

# HINGUAR PRIMARY SCHOOL & NURSERY

📍 New Garrison Road, Shoeburyness, Essex, SS3 9FE ☎ 01702 292 721

🌐 [www.hinguar.secat.co.uk](http://www.hinguar.secat.co.uk) ✉ [office@hinguar.secat.co.uk](mailto:office@hinguar.secat.co.uk)

**Headteacher:** Mrs Alison Waite

19<sup>th</sup> January 2023

Dear Parents/Carers,

We are writing to let you know of some exciting news for Hinguar Primary School. From April, we will be getting our first visit from a dog, called Milo, who will be a regular attendee at Hinguar Primary School. Milo is 2.5 years old small Shihpoo (cross breed of a shih tzu and poodle). Many parents have already met Milo over the Garrison, as he belongs to Mrs. White. He is small, playful, cuddly and very calm once he has had a run around with his friends.

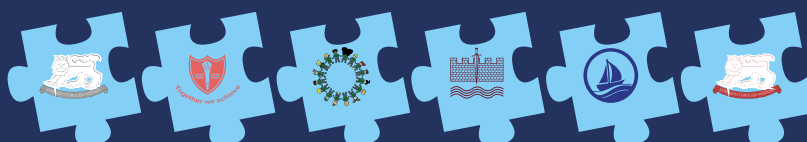
Shihpoos are a breed of dog that are known for their mild temperament, and he has a hypo-allergenic coat. Milo will be only coming into school for short sessions initially. Mrs. White will obviously be caring for Milo in school, but other staff will be taking him for sessions too, as he settles.

In an assembly, we will discuss with the children the rules and expectations and the benefits about having a dog in school. We have undertaken a significant amount of research and are aware of many benefits to having a school dog including:

## Benefits:

- a calming effect on pupils.
- improved behaviour and concentration, reduced stress and improved self-esteem.
- encouraging expression, participation and confidence for all children.
- fostering a sense of responsibility.
- motivating pupils to think and to learn, as most children have a high level of natural interest in, enthusiasm for and enjoyment of animals.
- encouraging respect and thereby improving pupils' relationships with each other, parents and teachers.
- teaching children to nurture and respect life.
- helping work undertaken with the most vulnerable children.
- helping children build confidence in reading.
- improving attendance.
- further promote our 'Well Being' agenda for pupils.

Dogs are increasingly being used in schools with great success and some of you may have seen in the media that they are now being used in some hospitals, as the emotional health benefits they bring are just so vast.



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The dog's main place of residence will be in the downstairs office area, which is secure and separate from the classrooms. As Milo is still only young, he will slowly be introduced to the school community, and we will begin by introducing him to small numbers of children. Over the year, all children will have the opportunity to interact with Milo as he begins to visit more classrooms and moves around the school more. Whilst moving around the school, Milo will be kept on a short lead and will always be with an adult.

Please understand that we will do everything we can to reassure children who are fearful and that under no circumstances will they be forced to meet with the dog.

We have chosen a Shihpoo as an appropriate breed of dog for the school. The breed has been carefully selected because of its ideal temperament. We will publish pictures of the dog, Milo, via our social media, so that everyone can enjoy his development and our weekly newsletter will provide regular updates.

We hope the children will gain a great deal of enjoyment from having a dog in school and that he becomes an established part of life at Hinguar Primary School. However, should you have any queries or questions on the matter then please do not hesitate to contact the school. In the meantime, please see the FAQs attached.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Alison Waite      Mrs Kerri White

Headteacher      SENCo

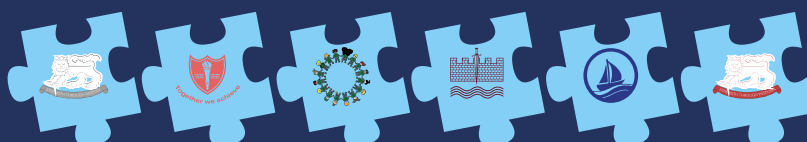
## Permission slip for working with our school dog

Please tick as appropriate:

- ☐ I am happy for my child to be involved with all aspects of caring for the school dog, including supervised walks at break time.
- ☐ My child is a little nervous of dogs, but I am happy for him/her to be involved in all aspects of caring for the dog in school, including supervised walks at break time.
- ☐ My child is fearful of dogs but, in time, I would like them to work with the dog to develop their confidence with and understanding of dogs.
- ☐ I do not give permission for my child to come into direct contact with the dog.

Child's name..... Class..... Date.....

Signed..... Print name.....



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## School Dog

### Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

#### **Q Who is the legal owner of the dog and who pays for its costs?**

A. The legal owner of the dog will be Mrs White who will care for the dog out of school hours and will bear the costs associated with it; the school budget will remain unaffected.

#### **Q Will the dog be a distraction?**

A. The dog will be kept in an office area. We will be careful to ensure that time spent with the school dog is shared among the children fairly. We will also ensure that children who are not involved in regular, direct contact with the dog are still able to participate in several ways, should they wish to do so.

#### **Q Has a risk assessment been undertaken?**

A. Yes, we have carefully considered having a dog in school and sought advice from many sources, including other schools that successfully have a dog on site. There is also a School Dog Policy available to view on the Website.

#### **Q Who is responsible for training?**

A. The nominated member of staff will be the legal owner of the dog and as a result, will be responsible for its training.

