

# Philpots Manor School



## Dogs & Animals in School Policy

**Approved by:**

**Date:** 06.03.24

**Last reviewed:** 06.03.24

**Next review due by:**  
23.09.26

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### **1. Rationale**

The Department for Education has recommended strongly to schools that dogs and animals are only allowed on school premises for educational purposes or with pupils, staff or members of the public as a registered service animal. The senior management team have considered this advice and have agreed to accept this recommendation.

### **2. Aims**

To promote the welfare of animals on and off site by developing knowledge and understanding of good practice relating to animal welfare.

To ensure the safety of children, adolescents and adults on site whilst handling and learning about animals.

### **3. Scope**

Philpots Manor School recognises that the presence of animals in our school can provide a valuable learning experience and enhance the curriculum for many of our young people, but animals cannot be allowed to endanger pupil safety or disrupt learning. For that reason, there should be a clear educational purpose for an animal to visit or reside at the school.

The school recognises that animals can offer the potential for a very positive learning experience for children to learn about taking care of and showing responsibility for animals as well as developing an understanding of the importance of the humane treatment of living creatures. A variety of animals are integrated into our animal care curriculum and forest school activities and an understanding of the different characteristics of these animals supports the young peoples' celebration of diversity and promotes inclusion.

Children can benefit educationally and emotionally, increase their understanding of responsibility and develop empathy and nurturing skills through contact with pets.

### **4. Objective**

To identify a strategy for animals visiting or residing at school which takes into consideration the safeguarding and welfare of staff, pupils and the animals.

## **5. Dogs who reside on site and dogs who are approved to visit for educational purposes**

Specific dogs are welcome in our school as part of our educational curriculum. These dogs are identified by a 'Animal' poster which is displayed in reception and in the main school building, identifying which canine partners have been approved by the Headteacher to be on our school site and have the appropriate paperwork to support this decision. Appropriate paperwork includes an identification picture, risk assessment and the owner's evidence of public liability insurance to a minimum of £2 million. Risk assessment of dogs or other animals kept on site or visiting site regularly must be made available at all times on the shared drive and updated biannually.

## **6. Visiting dogs/animals**

From time-to-time dogs or other animals might come into school as part of an educational activity. This could be linked to a curriculum topic on animals or pets, fundraising for Guide Dogs, Canine therapy dogs or workshops by the Dogs Trust for example.

In these cases, the following guidance should be adhered to:

- a) A risk assessment is completed prior to the visit and approved by the Headteacher.
- b) The dog/animal must be from a recognised organisation that can show evidence of their suitability for the work.
- c) The organisation has public liability insurance for the animal in question;
- d) Alternative arrangements have been made for pupils that may not wish to participate in the activity;
- e) All necessary arrangements have been put in place prior to the visit, as agreed with the organisation bringing in the dog/animal. This should take into consideration size, breed, age group and numbers of children to interact with the dog/animal;
- f) Consideration should be taken of any allergic reactions to dogs/animals that pupils or staff may have;
- g) Good hygiene and hand-washing procedures are in place for pupils and staff.

In other cases, a young person may wish for a pet or other animal to visit the school. Before bringing an animal onto the school premises during school hours, staff and pupils must seek prior authorisation from the Headteacher.

Evidence must be provided that the animals are in good health and have had all the necessary immunisations or vaccinations.

Any animal brought to school must remain under control of the responsible adult at all times (the member of staff the animal belongs to or the parent of the pupil who wants to bring an

animal in). The animal should be restrained on a lead or in a suitable carrier. This applies to days when school is in session, prior to the start of school and for any time after the school day, whenever the animal is on the school premises. Transportation of animals to and from school will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian or other adult. Dogs should not be exercised within the school grounds but may be exercised on adjacent footpaths.

No wild animals or protected animals will be brought to the building or on school grounds by anyone other than an authorised or licensed animal handler.

There will be no physical contact between any animal and pupils unless it is an integral part of the learning curriculum with prior approval received.

Should any pupil or adult be scratched or bitten by an animal at school, first aid must be administered immediately and in the case of a pupil, parents will be called and an incident or accident report written. The policy for animals in school will be reviewed and if necessary, amended accordingly.

Consideration should be given to the temperament and characteristics of any dog being brought into school.

