

# Learning Unit: Safety around animals 16+

<b>Unit title:</b> Staying safe around animals <b>Subjects:</b> English; PSHE; General studies; Science		<b>Teacher:</b>  <b>Duration of Unit:</b> 4 weeks
<b>Summary:</b> Understand how to stay safe around pets and that this in turn keeps pets safe		
<b>Desired Results</b>		
<b>Objectives:</b> To consider how we keep ourselves safe around animals and how we keep animals safe too.		<b>Essential Questions:</b> What dangers can animals present? Who has responsibility for animal safety? How can we prevent dangerous situations? Can you understand dog communication?
<b>Factual Knowledge:</b> Students will know: How species, individual differences and the situation may affect the animal's behaviour. What signs dog show when, they are nervous or stressed.	<b>Embedding Knowledge:</b> Students will: Complete the worksheets and have a discussion around the topics of animal safety.	<b>Information becoming knowledge:</b> Students will research and present on one topic of pet safety. Active learning leads to better knowledge and behaviour change than passive learning.
<b>Assessment Evidence</b>		
<b>Tasks:</b> Research and give a presentation on one aspect of pet safety. Independently researching and writing a presentation embeds knowledge and allows students to demonstrate what they have learnt.		<b>Pre-Assessment:</b> Complete the worksheets on safety around pets. Contribute to discussions on pet safety and how we can prevent pets becoming dangerous by ensuring they aren't placed in stressful situations. Demonstrate knowledge of canine communication

**Extensions:** Write a plan for how you would act if you got a new puppy and how you would try and prevent future behaviour problems arising.

**Differentiation considerations:**  
Describe the strengths and needs within the group and how to meet needs and objectives in different ways.

### **Learning Plan**

#### **Differentiated Objectives:**

Most will be able to understand the importance of safety around companion animals and demonstrate basic knowledge of how to stay safe.

Some will be able to empathise that stressful situations can make animals dangerous and how to prevent those situations.

Most will be able to understand basic canine communication

Some will be able to recognise the more subtle canine communication and act accordingly by empathising with the dog.

#### **Plan:**

**Week 1:** Focus on how we keep ourselves safe around animals and how this impacts the animals' safety.

**Week 2:** Focus on developing the concepts of what can cause an animal to become unsafe and how we can prevent this.

**Week 3:** Focus on canine communication and body language and understand that this tells us how the dog is feeling. Empathising with the dog can lead to safe practices for both the dog and human.

**Week 4:** Assessment week - has information become knowledge? Give a short presentation on one topic of pet safety.

#### **Post 16 links to the National Curriculum**

Citizenship is a statutory subject on the national curriculum in secondary schools in England, and it is monitored by the schools regulator, Ofsted.

At Post-16 students no longer have a national curriculum to follow and follow study programmes enabling them to work towards specific areas of learning that is of interest and important to their future aspirations. The key focus is to support the students to become as independent as they can be. Many of the unit plans from Oak Tree Animals' Charity will support independent research and learning, and will offer ideas for discussion and debate.

# Session Plan I

**Project Name:** OTAC education programme

**Programme Session Name:** Staying safe around animals

**Session Date:**                      **Session Time:** 1 hour

**Group Name/Age Group:** Age 16+

**Session Lead/Planner:**

<b>Healthy Living</b>	Promoting and supporting healthy life-styles to secure physical, spiritual, social and emotional well-being.
<b>Feel Safe</b>	Ensuring that members of the Community are supported to feel safe.
<b>Life Enhancement &amp; Achievement</b>	Inspirational and exciting learning activities that ensure members of the Community raise their expectations and aspirations, and achieve at the highest possible level.
<b>Participation</b>	Opportunity for the voice of the Community to be heard and to help shape the services available to them, whilst encouraging them to make a positive contribution to their local community.
<b>Learning &amp; Development</b>	Providing access to a range of learning pathways so that members of the Community develop knowledge and robustness.

## **Session Aims and Objectives:**

To understand how we keep ourselves safe around animals and how this in turn keeps animals safe too.

