



## **Policy on Dogs on School Grounds**

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.

However, we have also received much feedback from parents and carers, indicating that many are finding the presence of dogs in the playground stressful, even frightening, particularly for younger children.

Many have expressed the opinion that a school playground is not an appropriate place for dogs and are concerned about the sheer number of dogs, dogs fighting and dogs being left unattended in the playground.

We are concerned that even well-behaved dogs can behave unpredictably when placed in busy, noisy and crowded school environments and that this can lead to dog fights/snapping at each other. Children can also behave unpredictably when in the presence of dogs or when in contact with dogs and this can potentially lead to a child being bitten.

Governors, staff and parents also have health and safety concerns about dog fouling, particularly on the school field but we recognise that this is a separate issue; parents bringing dogs into the school grounds have behaved responsibly and there is no suggestion that these dogs have left mess behind.

Therefore the Governing Body has agreed that with effect from the beginning of the Autumn Term 2011, it is now policy that dogs are not allowed on the grounds of Thurlstone Primary School at any time (unless used as an aid to visual impairment or disability)

Governors' also kindly request that dogs are not tied up and left unattended at the school gates.

If you would like to discuss this matter further, please write to the Governing Body and your concerns will be discussed at the next Governing Body meeting.

Kind regards

Mrs Gibbins  
Headteacher