Children must never be left alone with dogs or other animals and there must be appropriate adult supervision at all times. Pupils should be taught how to interact with the dogs safely as part of their curriculum.

Dogs will:

- Not be allowed in school if they are unwell.
- Be kept on a lead when moving between classrooms or on a walk.
- Always be under the full control and supervision of an adult.
- Be kept in the yard office or forest school hut with a quiet area for resting.
- Be fully trained and responsive to commands and recall.
- Have had all vaccinations.

Our children will:

- Not have sole responsibility for, or be left alone with, the dog.
- Meet the dogs in small groups and approach the dogs quietly and with consideration to the dog's body language.
- Be gentle with the dogs.
- Not put their faces near the dog's face.
- Not disturb a dog that is eating or sleeping.
- Always approach a dog standing up.
- Not be allowed to feed the dogs.

The Senior Management Team reserves the right to refuse any animal from coming on site at any time, at the school's discretion.

## **7. Children with Medical Concerns**

Health issues must be considered when assessing the appropriateness of animals in the classroom. Prior to the consideration of the introduction of an animal to the classroom, the

teacher should review the medical notes of the pupils in their class to ensure there is no conflict.

It is the policy of the school to consider the safety, health and well-being of every pupil when making decisions regarding the introduction of animals to the classroom. When there is a conflict in this area, the Head of Education will confer with the staff member to find an agreeable solution to the matter in consultation with others, e.g. the parents and pupil, school and others as appropriate. If pupils have petted an animal, it is essential that they wash their hands after the activity and that this is supervised to ensure that it is thorough.

## **8. Responsibility**

The owner or handler of any animal, including a service animal, is responsible for the animal at all times and must take responsibility in the event of any harm accidentally or otherwise that befalls the animal, a child or adult. All staff must complete a risk assessment form prior to the introduction of a new animal in the classroom which must be signed off by the Headteacher.

## **9: The Care and Humane Treatment of Animals**

Animals within the school will be handled, treated, and cared for in a humane manner. Enclosures must be appropriate to the animal, and it is the responsibility of the owner or organising staff member to ensure that the animal has sufficient food, water and a comfortable environment to reduce the stress for the animal. Habitats must be maintained and cleaned by staff or by pupils under the supervision of staff.

## **10: Health and Safety**

Children and adults will always wash their hands or use hand sanitiser after handling a dog or other animal. Any dog excrement or animal faeces will be cleared up immediately and disposed of appropriately by the adult in charge of the dog at the time. Children must never be allowed to do this.

## **11: Rabbits**

As part of our animal care educational provision, we have 6 rabbits that live permanently onsite at the yard. These rabbits can be taken into the classroom for an extended visit but only if correct animal welfare standards can be met. This will be determined by a classroom visit prior to the rabbits visit by the Yard Manager, or another qualified member of the Equine team, who have overall responsibility to ensure animal welfare is maintained onsite at all times. Whilst rabbits are off yard, the lead teacher will assume all responsibility to ensure that correct welfare standards are maintained through the following:

- Safe, secure environment provided with non-slip flooring, hay and water available at all times.
- Rabbits are handled in the correct manner, shown care and respect, and students are fully supervised for any interactions.
- Rabbits are monitored for any signs of stress or distress, and all interactions are ceased immediately if there are concerns.

## 12: Appendices

### Risk Assessments

1. Risk assessments for School own rabbits
2. Risk assessment for cat: Mai
3. Risk assessments for dogs: Huxley, Peggy, Lucy