**Teacher notes:** Worksheet 1: A possible order is 3; 1; 4; 5; 2. Students should pick up upon the fact that the dogs have more potential to be dangerous than the rabbit or cat and should be the top 3. The German Shepherd should be first because it has the potential to be aggressive towards a large number of people, including children, in a shopping centre and would probably be nervous due to all the strange people and situation. The Golden Retriever may or may not be aggressive, we don't have enough information to say; a discussion should be had noting that familiar, usually friendly breeds still always have the potential to be dangerous, and children should always be supervised around dogs. Mother dogs, especially new mothers, have the potential to be very protective of their puppies and may become aggressive

when they weren't previously. We have put the feral cat as number 5 even though it has the potential to inflict more harm than the rabbit, because it should be easier to avoid coming into contact with a feral cat than a pet rabbit.

### **Session/Activity Outline:**

- Introduce the topic of animal welfare and the coming sessions: today will cover how we keep ourselves safe around animals and how this keeps animals safe too. The second session will look at what causes an animal to become unsafe and how we can prevent this, then we will look at dog communication and body language.
- Discuss as a group the ways in which we all have animals in our lives and which have the potential to be dangerous (pets/farms/food/zoos/wildlife/working dogs).
- Consider who has responsibility for safety around each of these groups of animals and what sorts of things we need to do to stay safe around them. Explain that for these sessions we will be focussing on companion animals (pets).
- Introduce the idea that although most of us love the companion animals we have in our lives, they are also the most likely animals to injure us because they are the ones we have in our houses and interact with closely and are not behind fences or wild outside.
- Activity: can the class think of any scenarios in which companion animals could become dangerous? How would you deal with these? Could they have been prevented? Note these down on the board.
- Give each student a worksheet. Activity: complete the worksheet 'Safety around companion animals'
- Ask students to report back to the class on what they thought and compare the different ideas (see notes above). Ask the class which of these animals they think would be stressed and how this may affect their behaviour.
- Discuss how allowing an animal to become dangerously out of control can be dangerous for the animal as well as the people. Legislation under the Dangerous Dogs Act (1991) enables dogs to be taken away from their owners or put down if they present a danger to people or assistance dogs. On a lesser scale, it can be very stressful for an animal to be in scenarios where they feel unsafe and that stress can then make the animal more dangerous. It is up to us as the person in charge of the dog to advocate for them and create situations in which that dog feels safe and isn't stressed.

Explain that the person in charge of the animal at that particular time has responsibility for the animal (not necessarily the owner). If you are walking a dog for a friend and the dog attacks, you would be responsible. Discuss how it is important not to put yourself in a situation where you think you may not be able to manage the animal's behaviour and keep yourself and others safe.

- Ask the class if they have seen the many reports in the news recently about dog attacks on people? Why do they think the number of dog attacks is rising? What can be done to prevent this? Here are some ideas to use in the discussion. There are many reasons for the rise in dog attacks: more people got dogs during lockdown and many weren't properly trained or socialised, many were inexperienced dog owners, many were suddenly left alone for long periods when their owners went back to work; there is a rise in popularity of breeding the most aggressive fighting dogs which can change hands for large amounts of money; dogs are generally a more popular pet now more people work from home so there are more dogs around; dogs are more widely welcomed everywhere so people are less cautious around dogs than they used to be. What can be done to prevent this: always supervise children around dogs; understand dog body language and recognise when they are uncomfortable in a situation; support your dog to feel comfortable with suitable training and experience using positive training techniques; get early advice from a professional for particular issues to prevent escalation.
- Summarise the session and introduce the next session, which will be on what can cause an animal to become unsafe and how we can prevent this.

**Resources/Materials:** Basic stationery box, projector or board for class discussion notes, printed worksheets 'Safety around companion animals'.

### **Extension Exercises/Take-Home Activity**

**If the group or individual is fast to finish, or for homework:** Write a plan for how you would act if you got a new puppy and how you would try and prevent future behaviour problems arising.

# Session Evaluation

**Participant Comments/Evaluation**

**Staff Evaluation**

**Issues Raised/Discussion Points**

**Follow-up/Action Required**

**Additional Notes**

**Staff signature:**

**Name:**

**Date:**

# Session Plan 2

**Project Name:** OTAC education programme

**Programme Session Name:** What causes an animal to become unsafe?

**Session Date:**                      **Session Time:** 1 hour

**Group Name/Age Group:** Age 16 +

**Session Lead/Planner:**

<b>Healthy Living</b>	Promoting and supporting healthy life-styles to secure physical, spiritual, social and emotional well-being.
<b>Feel Safe</b>	Ensuring that members of the Community are supported to feel safe.
<b>Life Enhancement &amp; Achievement</b>	Inspirational and exciting learning activities that ensure members of the Community raise their expectations and aspirations, and achieve at the highest possible level.
<b>Participation</b>	Opportunity for the voice of the Community to be heard and to help shape the services available to them, whilst encouraging them to make a positive contribution to their local community.
<b>Learning &amp; Development</b>	Providing access to a range of learning pathways so that members of the Community develop knowledge and robustness.

