

**École James S. McCormick School**  
**Dogs in School Policy**  
**Based on WCPS Admin Procedure 255**  
**October 1, 2018**

Note: *This policy does not apply to dogs brought to school for show and tell.*

For dogs to be included in the instructional environments,

1. The principal must give approval in advance.
2. Dogs must be leashed at all times, both indoors and out.
3. There must be an educational purpose.
  - see [Making Comfort Dogs an Everyday Part of School](#)
  - as subjects for observation and data gathering on body characteristics, habits, movement, feeding behaviour, instinctive reactions
  - for supporting the development of a sense of responsibility, kindness and concern for other living beings
  - for supporting the development of a healthy respect for the animals in our local environment
  - [assisting with literacy](#)
  - supporting emotional regulation
4. To be considered for the instructional environment:
  - Dogs must have up-to-date vaccinations and be in generally good health.
  - A dog must be a good candidate for a school setting in terms of temperament, energy, behaviour, and health, etc. For example, an unruly dog that might jump on a child and knock him over would not be considered a good candidate.
5. All breeds and origins (eg., rescue dogs) will be considered for approval, as long as temperament, health, and behaviour criteria are met.
6. Both males and females will be considered for approval; however, with regard to adult dogs, being spayed or neutered will increase the likelihood of approval.
7. The staff members, students, and parents/guardians affected must be informed, in advance, and given the opportunity to inform the teacher if there are any allergies or other health-related concerns (eg. fear of dogs).
8. Students must be prepared, in advance, for dealing with dogs. (In the same way they are prepared in advance for a field trip.) For example, they should be taught [how to approach a dog](#). See posters to support educating students [here](#).
9. Aggression in any form will not be tolerated, and any dogs with a history of aggression will not be considered for approval.
10. Animal hygiene must be maintained, and students must be taught to address their own hygiene before and after handling an animal.
11. A dog must be under adult supervision when around students (ie., students are not left alone in the classroom with the dog).

12. Dogs will be identified by wearing a predetermined harness (or t-shirt, collar, etc.).
13. Any room with a dog inside must have signage posted outside the room (eg., "Grace is working in the room today."), so others have warning before opening the door. This is particularly important if a dog is left in a classroom unattended (eg., when the staff members are out on supervision). Signage will also alert emergency personnel to the fact a dog is in a room.
14. Dogs new to the school environment should be introduced to other dogs under controlled circumstances when students are not present (ie., during non-student hours).
15. The staff member bringing the dog to school must
  - "Introduce" the dog to the staff and parents/guardians (see below)
  - inform parents/guardians of the purpose and policy (see the website)
  - model and ensure ethical and humane treatment
  - determine the care and feeding requirements
  - take the dog out to designated areas for urinating and defecating
  - ensure fecal matter is cleaned up promptly
  - put the identifying harness on the dog when it is in school
  - put signage on the classroom door indicating a dog is in the room
  - regularly provide the administration with proof of updated vaccinations once the dog has been approved
16. If someone is bitten (adult or child), the administration must be informed immediately. If a child's skin is punctured, follow these steps:
  - [clean the wound immediately with soap and water](#)
  - contact parents/guardians or emergency contacts immediately and recommend taking the child for medical attention right away
  - fill out an accident report as a follow up, including all actions taken by the home
17. Approvals for dogs to be at school will be reassessed if there are any complaints from school staff or the parents/guardians.

Introducing a dog:



Hi! My name is *Grace*. I am a 3 year old female Black Labrador. I am so excited to come to *Grade One* and be a comfort dog!! I am a mild tempered dog who loves to be around kids. My most favorite activity is to cuddle, be petted and listen to stories. When I am not inside a building I love to play fetch, swim and go for hikes!! I am so excited to meet the *Grade One* students this year!!