



Therapeutic Activities Group CIC
Risk Assessment
Programme: The Baxter Project.

Parent/Guardian consent and School Referral forms need to be completed prior to engagement.

What is the hazard	Who might be harmed	How might people be harmed	Risk Rating	Risk Control Measures / Standards to be Implemented by the School	School Control Measures	Residual Risk Rating
<p>Injuries to a pupil, staff, or visitor</p> <p>E.g., Minor injuries (scratches)</p> <p>Major injuries (biting)</p>	<p>Employees</p> <p>Pupils</p> <p>Visitors</p> <p>Public</p>	<p>Failure to provide a suitable school environment or the dog does not integrate well, resulting in distress and protective instincts etc.</p> <p>Failure to ensure the dog has had the relevant pre-assessment and health checks resulting in the dog being unsuitable for a school environment and the necessary behaviour/standards required.</p> <p>No training for the dog and/or the owner/handler resulting in confusion, distress, disobedience (jumping, scratching or other unsuitable behaviours). [Owner/handler not being able to notice warning signs].</p> <p>Lack of effective supervision OR lack of awareness training for staff/pupils OR poor behaviour exhibited by the cohort of pupils resulting in dog becoming distressed/protective instincts.</p>	<p>HIGH/ MEDIUM</p>	<p>>The dog has been assessed by a competent person and deemed suitable for a school environment (dependent on the nature of the pupils).</p> <p>>The dog and owner/handler has been trained (including on-going training) by a competent person to fully understand dog behaviour and warning signs. [Dog and owner/handler aim for high standards of recognised training].</p> <p>>The dog has regular health check-ups, treatments, and assessment etc. This includes claws being trimmed (where necessary).</p> <p>> Dog allowed to not attend any sessions if fatigued, recovering or has any injuries. Ensure timetabling is in place and dog able to 'walk away' from any potential distress.</p> <p>>The dog is always supervised by the trained owner/handler.</p> <p>>Pupils, staff etc. are educated on appropriate behaviour around the dog (e.g., Kennel Club standards). 'Safe & Sound' standards include never to put your face to a dog's face, never touch a dog whilst eating, never ignore a dog's warning growl, etc.</p> <p>>Kennel Club 'Standards' advise that the owner/handler is in control of the dog at all times, with a dog on a static lead.</p>	<p>The dog will enter the building to collect the relevant child/children for the therapeutic activity.</p> <p>The dog belongs to the Baxter Project and they are responsible for its checks and treatments.</p> <p>The dog is well rested prior to entering the school premises.</p> <p>The dog is always under the supervision of its handler.</p>	<p>LOW</p>