## **Session Aims and Objectives:**

To understand what causes an animal to become unsafe and how we can prevent this.

**Teacher notes:** "Species, breed or individual?" activity (see below): all these answers are correct and students should be able to make valid arguments for each answer. Species: larger animals with larger and more powerful jaws and claws will have the potential to inflict more serious wounds for example, a large breed dog bite tends to be worse than a hamster bite. Species also behaviour in specific ways, for example, goldfish don't tend to bite. Breed: there is huge variation between different breeds of dog. They have been bred for different purposes and naturally display different traits. For example, collies are usually very intelligent, get bored easily and have a natural tendency to herd. Breeds that have been bred for their prey drive such as lurchers may be more inclined to chase small furry animals than other breeds of dog.

**Individual:** the way an animal has been treated, the circumstances it has been kept in and the temperament of the individual can produce huge variation in behaviour. One cat that is kept with a lot of other cats in a house with a shortage of resources may be aggressive, whereas another cat in the same circumstances may be better able to cope and may be placid. A spaniel poked and prodded by children may react aggressively, whereas the same dog in an adult only household may have been absolutely fine. Even early experiences with the breeder such as socialisation and exposure to different experiences may have a large effect on individual temperament, as will the genetics they have inherited from their parents.

### **Session/Activity Outline:**

- Companion animals can be a huge part of our lives and are mostly very safe and rewarding, but pets are also the most likely animals to injure us because they are the ones we have in our houses and interact with closely, and are not behind fences or wild outside. Last week we looked at some scenarios where companion animals could be dangerous. This week we will look at what can cause them to become dangerous and how we can prevent this.
- **Activity:** Species, breed or individual? Write these 3 words on the board and ask the class which of these they think may affect the animal's behaviour the most and could make an animal more dangerous than other animals. Note the suggestions down on the board, then lead a discussion using the class's ideas and the teacher notes above.
- **Activity:** Complete the worksheet 'What causes an animal to become unsafe?'
- Ask students to report back to the class on what they thought and compare the different ideas.

**Plenary:** Remind the class that it can be very stressful for an animal to be in scenarios where they feel unsafe and that stress can then make the animal more dangerous. If we always try and think how the animal may be feeling and prevent them from getting in situations where they feel stressed or threatened, this is the best way to keep them and us safe.

**Resources/Materials:** Basic stationery box, projector or board for class discussion notes, printed worksheets 'What causes an animal to become unsafe?'

# Session Evaluation

**Participant Comments/Evaluation**

**Staff Evaluation**

**Issues Raised/Discussion Points**

**Follow-up/Action Required**

**Additional Notes**

**Staff signature:**

**Name:**

**Date:**

# Session Plan 3

**Project Name:** OTAC education programme

**Programme Session Name:** Canine Communication

**Session Date:**                      **Session Time:** 1 hour

**Group Name/Age Group:** Age 16+

**Session Lead/Planner:**

<b>Healthy Living</b>	Promoting and supporting healthy life-styles to secure physical, spiritual, social and emotional well-being.
<b>Feel Safe</b>	Ensuring that members of the Community are supported to feel safe.
<b>Life Enhancement &amp; Achievement</b>	Inspirational and exciting learning activities that ensure members of the Community raise their expectations and aspirations, and achieve at the highest possible level.
<b>Participation</b>	Opportunity for the voice of the Community to be heard and to help shape the services available to them, whilst encouraging them to make a positive contribution to their local community.
<b>Learning &amp; Development</b>	Providing access to a range of learning pathways so that members of the Community develop knowledge and robustness.

## **Session Aims and Objectives:**

To understand dog body language and communication and how this can keep us and the dog safe.

