.

- After all interaction with the dogs, hands must be washed with soap/hand gel.

As the Betty and Molly become more established there will be occasions when interaction will take place outside. On these occasions the following guidelines apply in addition to the guidelines above.

- No children will ever be asked to pick up faeces.
- If walking the dogs , an authorised adult must be present at all times.

- Children may hold the dogs lead if they are confident to do so. The authorised adult remains in charge of the situation at all times and will take the lead back if necessary. As Betty and Molly become more established, a carefully prepared programme of interaction will be timetabled and fully Risk Assessed.

