

St. Monica's Catholic Primary School School Dog Policy



‘Let Trust, Respect and Love live here.’

Approved: Autumn 2026

Review Due: Autumn 2028

1. Introduction & Rationale

At St Monica's, we recognise that dogs can exert a significantly positive impact on children's emotional well-being, mental health, and social development. Introducing a school dog aligns with our commitment to supporting the holistic development and well-being of our pupils.

2. Dog Profile & Ownership

- **Name:** Luna
- **Breed:** Lhasa Poo (Hypoallergenic and non-shedding)
- **Owner:** Mrs Read
- **Schedule:** Initially 1 day per week, building gradually as Luna settles.

3. Health, Veterinary Care & Hygiene

- Mrs Read retains full legal and practical responsibility for Luna.
- Mrs Read will ensure that Luna is kept up to date with all vaccinations, flea/worming treatments, and routine medical checks.
- If Luna shows any signs of illness, she will remain at home until fully recovered.
- Suitable hygiene measures (such as hand washing before and after handling Luna) will be enforced for all staff and pupils.

4. Location & Supervision

- Luna will be based in the school office area when on site.
- Luna will **never** be left unsupervised. An adult handler will be present with Luna at all times during her time on school premises.
- Luna will not roam freely around the school premises.

5. Interactions with Pupils

- **Consent:** Pupils will only interact with Luna if signed consent has been received from their parent/carer.
- **Roles:** Planned interactions include but are not limited to:
 - Emotional support and comfort for upset/stressed pupils.
 - A non-judgmental companion for reading sessions ("Reading Buddy").
 - Class mascot for special school activities.
- **Phased Rollout:** Interactions will commence only after Luna has successfully completed an initial settling-in period.

6. Fear & Allergies

- Respect for pupils and staff who are fearful or allergic to dogs is paramount.
- Luna's non-shedding, hypoallergenic breed minimises allergy risks.
- Clear measures will be maintained to ensure pupils who do not wish to interact with Luna are not required to do so.

7. External Therapy Visits

- Luna's introduction is complementary to existing school initiatives. The school will continue its ongoing partnership with Medical Detection Dogs, and Bobbin will continue regular visits.

8. Risk Assessment & Review

- A detailed School Dog Risk Assessment has been completed and is published on the school website.
- This policy and associated risk assessments will be reviewed annually or sooner if circumstances require.