**Teacher notes:** Dog communication worksheet: Dog 1 is happy and relaxed; his mouth is open (children might say he's smiling), his tongue is out and relaxed, his body is relaxed and soft. Dog 2 is nervous. He is looking down and away and is refusing to move. Dog 3 is scared or stressed. He is baring his teeth. This is a dog very close to biting and the situation should be taken seriously with immediate action to remove the dog or the subject of the dog's aggression. Dog 4 is alert and interested. His body language is upright and focused but not aggressive. His mouth is open and he is somewhat relaxed. Dog 5 is also alert but his mouth is closed and he is more serious than dog 4. You should be cautious of this dog.

### **Session/Activity Outline:**

- Introduce the idea that dogs communicate with us all the time, we just have to understand what they are trying to tell us. Ask the class how dogs communicate? (through body language, and sometimes sounds). Ask the class what a nervous dog might look like and write notes or draw on the board (tail down, looking away, could be cowering or rolling over). Repeat this exercise with a happy dog (loose, soft, wiggly); a defensive dog who is guarding resources (standing in front of the resource barking/growling/snapping) and an alert dog (ears and tail up, focussed on something).
- Ask the class to complete the worksheet 'Dog communication'.
- Discuss the answers together and ask the class why they chose each word (see notes above)
- Place the pictures of 3 dogs in the document entitled 'Dog photos Session 3 Safety around animals I6\*' on the board. Ask the class how these dogs are feeling?
- Discuss the class's answers then tell the class that these dogs are all feeling stressed or anxious. Lip licking when there is no food around, yawning and showing the whites of their eyes (whale eye) are all signs that a dog is feeling stressed or anxious. The dog should be removed from the situation or the person should stop what they are doing to the dog. This could be something like cuddling or kissing the dog, which they often don't enjoy. The dog is communicating very clearly with these low level signs. Listening to the dog and stopping something at this stage can prevent the dog from escalating its behaviour to a point where it could be dangerous.

**Plenary:** Ask the class if they or others they know have even been bitten by a dog, what the situation was and whether they think anything could have been done to prevent the bite occurring?

**Resources/Materials:** Basic stationery box, projector or board for class discussion notes, printed worksheets 'Dog communication', 'dog photos' document on smartboard.

# Session Evaluation

**Participant Comments/Evaluation**

**Staff Evaluation**

**Issues Raised/Discussion Points**

**Follow-up/Action Required**

**Additional Notes**

**Staff signature:**

**Name:**

**Date:**

# Session Plan 4

**Project Name:** OTAC education programme

**Programme Session Name:** Assessment of safety around animals

**Session Date:**                      **Session Time:** 1 hour

**Group Name/Age Group:** Age 16+

**Session Lead/Planner:**

<b>Healthy Living</b>	Promoting and supporting healthy life-styles to secure physical, spiritual, social and emotional well-being.
<b>Feel Safe</b>	Ensuring that members of the Community are supported to feel safe.
<b>Life Enhancement &amp; Achievement</b>	Inspirational and exciting learning activities that ensure members of the Community raise their expectations and aspirations, and achieve at the highest possible level.
<b>Participation</b>	Opportunity for the voice of the Community to be heard and to help shape the services available to them, whilst encouraging them to make a positive contribution to their local community.
<b>Learning &amp; Development</b>	Providing access to a range of learning pathways so that members of the Community develop knowledge and robustness.

## **Session Aims and Objectives:**

To check young people's learning of safety around animals and whether information has become knowledge.

## **Session/Activity Outline:**

- Over the past few weeks we have been thinking about how to stay safe around pets. This week we are going to check what you have learned.
- Split the class into small groups, or ask students to work individually. Each group/individual must research, write and give a 5 minute presentation on one topic of pet safety. You can either assign each group a topic, or let them choose their own. Possible topics include understanding dog communication, preventing cat bites and scratches, keeping young children safe, puppy training to prevent future problems, 'species, breed or individual; which has the biggest effect on behaviour?'

**Plenary:** Encourage the class to ask questions after each presentation and have a group discussion on the ideas presented.

**Resources/Materials:** Basic stationery box, projector or board for class discussion notes.

## Session Evaluation

**Participant Comments/Evaluation**

**Staff Evaluation**

**Issues Raised/Discussion Points**

**Follow-up/Action Required**

**Additional Notes**

**Staff signature:**

**Name:**

**Date:**