				>Ensure owner/handler fully aware of any implications (e.g., prosecution, civil claims) that could affect the owner/handler/dog.		
<p>Injury to the dog</p> <p>For example: Poked in the eye, pinched, slapped, kicked by a pupil.</p> <p>Unintentional injury (e.g., step of paw, fall into/onto the dog, dog hit by door or gate. Dog hit by sporting equipment etc.)</p>	<p>Employees Pupils Visitors Public</p>	<p>Intentional injury to the dog by pupil who is showing uncontrollable or unreasonable behaviour OR unintentional injury to the dog by pupil.</p> <p>This could also result in injury to pupil/staff/visitor if dog reacts adversely.</p> <p>School specific environmental risks exist where dog could get injured by the schools' heavy doors, gates, unprotected areas, or main roads etc.</p>	MEDIUM	<p>Situational Awareness: Owner/Handler (employee) to be always aware of situation.</p> <p>Pupil's behaviour to be monitored and assessed prior to the introduction of the dog.</p> <p>Pupils showing unacceptable behaviour will not be allowed to have a session with dog and awareness training provided.</p> <p>Ensure Owner/Handler has been trained on passing through doors safely and to always follow training methods on movement around school. Adapt the school to meet the dog's welfare needs.</p> <p>The dog should be kept on a lead while inside and outside.</p> <p>Owner/Handler to intervene if risk is realised (trained to identify warnings).</p> <p>> Dog does not attend any sessions if fatigued, recovering or has any injuries. Ensure timetabling is in place and dog can 'walk away' from any potential distress/intentional/unintentional injury.</p>	<p>The individual pupils who will be taking part in these therapeutic activities are reminded prior to the activity about their behaviour.</p> <p>The dog must always be on its lead on site.</p> <p>Limited access of individual identified pupils to dog. No others will work with the dog.</p>	LOW
<p>A dog out of control, resulting in injuries to the dog or others</p>	<p>Employees Pupils Visitors Public</p>	<p>An out-of-control dog can cause nuisance or manifest anxiety and fear in others. It can also cause injury to itself and others.</p> <p>An out-of-control dog that causes a 'perceived threat' to others could be reported to the police resulting in criminal investigation (Dangerous Dogs Act 1991) as well as potential civil claims.</p>	HIGH	<p>>Pupils always be supervised.</p> <p>>Dog must always be supervised by the trained owner/handler.</p> <p>>Point 43 of the Kennels Club Silver Award Standard states: <i>No matter how well trained or under control a dog might be, it should never be walked off lead in environmentally unsuitable areas.</i></p> <p>>Dog trained to not pull-on lead.</p> <p>>The dog has been assessed by a competent person.</p> <p>>The dog and owner/handler has been trained (including on-going training) by a competent person.</p> <p>>The dog has regular health check-ups, treatments etc.</p> <p>>School implemented a Dog Behaviour Log.</p> <p>>Dog allowed to not attend any sessions if fatigued, recovering or has any injuries. Ensure timetabling is in place and dog able to 'walk away' from any potential distress.</p>	<p>The visiting dog is always supervised by its handler. The dog will always be on a lead with a harness.</p>	MEDIUM
<p>The dog is not suitable for the school environment</p>	<p>Employees Pupils Visitors Public</p>	<p>No preparation and planning result in dog being distressed and potential injury to the animal, pupil, or staff etc.</p> <p>Failure to appoint a competent person to assess the dog's behaviour, temperament and suitability as a school dog resulting in an injury to the animal, pupil, or staff.</p>	HIGH	<p>>The dog has been assessed by a competent person and deemed suitable for a school environment (dependent on the nature of the pupils). Follow up and ah hoc sessions may also be required in response to dog behaviours.</p> <p>>Dogs should be gradually socialised to other dogs, people, pupils, and the school environment (including traffic). Not doing so can cause apprehension. Withdrawing a dog from</p>	<p>The Baxter Project wellbeing animals are behaviour assessed and kept under stringent control initially in new environments.</p> <p>The Baxter Project wellbeing animals are always monitored closely. If the animal appears to become distressed or agitated for any reason,</p>	

