



## **Norfolk and Suffolk Animal Trust (NASAT)**

### **Children in the Home Adoption Policy**

**Approved by:** Board of Trustees

**Date Approved:** 13.05.2026

**Next Review Due:** 13.05.2027

---

#### **1. Purpose**

Norfolk and Suffolk Animal Trust (NASAT) are committed to ensuring the safety, welfare, and successful long-term rehoming of all dogs in our care.

This policy outlines NASAT's position regarding the rehoming of dogs into households where children under the age of 10 years reside at the time of adoption.

The welfare and safety of both the dog and all household members will always remain the primary consideration.

---

#### **2. Scope**

This policy applies to:

- All adoption assessments and rehoming decisions carried out on behalf of NASAT
  - All dogs in NASAT care being considered for adoption
- 

#### **3. General Principles**

NASAT recognises that many rescue dogs entering our care may have:

- Unknown backgrounds or histories
- Limited socialisation
- Trauma, anxiety, or behavioural concerns
- Fear responses to sudden movement, noise, or handling
- Medical or emotional needs requiring a calm and predictable environment

For this reason, NASAT generally does not rehome dogs into households where children under the age of 10 years permanently reside at the time of adoption.

This approach is intended to:

- Reduce the risk of injury or distress to children and dogs
  - Allow dogs appropriate time and space to settle into a new environment
  - Support safe and successful long-term placements
  - Protect dogs from situations that may cause fear, stress, or overwhelm
- 

#### **4. Adoption Assessments**

All adoption applications are assessed individually, considering:

- The behaviour and temperament of the dog
- Known history and behavioural assessments
- Medical needs
- Household composition and environment
- Experience of the adopters
- Lifestyle and management arrangements

Where children are present within the household or regularly visiting the property, NASAT may require additional assessments or may determine that the home is unsuitable for a particular dog.

---

#### **5. Exceptions**

In exceptional circumstances, NASAT may consider applications from homes with children under 10 years where:

- The individual dog has been fully assessed as suitable for living with younger children
- Appropriate introductions and risk assessments have taken place
- Trustees or authorised management approve the placement
- Suitable supervision and management arrangements are demonstrated

NASAT reserves the right to decline any application where it is believed the placement may place the dog or household members at risk.

---

#### **6. Visiting Children**

Where children under 10 years do not permanently reside in the home but visit regularly, adopters must disclose this during the application process.

NASAT may:

- Assess the frequency and nature of contact
  - Provide additional guidance regarding management and supervision
  - Decline an application where risks are considered unsuitable
- 

## **7. Adopter Responsibilities**

Adopters are expected to:

- Provide accurate information regarding all household members and regular visitors
  - Supervise all interactions between dogs and children appropriately
  - Follow any behavioural or management guidance provided by NASAT
  - Contact NASAT promptly if concerns arise following adoption
- 

## **8. Decision-Making**

All adoption decisions remain at the discretion of NASAT.

The charity reserves the right to refuse any adoption application where it believes:

- The environment is unsuitable for the dog
  - There is an unacceptable risk to children or the dog
  - The dog's welfare may be compromised
  - A successful long-term placement is unlikely
- 

## **9. Monitoring and Review**

The Board of Trustees will review this policy annually, or sooner if required due to changes in welfare guidance, legislation, operational practice, or risk assessment procedures.