

Co-Head Teacher: Kate Marchesi
Co-Head Teacher: Maggie Down
Assistant Head: Larissa Cannon
Assistant Head: Helen Woolvet
Inclusion Leader: Jane Mason



T. 01372 846930
E. office@stmartinsepsom.school
www.stmartinsepsom.school

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Frequently Asked Questions

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

A. The legal owner of the dog is Mrs Marchesi. She will care for the dog out of school hours and will bear the costs associated with it; the school will not pay any additional costs that may incur as a result of the dog being in school (for example, a high level of training).

Q. Is the dog from a reputable breeder?

A. Yes. We have researched breeders and chosen a reputable breeder.

Q. Will the dog be a distraction?

A. The dog will be kept in the SLT office (Senior Leadership Team). The office is separate from the classrooms / playground area to ensure it only comes into contact with children who are happy to have contact and parental permission for this, under strict supervision. 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 do not have permission for direct contact with the dog are still able to participate in a number of 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 sort advice from many sources, including other schools that successfully have a school dog. A copy of the risk assessment can be found on the school website.

Q. Who is responsible for training?

A. Mrs Marchesi will be the legal owner of the dog, as a result she will be responsible for her training. Appropriate training will be obtained.

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 designated area, away from the school and the school playground, so there will be no chance of the children coming into contact with faeces.

Q. Will there still be a policy of no Dogs in the playground?

A. Yes, our policy of no dogs in the playground is 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. The dog will be walked at lunchtime. The dog will be kept in the SLT office and will only have planned and supervised contact with children and visitors. The dog will be carefully trained over a period of time 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. The breed of dog has been carefully chosen for its hypoallergenic properties, however, children will not need to touch the dog, which will relieve the possibility of allergic reactions however small. We already manage a number of allergies at school and this will be no different for children and adults that are allergic to dogs. 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 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.

Q. My child must not be licked by the dog because of our religious beliefs. How will the school manage this?

A. The dog will be trained not to lick. However, while she is still a puppy and being trained, we will try hard to ensure that the children do not come into contact with saliva, but if they do, we will contact parents as soon as possible to let them know that their child will need to wash before praying.

Infant School - Worple Road, Epsom KT18 7AA

Junior School - Ashley Road, Epsom KT18 7AD

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