#### 1. Rabbits RA -Yard and Classroom

#### RISK RATING: Low

Task / Activity	Who is at risk & who needs to know about the activity?
What are the hazards (dangers)?	Action to be taken to reduce the risk/s
<p>Handling the rabbits within their pens Catching and picking up rabbits Cleaning out the rabbit pens moving the rabbits Classroom visits with rabbits</p>	<p>At Risk: Students, Staff and Visitors.</p> <p>To be aware of risks and protocols: all staff/students/visitors involved with any 'rabbit' activity.</p>
<p>Injuries to person:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bites, scratches, bruising from the rabbit.</li> <li>2. Scratches, bruising, wounds from accidents involving any rabbit equipment</li> <li>3. Strains, Sprains and other musculoskeletal injuries</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Students are only allowed into the rabbit stable when supervised by a member of school staff. Staff have been given correct training on how to catch, pick up and hold a rabbit to maintain the animal's welfare throughout.</li> <li>● If holding the rabbit, students must be seated. There are towels available for rabbits to sit on the student's lap.</li> <li>● Only attempt to pick up a rabbit who is calm and happy to be caught.</li> <li>● Care must be taken by the student and supervising adult to ensure the rabbit is correctly restrained during handling to ensure the animal feels safe and supported. If student at all in doubt, or rabbits showing signs of distress do not continue and allow rabbit to be placed down on the floor.</li> <li>● A maximum of 3 people (2 students and 1 adult) can be in each pen at one time, and a maximum of 4 in total within the stable.</li> <li>● The stable door must always remain closed during any handling activity.</li> <li>● Staff training is provided in the safe techniques in catching and holding rabbits.</li> <li>● Students are to be supervised when handling rabbits and must be seated unless transporting the rabbit from one point to another using the carry case.</li> <li>● Care must be taken when climbing over the internal partition and only to be done so if individual mobile and well balanced.</li> </ul>
<p>As a result of handling activity, Rabbits displaying unsettled behaviours, or gaining an injury.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Students to be supervised at all times by knowledgeable staff when inside the pens/handling rabbits.</li> </ul>

<p>-signs of stress          -biting/scratching          -avoiding contact          -injuries to limbs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Posters are on display in the rabbit stable clearly indicating different rabbit behaviours, both positive behaviours and ones as a result of stress/illness. All students have these pointed out to them.</li> <li>● Rabbits must be caught using correct, safe techniques as demonstrated in the posters in the stable, and by staff to maintain animal welfare. Only staff and students who have been correctly shown how to catch rabbits are permitted to do so. Yard staff will offer training to those needing upon request.</li> <li>● Rabbits who are calm and happy may be picked up. At times all rabbits will try to evade catching at times and can usually be caught calmly with patience and perseverance. If the rabbit continues to evade or show signs of stress (elevated breathing, stamping, hiding, boxing with legs) then the rabbit must be left alone. Do NOT continue to pursue the rabbit.</li> <li>● If a rabbit is to be handled within the stable, the handler should be seated once the rabbit is caught and the rabbit secured with all 4 feet on the lap as demonstrated in the posters on display. Towels are provided to protect clothing.</li> <li>● All staff and students are aware of the injuries that may occur to a rabbit through mishandling or stress, and are to take every precaution to avoid this happening.</li> </ul>
<p>Cleaning out rabbit pens</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Correct training must be given to all handlers to ensure they understand correct procedures for cleaning out the rabbit pens with minimal disturbance to rabbits.</li> <li>● Care must be taken when climbing over the internal partition and only to be done so if individual mobile and well balanced.</li> <li>● Stable door to remain closed unless rabbits have been caught and placed in travel carry case whilst student is cleaning out the pen. Rabbits must be restrained in this manner if more than 2 students are cleaning out the pen as part of their session.</li> <li>● Students to use tools and equipment in the safe, correct manner as demonstrated by supporting staff.</li> <li>● All waste to be disposed of correctly onto the muck trailer and all tools to be put away safely once finished with.</li> <li>● All to wash hands thoroughly before eating or drinking anything. Eating and drinking is not permitted anywhere on the yard or near the animals.</li> </ul>
<p>Grooming rabbits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Only attempt to pick up and groom a rabbit who is calm and happy with the process. .</li> <li>● Care must be taken by the student and supervising adult to ensure the rabbit is correctly restrained during handling to ensure the animal feels safe and supported. If student at all in doubt, or rabbits showing signs of distress do not continue and allow rabbit to be placed down on the floor.</li> <li>● A towel must be placed on the lap of the person grooming</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Only the designated rabbit grooming tools are to be used, and must be used in the manor as demonstrated by the member of staff and no other. Care and consideration should be taken at all times to maintain the welfare of the rabbit.</li> <li>● Nail clipping and health checks are only to be carried out under direct supervision of the equine teaching team - Beth, Andi, Kate, Debra.</li> </ul>
Rabbits in the classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Any staff wishing to take rabbits into the classroom must be authorised by the yard manager or Debra Richmond and a classroom visit undertaken to ensure the correct environment is available.</li> <li>● If the intention is for rabbits to stay for longer than 1 session (45 minutes) within the classroom a secure area must be set up for the rabbits to be able to free roam without fear of escape. This area must include somewhere for the rabbits to hide; this could be within their carry case. Flooring should be non-slip; carpet squares, a towel or something similar would be suitable</li> <li>● If rabbits are just visiting for less than 1 lesson, i.e. collected and returned to the yard within that 45-minute slot, they can stay within their black travel carrier but the following points must be adhered to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Hay and fresh water must be available at all times.</li> <li>● The teaching staff are fully responsible for ensuring the rabbit's welfare is paramount and must not be compromised in any way.</li> <li>● Handling activities should be undertaken in the same manner they would within the stable pens - calmly, using correct handling technique.</li> <li>● Rabbits are to be taken in pairs if they are to be taken for any period of time longer than 1 session (45mins inc collecting and returning to the yard).</li> <li>● Rabbits are to be transported in either of the 2 carriers available - the larger mesh can accommodate 4 rabbits, and the smaller plastic carrier 2 rabbits.</li> <li>● Any rabbit showing any signs of stress or distress must be allowed time to calm before any further activities are attempted. If the rabbit shows a second sign of distress they should be returned to the stable yard immediately. All activities/interactions MUST be supervised by a member of staff.</li> <li>● During periods of extreme cold weather, rabbits will acclimatise to the cooler temperatures and indoor time should be limited to a single session.</li> <li>● Rabbits must not be left in an unlocked classroom unsupervised at any time. Rabbits must always be supervised by an adult.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Comments and Actions:</b>	

