

Dog Mentor Risk Assessment

Millie and Pawsitive Start 2026–2027

*From small beginnings come great things
Matthew 13:31–32*

Assessment owner	Mrs Debbie Groom, Headteacher
Authorised handlers	Mrs Debbie Groom and Mrs Julie Hazell
Activity	Millie's Friday attendance, Pawsitive Start, individual and group Dog Mentor work
People at risk	Pupils, staff, visitors, handlers and Millie
Assessment date	September 2026
Review date	September 2027 or sooner following change or incident

Risk-rating method

Likelihood: 1 unlikely, 2 possible, 3 likely. Severity: 1 minor, 2 moderate, 3 serious. Risk score = likelihood × severity. Low = 1–3, medium = 4–6, high = 7–9. Residual ratings assume all listed controls are in place.

Hazard	Who may be harmed	Initial L×S=R	Control measures	Residual L×S=R	Responsible
Bites, scratches or sudden movement	Pupils, staff, visitors and Millie	2×3=6	Millie is trained and supervised by an authorised handler. Handler checks her wellbeing and body language before and throughout each activity. Calm activities are used; pupils receive safety instruction and do not approach without invitation. Millie is removed immediately if stressed. First-aid and incident procedures are followed.	1×3=3	Handlers and all staff
Allergic reaction	Pupils, staff and visitors	2×3=6	Written consent and allergy information checked before planned contact. Known allergies recorded and individual controls agreed. Contact is voluntary; alternatives and separation are provided. Rooms are ventilated and cleaned; handwashing is required. Healthcare and emergency plans are followed.	1×3=3	Headteacher, handlers and staff
Fear, phobia or distress	Pupils, staff and visitors	2×2=4	Phobias identified through parent and staff information. Contact is optional. Pupils are told what to expect, can keep distance or use another area, and are never pressured to interact. Gradual introduction is used only with agreement.	1×2=2	Handlers and staff
Interaction with EYFS or Key Stage 1 pupils	Younger pupils and Millie	2×3=6	Millie may work with EYFS and KS1. Activities are brief, calm and developmentally appropriate. Smaller groups and closer supervision are used. A trained handler leads the activity and an additional adult is present for groups. Pupils practise the safety rules first.	1×3=3	Handler and supporting adult

Hazard	Who may be harmed	Initial L×S=R	Control measures	Residual L×S=R	Responsible
Pupil dysregulation, unsafe behaviour or overcrowding	Pupils, staff and Millie	2×3=6	Suitability and current presentation considered before each activity. No more than eight pupils directly interact at once, with smaller groups where needed. Additional adult present for groups. Unsafe behaviour leads to calm removal and regulation support. Millie has a clear exit route and rest area.	1×3=3	Handler and supporting adult
Inadequate supervision	Pupils and Millie	2×3=6	Pupils are never alone with Millie. One authorised handler may supervise suitable one-to-one work. Direct group work includes a handler and another adult. Responsibility for Millie is clear at all times.	1×3=3	Headteacher and handlers
Trips, falls, lead, toys or equipment	Pupils, staff, visitors and Millie	2×2=4	Routes and rooms kept clear. Millie remains on a lead while moving around the site. Handler positions Millie and equipment away from doorways and walkways. Pupils do not hold the lead unless this is a planned, individually assessed activity.	1×2=2	Handlers and premises staff
Food contamination during Pawsitive Start	Pupils, staff and Millie	2×3=6	Millie may be in the room under handler control but is kept away from food, tables and eating areas. No direct handling while food is served or eaten. Food is cleared before interaction. Hands are washed before eating and after contact. Dog and human food, bowls and utensils are stored separately. Millie does not enter food-preparation areas.	1×3=3	Handler and breakfast-club staff
Zoonotic infection or poor hygiene	Pupils, staff and visitors	2×3=6	Millie receives routine veterinary care, vaccinations and parasite treatment. Cuts are covered. No face licking or contact with open wounds. Hands washed after contact. Dog equipment is cleaned separately. Pupils do not handle waste. Soiling is removed promptly with gloves and pet-safe disinfectant.	1×3=3	Owner, handlers and staff
Millie becomes tired, stressed, unwell or overstimulated	Millie and nearby people	2×2=4	Pre-visit fitness check and continuous handler observation. Planned rest, water, exercise and toileting. Secure child-free rest area. Time-limited, calm sessions. Millie can disengage and is withdrawn at the first sign of stress, pain, illness or fatigue.	1×2=2	Authorised handlers
Millie escapes or is separated from handler	Pupils, staff, visitors and Millie	2×3=6	Secure collar, lead and doors; movement supervised by handler. Gates and external routes checked. Pupils are moved to safety and instructed not to chase. Handler implements recovery procedure; microchip and emergency contact details are current.	1×3=3	Authorised handlers
Damage to property or access to harmful items	Millie, pupils and staff	2×2=4	Rooms checked before entry. Bags, medication, chemicals, food, cables and small objects are placed out of reach. Suitable toys supplied. Millie remains supervised and is not left in an unsecured room.	1×2=2	Handlers and room staff
Fire, evacuation, lockdown or invacuation	Everyone on site and Millie	2×3=6	Millie is included in emergency arrangements and remains with an authorised handler where safe. Human safety takes priority. Handler uses the safest available route or secure location and does not obstruct pupil evacuation or supervision.	1×3=3	Headteacher and handlers
Outdoor toileting and cleaning products	Pupils, staff, visitors and Millie	2×2=4	Designated toileting arrangements used. Handler removes faeces immediately using gloves and double bags. Pupils do not handle waste. Cleaning products are pet-safe, used according to instructions and stored securely.	1×2=2	Handlers and premises staff
Incident, near miss or change not acted upon	Everyone on site and Millie	2×3=6	Bites, scratches, reactions, escapes, complaints and near misses are recorded and reported to the Headteacher. Parents are informed where relevant. Work stops where necessary. Policy and risk assessment are reviewed after significant incidents or changes to health, handler, activity or environment.	1×3=3	Headteacher

Approval and review

Assessor	Mrs Debbie Groom	Date	September 2026
----------	------------------	------	----------------

Approved by	_____	Date	_____
Next review	September 2027	Earlier review	Following a significant incident or change