		<p>Failure to prioritise the dog's needs resulting in a lack of strategic control and injury to the animal, pupil, or staff.</p> <p>Failure to provide ongoing assessment and support for the school dog and behaviour changes going unnoticed resulting in an injury to the animal, pupil, or staff.</p>		<p>something that frightens it will only make apprehension worse in the long run. All socialisations should be carried out in a careful manner.</p> <p>>Competent person has passed basic vetting and therefore deemed 'competent'.</p> <p>>Dogs must always walk calmly on a loose lead.</p> <p>>School has adopted recognised behaviour standards for the dog to adhere to, e.g., Kennel Club Behaviour Standards and Awards.</p>	<p>sessions are cancelled to ascertain the issue and to mitigate any risk of harm.</p>	
<p>The school is not suitable for the dog, or the school has not been adapted to meet the dog's needs</p>	<p>Employees Pupils Visitors Public</p>	<p>Failure to provide a suitable environment (i.e., toileting, rest, food, drink, and exercise) resulting in distress and injury to the animal, pupil, or staff.</p> <p>Failure to allow the dog to exhibit normal behaviour patterns (as per Animal Welfare Act 2006), resulting in distress and injury to the animal, pupil, or staff.</p> <p>Failure to provide a safe space for the dog to retreat where necessary which can result in distress and injury to the animal, pupil, or staff etc.</p> <p>School not adapted to meet the dog's needs (e.g., not sufficient funds) to adapt resulting in potential distress and injury to the animal, pupil, or staff.</p> <p>Risk Assessment not completed or reviewed resulting in hazards not being controlled.</p> <p>Failure to identify hazards associated with school lettings and hire agreements resulting in distress and injury to the animal, pupil, or staff, etc.</p>	<p>MEDIUM</p>	<p>>Adapt the school to ensure the dog's welfare and environmental needs are met, this will include suitable rest places between sessions with the pupils; toilet & exercise areas; food and drink etc.</p> <p>>Develop and implement a School Dog timetable to ensure the school day suits the needs of the dog (factor in rest periods etc.)</p> <p>>Keep a record of known pupils/staff that cannot have sessions with the dog, e.g., no consent, allergies, immunosuppressed etc.</p> <p>>Ensure the location used for dog sessions permits enough space for the dog, and occupants (pupils, staff) to navigate safely (i.e., remove chairs, furniture etc.)</p>	<p>Visiting dog comes to school one morning session a week, the time is spent outside walking the talk in the locality/proximity of the school.</p> <p>No children with allergies have sessions with the dog. Only 5 children have been identified for sessions.</p> <p>Furniture removal is not necessary as the dog is outside.</p> <p>The dog will spend the majority of its time outside of the school's grounds.</p>	<p>LOW</p>
<p>The dog has received insufficient training and/or the dog owner/handler has received insufficient training</p>	<p>Employees Pupils Visitors</p>	<p>Failure to appoint a competent person to assess and provide the necessary training for the dog and the owner/dog handler resulting in distress and injury to the animal, pupil, or staff etc.</p> <p>Failure to prioritise the dog's needs (due to lack of awareness training) resulting in distress and injury to the animal, pupil, or staff.</p> <p>Failure to provide ongoing training (for the dog/owner/handler) resulting in dog</p>	<p>HIGH</p>	<p>>The owner/handler and dog must work to the minimum standards required (For example: The Kennel Club Silver Good Citizen Award, or to an equivalent standard etc.)</p> <p>>Ensure the dog and owner/handler has received suitable and sufficient training from a competent person (see guidance).</p> <p>>Ensure any ongoing training requirements are also put into place.</p>	<p>Although specific training is not required by the wellbeing animals for their role, behaviour assessments are carried out to ensure the dogs have the correct temperament for such work.</p> <p>General training would have been undertaken by the dog's owner over the course of the dog's lifetime.</p>	<p>LOW</p>