**Who prepared this risk assessment:**

[Bethan Stacey](#) Yard Manager 13.11.25

<b>When does this risk assessment need to be reviewed?</b>	
To be reviewed every 12 months unless changes have been made.	
<b>Details of reviews or amendments</b>	
Moved to new RA layout from 23/24 layout. Classroom and Stable RA combined and reviewed.	BStacey 13.11.25

Equine yard risk assessments located on the shared drive

## 2. Cat – Mai

**RISK RATING: Low**

Date of Risk Assessment 25<sup>th</sup> September 2025

<b>Task / Activity</b> <b>Madam Mai (Caretaker's cat)</b>	<b>Who is at risk &amp; who needs to know about the activity?</b> <b>Staff, Students and visitors and Mai</b>
<b>What are the hazards (dangers)?</b>	<b>What are the potential outcomes?</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Scratches, bites and nips</li> <li>2. Handling including allergies</li> <li>3. Fear</li> <li>4. Hygiene</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mai being dropped and injured. Students bitten, skin broken and bleeding.</li> <li>2. Not to stroke or touch Mai if a person knows they have an allergy to cats.</li> <li>3. Students and Mai could be stressed or upset if Mai is dropped and injured.</li> <li>4. Like all animals if you stroke Mai always wash hands this will prevent any infections.</li> </ol>
<b>How do you currently control these risks?</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mai is very much a timid shy cat and 80% of the time she spends it asleep in the Caretakers bungalow. However, if she is outside, she is often found sitting on the caretaker's patio or walking around. She may come up to people and rub herself against the legs, and also lay on the floor where people may want to give her a stroke. She is ok with this but she may give a little nip as a warning to let them know I have had enough; at this point she should be left alone.</li> <li>2. If anyone is allergic to cats, they should be alright in the open air but not inside. It would be preferable for allergies concerned people to not stroke or handle Mai. Mai <b>should not</b></li> </ol>	

be picked up as she is not used to being picked up by strangers this could cause her to scratch or bite. If this does happen use antiseptic wipes and cover with a dressing/ plaster check the injured person has an updated tetanus.

- 3 Mai occasionally spends time asleep in my office at the reception.

**General**

Mai is well looked after and has regular flea and worm treatment. Like most cats Mai will go hunting (mostly at night and down a mouse or two. During the spring time she may on occasion catch the odd small rabbit and bring it to me for a gift. (Alive)

**Mai is fully insured and has yearly check-ups and vaccinations with the vet.  
She is also microchipped.**

**Who prepared this risk assessment:  
John Flint Mai's owner.**

**When does this risk assessment need to be reviewed?**

Annually or if there has been an incident.