#### **Q. How will the dog be toileted to ensure hygiene for all?**

A. In the interest of health and hygiene our school dog will be toileted in a sectioned off area of the school site where children have no access. Thus, there will be no chance of the children encountering faeces. Our policy of no dogs in the playground is still applicable as we are unable to put effective control measures in place that guarantee temperament and safety when children come into unsupervised contact with unknown dogs.

#### **Q How will the dog's welfare be considered?**

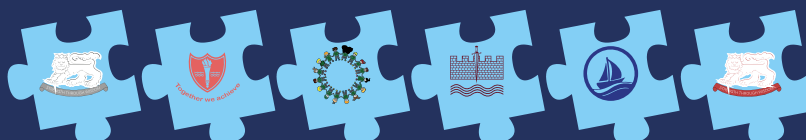
A. He will be walked in the mornings and come to school afterwards by school staff who live locally. The dog will be kept in an office area and will only have planned and supervised contact with children and visitors. The dog will be carefully trained over a period and will have unlimited access to water. We will work closely with other professionals to ensure the dog's welfare is always carefully considered.

#### **Q How will this be managed where children have allergies?**

A. We already manage a number of allergies at school, and this will be no different for children and adults that are allergic to dogs. The breed of dog has also been chosen for its hypoallergenic properties. Individual needs will always be met, and we are happy to work with parents to put additional control measures in place for individual allergies.

#### **Q My child is frightened of dogs; how will you manage this?**

A. Access to the dog is carefully managed and supervised and children do not need to have regular, close contact with it unless permission for this has been given. We hope to work closely with parents of children who are fearful of dogs to alleviate their fear and to teach them how to manage this.



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## Policy on Dogs on School Grounds

**Aims:** To ensure the safety and well-being of pupils, staff and visitors to the school and to minimise the risk of accident or injury to people or animals within the school grounds.

### **The context of the policy**

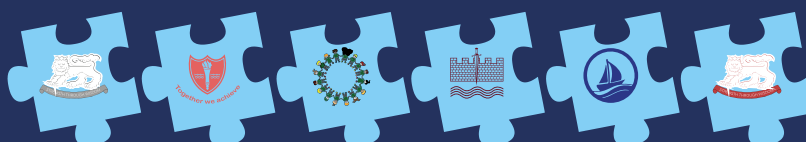
Governors and staff recognise that dogs are an important part of life for some of our families and, as such, are often included in day-to-day activities such as walking children to and from school. In our teaching, we promote the relationship between people and their pets and accept and encourage the idea of pets as 'family members'. We do see pet ownership as a valuable educational experience for children. It also recognises that some staff who reside on site are dog owners.

The value of pet 'therapy' is widely accepted as a powerful aid to stimulation and communication. Studies have shown that the presence of companion animals can improve the well-being of children and lower the rate of anxiety, simply by making the environment happier, more enjoyable and less forbidding. The school also acknowledges the views of families who have chosen not to have dogs or other pets. They also recognise that bringing dogs onto the premises might pose a health and safety risk to our pupils and others on site and could be unsettling for many as they arrive and leave school. There are added risks of dogs fouling, dogs biting or showing aggressive unpredictable behaviour. The school recognises that even well-behaved dogs can behave unpredictably when placed in an unfamiliar, busy, noisy and crowded school environment and that this can lead to unexpected behaviour in even the best-behaved pet. Children can also behave unpredictably when in the presence of dogs especially where they are not used to being with them. It is in considering this context that this Policy and Code of Conduct has been drafted.

### **Code of Conduct**

The school requires all staff, parents and any visitors intending to bring their dogs to school must adhere to this Code of Conduct which states:

- All visiting dogs must be on a lead that keeps the dog reasonably close to the adult who is control of them;
- No dogs accompanying children to and from school are allowed inside any school buildings only dogs resident on the school site or assistance dogs are allowed inside school buildings;
- Unsupervised resident or assistance dogs must be secured in an appropriate crate when on the school site;
- Visiting dogs must not be left unsupervised on the school premises and must not be left in the sole care of anyone under the age of 18. No dog can be tied up and left unattended on or near the school site at any time - dogs should be kept away from entry ways so that children have a choice whether they want to come in direct contact with dogs;
- If any parent or pupil object to the animal's presence, then arrangements must be made to ensure that this animal is kept away from them. If necessary, the animal may need exclusion from specific areas;
- In any event, no dogs are allowed in the enclosed Early Years play area at any time;





SECAT

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- The adult bringing the dog on site is responsible for cleaning up and removing from site any soiling by their dog on the school grounds and failure to do so will mean the dog will no longer be allowed in the school grounds (N.B. dog waste must not be put into the school bins);
- All dogs coming onto school grounds must be properly vaccinated and treated for fleas and other parasites, regularly groomed and checked for signs of infection or other illness;
- Claws should be kept trimmed to reduce the risk of scratches;
- Pets that are ill should be diagnosed and treated by a vet and should not be allowed in the school premises until their health is restored. All pets should have their coats cleaned regularly.
- 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 any aggression towards children or others and that the owner believes the dog is fully trustworthy in a school environment;
- It is understood that bringing dogs to school is a privilege not a right and is done at the absolute discretion of the Headteacher.

**March 2023**

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