		behaviour/handling deteriorating and potential distress/injury to the animal, pupil, or staff etc. Failure to identify signs and symptoms of distress and fatigue in the animal, resulting in distress and potential injury to the animal, pupil, or staff etc.				
Lack of commitment and support from the school	Employees Pupils Visitors	Failure to achieve sufficient support/resources from the school (i.e., governing body, senior leadership team, staff, trade union reps, local community etc.) resulting in potential distress and injury to the animal, pupil, or staff etc. Lack of funding/resource commitment/support from the school resulting in the dog's needs not being met and potential distress/injury to the animal, pupil, or staff etc.	MEDIUM	>Engage with 'visiting dog' services before committing to a continuous school dog to ensure the school can handle the commitment and ongoing support. >Ensure all parties have been consulted (including the local community/parents and carers) to ensure support. >Assess resources/costs (including the loss of a member of staff to supervise the dog).	The school does not intend to have a continuous dog. This is an intervention organised by Mary Immaculate High School for itself and the feeder school as part of cluster work and funding to support LACE. Funded via cluster LACE funding.	LOW
No consent, support or understanding from school staff and parents/carers Allergies, Cultural differences, and Medical Vulnerabilities	Employees Pupils Visitors	Failure to communicate or discuss with school staff and parents/carers resulting in the school being unable to address the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils, staff, visitors with dog allergies • Pupils, staff, visitors with specific medical vulnerabilities • Pupils, staff, visitors that are anxious, fearful or have cultural concerns relating to the presence of the school dog at the school/workplace. 	HIGH	>All pupils have a completed consent form (via parent/carer) indicating any issues. >Pupils with allergies do not have sessions with the dog (this may result in the class being split into two groups). The group with the dog will need to wash hands to reduce the likelihood of dander cross-contamination. >Seek medical advice on pupils who may experience serious allergic reactions (anaphylaxis) from the pupil's GP/Specialist (via the parent/carer). [Individual Healthcare Plan may need to be updated]. >Individuals or dogs that are immunosuppressed due to illness and/or certain types of medication must not be involved in the dog sessions without medical approval. >Dog in School Signs can be erected at reception when the school dog is at the school, thus warning visitors of its presence (in case of allergies, concerns etc.)	All parental consent forms have been completed. No pupils with allergies take part.	LOW
Lack of proactive medical care and assessment Infection and illness transferred to pupil	Employees Pupils Visitors	Failure to ensure the dog has regular check-ups, vaccinations, and necessary treatments (e.g., flea, worms etc.) This can result in distress, illness, and potential injury. Proactive medical assessments can identify ailments before they affect the dog's mental and physical health, which will prevent distress and potential injury to the animal, pupil, or staff.	HIGH	>Dog to be vaccinated against all recommended diseases as recommended by vet. >Worm and flea treatment to be carried out by owner/handler regularly. >Schedule regular health check-ups for the dog. >Owner/Handler trained to identify physical health and to seek medical advice where there are concerns.	The health of our animals is a priority. The owners ensure medical treatment is up to date. Similarly, any issues that arise in the course of the day will be monitored closely. If the animals wellbeing is in question it would be necessary to terminate sessions.	LOW

				>Owner/Handler to carry out routine checks on the dog to ensure there are no cuts/wounds or minor injuries that could result in the dog reacting to the pain.		
Lack of training and basic awareness for staff, pupils, and visitors	Employees Public Pupils Visitors	Failure to provide basic awareness training (rules) to staff, pupils, and visitors on how to behave, react and approach a dog etc. Over-crowding and misbehaviour have the potential to result in distress to the dog and potential for injury to the pupil or staff etc.	HIGH	<p>>Staff and pupils (and others at the school) need to be given information and training on how to behave and what signs/symptoms to look out for.</p> <p>>Always allow the dog to have enough space (no crowding) and ensure the dog can move away/retreat at any time.</p> <p>>Pupils are usually less predictable than adults and they should be trained on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never to make sudden movements close to a dog. • Never to scream or suddenly yell close to a dog. • Never to lunge at a dog, particularly when it is asleep. • Never to put their face close to a dog's face. • Never to eat food close to a dog. • Never to tease or pull a dog's body or coat. • Never to ignore a dog's warning growl. • Never touch a dog whilst it is eating • Always wash their hands after playing with a dog. • Always ask permission before touching a dog they do not know. 	Only 5 pupils have been identified to work with the dog and have been trained by the Baxter dog handler.	Medium
Lack of effective supervision	Employees Public Pupils Visitors	<p>Failure to ensure the owner/handler (or secondary dog handler) to prioritise the dog's needs at the school resulting in distress/injury to the animal, pupil, or staff etc.</p> <p>Insufficient planning (poor timetabling) resulting in the owner/handler having to supervise pupils as well as the school dog resulting in distress to the dog and potential injury to the animal, pupil, staff etc.</p>	HIGH	<p>>The owner/handler to prioritise the dogs needs (this will affect the employee's ability to be part of effective supervision ratios, e.g., school trips, lunchtime duty, fire evacuation, lock down etc.)</p> <p>>The school day must be carefully planned and timetabled to allow the dog to rest, recover, exercise, food/water etc.</p>	The handler will only be working with the identified children. They do not have a role with the school staffing structure as this is a visiting dog therefore supervision of any other children cannot take place.	LOW
<p>Roles and Responsibilities are not clearly defined</p> <p>No H&S policy or effective arrangements in place</p>	Employees Public Pupils Visitors	Failure to carefully plan the dog's integration OR failure to ensure effective arrangements can result in distress to the animal and potential injury to the pupil, staff etc.	MEDIUM	<p>>School Dog H&S policy developed OR School Dog added to the schools existing H&S policy outlining the arrangements, roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>>The employees responsible are named to ensure arrangements are effective and accountable. This will also highlight the level of commitment necessary to ensure the dog's welfare is taken seriously.</p> <p>>Recognised standards and best practice have been fully adopted by the school management team and staff. (E.g., Kennel Club Standards or equivalent/similar).</p>	<p>Not a school dog.</p> <p>No employees are responsible for this dog.</p> <p>The dog is not being integrated into the school.</p> <p>The Baxter Project are responsible for the dog (names above).</p>	LOW