**Details of reviews or amendments**

6th January 2025	Added section 3

### 3. Dogs

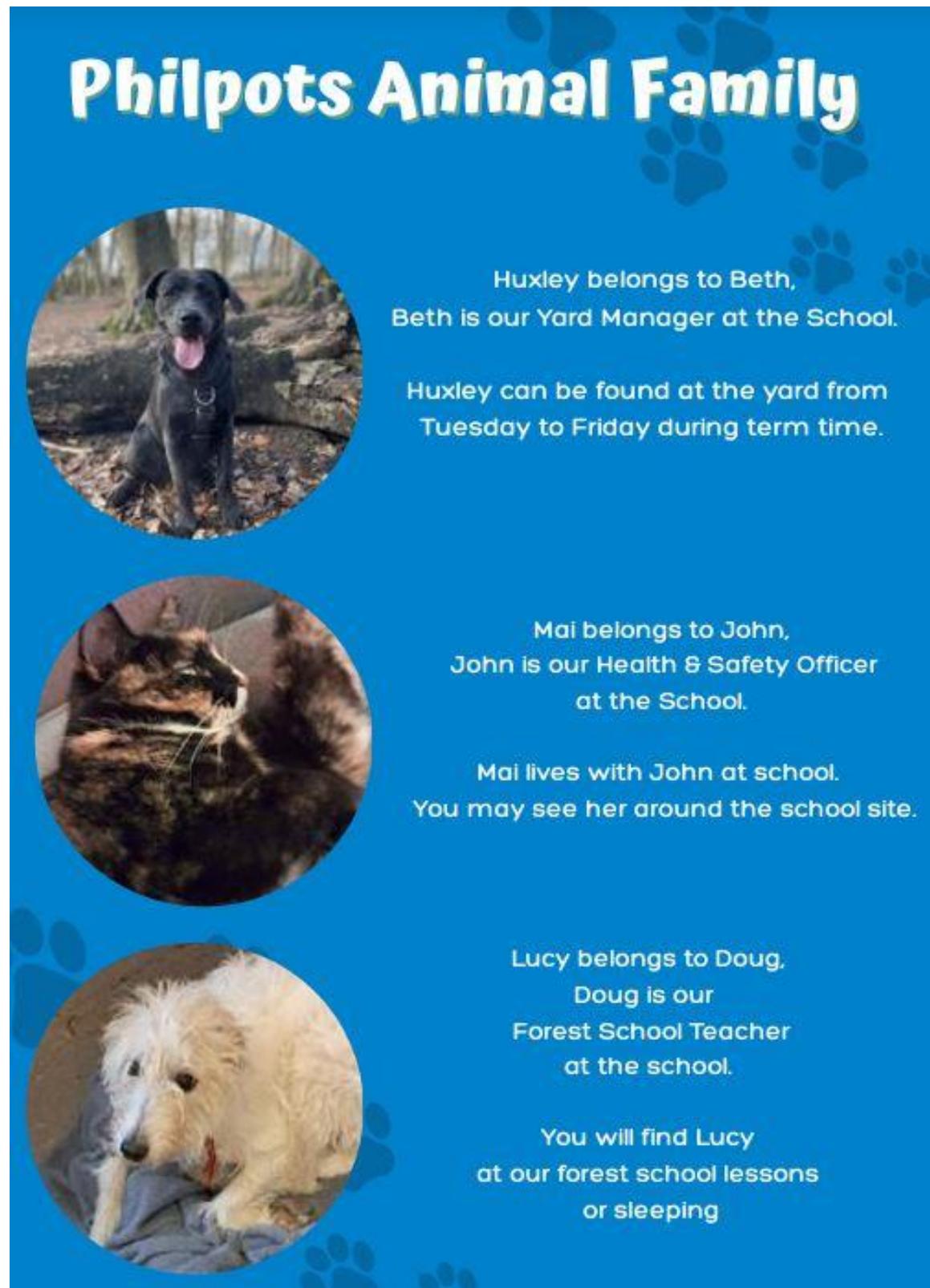
RISK RATING: Low

Task / Activity	Who is at risk & who needs to know about the activity?
<p>Equine staff dogs onsite in the office and yard, interacting with students at the stables and also around site on paths to the horse fields and Marley Track.</p>	<p>Students, Staff and Visitors</p>
What are the hazards (dangers)?	Action to be taken to reduce the risk/s
<p>1. Bites and scratches from Dog(s)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● All dogs are kept in the staff office during school hours unless they are supervised by a staff member (BS,KF,AC, MA) or locked in on the yard independently (eg.over lunch break). Students are not to enter the office without permission, and the door into the office is to remain closed.</li> <li>● Huxley is considered suitable for students to play with, providing students are confident at reading dog behaviour and react appropriately. All play to be monitored by a member of staff.</li> <li>● Huxley can be very excitable and vocal at times. Students are encouraged to interact in a way that keeps all 4 paws on the floor and does not encourage him jumping up. Huxley does bark at new people and if he is unsure about someone. This includes people wearing hats or hoods covering their face. Staff to supervise interactions and to explain how to approach a dog correctly.</li> <li>● Students will be asked if they are happy with dog interaction before any dogs are allowed out of the office.</li> <li>● Huxley will accompany staff to the fields for poo picking and other field-based duties. Whilst moving around the site they must be kept on a lead during term time, and be let off once they are in the horse fields.</li> <li>● Lucy will accompany students to forest school and is safe to handle under supervision by DA.</li> </ul>
<p>2. Dog(s) being used for student interaction in animal care lessons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● becoming over stimulated</li> <li>● displaying negative behaviours</li> <li>● displaying signs of stress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Huxley is not to be used in animal care lessons. Students may interact with Huxley in his capacity as a yard dog but he is not to be used as a therapy animal or for designated taught sessions. Huxley will accompany Bethan Stacey (Staff BS) and students into the fields for catching in horses and poopicking at suitable times of the day (not when taxi's due).</li> <li>● Huxley has an excellent temperament and students are encouraged to interact with him on the yard. If during any interactions the dog shows signs of stress, the activity will cease and the animal will be taken back to the office.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Huxley can be used to go on a dog walk with a member of staff (BS) but Huxley must remain on the lead throughout unless BS deems it suitable to let him off. Huxley is not to be walked without BS present. Normal sign out procedures apply.</li> <li>Lucy is not to be used in animal care lessons.</li> </ul>