				>The dog carefully and gradually integrated as per guidance and best practice, e.g., visit the school when empty, familiarisation includes sounds, feel and smells. Slowly build up pupil and staff introductions.		
Other animals E.g., Dogs, Cats, Rabbits Guinea Pigs Ponies Trespassing dogs	Employees Public Pupils Visitors	Failure to assess the impact on other animals at the school. This could include other dogs, rabbits etc. How these animals will react to each other and if it will affect their wellbeing and behaviour. Trespassing dogs, rodents, gulls or foxes may also be a concern in the local area.	MEDIUM	>Assess the presence of other animals at the school and whether they will interact. If interaction is likely, assess the impact this will have and if unable to introduce dog as a result? >Dog to be always kept under control (as per standards/best practice) >Owner/Handler to be always aware of environment (and supports to complete the site-specific risk assessment). >More than one dog: Do not initially try to train two or more together. It must be remembered that, not only will one dog distract the other but when one is praised, this will also apply to the other and will be confusing. Always train a dog on a one-to-one basis with the other out of the way. When both are well behaved individually, they can be handled together. >Assess the school site with other staff to determine the presence of other animals (e.g., rodents, foxes) that may prevent the introduction of a school dog until the situation is controlled.	No other animals Gates locked so no trespassing dog during the time the visiting dog would be visiting.	LOW
No contingency arrangements in place First Aider Risk Assessment not reviewed	Employees Pupils Visitors Public	Failure to plan for the foreseeable, e.g., <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illness to the dog or the owner/handler • Accidental soiling and cleaning arrangements • Staff shortages and requirement to use the dog owner/handler for pupil supervision duties • School dog catching rodents and other small animals – introducing disease and intervention from school staff to clean up 	MEDIUM	>Put in place contingency measures for all foreseeable issues and concerns that may present themselves. >Review First Aid Risk Assessment as the arrangements may be inadequate (dog owner/handler unable to complete certain duties whilst supervising the dog etc.) >Review schools Emergency Response Plan (ERP) to ensure arrangements in place for the dog in an emergency situation.	In the event of the visiting dog owner being taken unwell a school staff member with relevant experience will take control of the dog until the visiting dog owner is capable of managing the dog themselves.	LOW
Hygiene Dog faeces/urine Infection and illness transferred to pupil, staff etc.	Employees Pupils Visitors Public	Poor hygiene practices resulting in contamination and transmission of parasites, bacteria, viruses to other animals, pupils, staff etc. Lack of hygiene facilities or understanding on the transmission routes.	HIGH	>School provides suitable toileting and exercising areas and put in place procedures for faeces removal. Also put in place contingency procedures for faeces removal in case of accidents. >All staff and pupils to wash hands after coming into contact with dog. >Keep dog away from all food preparation areas and away from pupils during times when they are eating.	The dog will spend most of its time off school premises. The dog will not be near any food preparation area. The dog will only enter the foyer/reception area of the school. In the event of an accident the school admin will attend.	LOW

		Faeces not removed and coming into contact with pupils, staff etc. Faeces can transmit diseases.		>Dog to be removed from indoor environment. Taken to appropriate location. Faeces removed from school grounds. >Dog medical treatments all up to date.		
Slips, Trips and Falls	Employees Staff Pupils Visitors	Food, drinking water, faeces, urine, Pupils, staff, visitors not sturdy on their feet (falls). Dog exhibiting behaviour of jumping, pushing, pulling on the lead etc.	MEDIUM	>Adapt the school to ensure the dog's needs are met and these are set up without creating additional hazards. E.g., place food/water bowls in safe location, with non-slip mats where required. >Ensure staff, pupils or visitors that cannot be with the dog are not (e.g., elderly/frail visitors, parents, carers etc. >Monitor the dog's behaviour and address any concerns (with support from competent person where required).	The dog handler will ensure all of the dog's needs are met. Drinking water will be provided in an outside area. The dog will be removed from the site should there be any behaviour concerns.	LOW
Manual Handling	Employees Staff Pupils Visitors	Staff, pupils attempting to carry the dog resulting in manual handling injury to staff and other injuries to the pupil and animal.	LOW	>Ensure staff and pupils are instructed not to lift/carry the animal as the 'load' would be unpredictable and can cause injury.	No one will carry the dog.	LOW
Not reviewing the school dog procedures or policies etc.	Employees Staff Pupils Visitors	New admissions, pupil transfers, staff changes, dog changes, owner/handler changes that can result in hazards being uncontrolled, e.g., a new pupil at the school being allergic to the dog or a new staff member not receiving the relevant training.	HIGH/ MEDIUM	>Review the school dog risk assessment at least annually (sooner if there are any changes). >Review the schools dogs' suitability and timetable when there are new pupil admissions and new staff to ensure there are no conflicts in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allergies • Consent • Cultural issues • Anxiety/Fear • Etc. >Review the school dog training requirements annually and provide annual refresher to staff/pupils (i.e., every September). >Add school dog training to the schools INDUCTION so that new staff, agency / supply staff are trained and well informed of the arrangements etc.	The Risk Assessment will be reviewed annually or if there is any change in the identified children. All training is the responsibility of the Baxter project staff.	LOW
The school dog is fatigued Not looking after the dog's welfare	Employees Staff Pupils Visitors	The dogs working hours have not been adhered to and not provided with sufficient rest/recovery resulting in distress and potential injury to the animal or pupil or member of staff etc.	HIGH	>Owner/Handler to be aware of dog's characteristics and behaviour (recognise signs of fatigue etc.) >Provide dog with regular breaks and access to water. >Limit the number of pupils working with dog at one time to reduce chance of dog being overwhelmed.	Timetable is limited to short morning session. The Baxter Project handlers are responsible for looking after the dog's welfare at all times.	LOW

				<p>>Follow the school dogs timetable limit the number of sessions per day (reduce the number of sessions where necessary to provide rest and recovery).</p> <p>>Prioritise the dogs wellbeing and welfare needs by adopting recognised Best Practice/Standards (e.g., Kennel Trust)</p>		
Unsuitable equipment or non-maintained equipment	Employees Staff Pupils Visitors	Equipment not fit for purpose resulting in potential distress or injury or lack of control to any emergency situations.	MEDIUM	<p>>A dog's lead should be totally secure, and attention should always be paid to worn stitching or a clip that may not be reliable. Carry out regular checks on the collar or restraint system will not break under strain.</p> <p>>Ensure the collar/system is adjusted so that, in the event of panic, it would be impossible for the dog to get free. It remains a legal requirement for the dog to wear a collar with legally compliant identification</p>	The Baxter Project Staff complete all checks.	LOW
Changes in weather	Employees Staff Pupils Visitors	Dog unable to regulate temperature as easily as a human, resulting in distress, overheating etc.	MEDIUM	<p>>Provide information and training to all staff to understand this concern and what are the signs / symptoms.</p> <p>>Check weather forecasts and provide suitable spaces at the school to ensure the dog is not too cold or too hot, e.g., ventilation/draughts, shade etc.</p> <p>>Provide fresh drinking water.</p> <p>>Seek medical advice for further information.</p>	Sessions not to take place in poor weather conditions.	LOW
INSERT SCHOOL SPECIFIC HAZARDS (where required)						

Non-compliance with safety procedures may result in session cancellation and removal from the provision