<p>3. Dog reacting to strangers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>displaying negative behaviours</li> <li>displaying signs of stress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dogs are to remain inside the staff office during school hours unless there are no scheduled lessons on the yard at which point the main gates will be padlocked and dogs are allowed to be out on the yard once the yard is made safe.</li> <li>Visitors should not be coming down to the yard unsupervised and a member of the yard team will put dogs away if they are out.</li> <li>Huxley will bark at new people but if they approach, he will run away but continue barking.</li> </ul>
<p>4. Contracting an illness from contact with faeces or urine</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All dog faeces to be picked up promptly and disposed of on the muck trailer. Any tools used in this process to be washed off immediately.</li> <li>Any areas of urination to be washed off/ diluted with water</li> </ul>
<p><b>Comments and Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Huxley (male, neutered, charcoal labrador) - Owned by Bethan Stacey</li> <li>Lucy (female neutered lurcher) owned by Doug Ainsley</li> <li>Copies of insurance documents held on shared drive</li> </ul>	

<p><b>Who prepared this risk assessment:</b></p> <p><a href="#">Bethan Stacey</a> Yard Manager 28.3.25</p>	
<p><b>When does this risk assessment need to be reviewed?</b></p> <p>To be reviewed every 12 months unless changes have been made.</p>	
<p><b>Details of reviews or amendments</b></p>	
<p>Reviewed 14.1.2025 by Bethan Stacey</p>	<p>Changes Made - we now have a lockable door instead of a stair gate separating the staff office and the tack room.</p>

**Philpots Animal Display Poster:**

A blue poster titled "Philpots Animal Family" featuring three circular photos of animals and their owners. The top photo shows a black dog, Huxley, sitting in a yard. The middle photo shows a tortoiseshell cat, Mai, sitting on a surface. The bottom photo shows a white, scruffy dog, Lucy, lying down. The text provides details about each animal's owner and where they can be found at the school.

# Philpots Animal Family

Huxley belongs to Beth,  
Beth is our Yard Manager at the School.

Huxley can be found at the yard from  
Tuesday to Friday during term time.

Mai belongs to John,  
John is our Health & Safety Officer  
at the School.

Mai lives with John at school.  
You may see her around the school site.

Lucy belongs to Doug,  
Doug is our  
Forest School Teacher  
at the school.

You will find Lucy  
at our forest school lessons  
or sleeping