10th September 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

**WELCOME TO LOUIS – OUR SCHOOL THERAPY DOG**

I am writing to inform you that we will have a new member of our school community from next week. We have decided to appoint a School Therapy Dog. As a school, we have been considering introducing a school dog since last year.

There are many benefits of having a school dog and we have conducted extensive research, detailed below:

* Studies have shown that the presence of companion animals can improve the wellbeing of children and lower anxiety levels, simply by making the environment happier and more enjoyable.
* Dogs in the classroom can be used to calm fears, relieve anxieties and teach various skills.
* Over a period of time, rigorous research has been carried out to ensure that we have selected the most suitable breed of dog for our school, pupils and staff. We have chosen a Standard Poodle. Research shows that Standard Poodles are intelligent, devoted, loyal and clean. They are patient, friendly, affectionate, love children and adapt well to new situations.
* Prior to purchasing the dog, our Head Teacher, Kiran Peart, has visited the home of the breeder to ensure that the dog’s temperament and that of its parents is suitable for interaction with children.
* The dog has been immunised and wormed in line with the Kennel Club’s stipulations.
* The dog will live with Mrs Peart who has children at home which will help with its development.
* Our school dog is a non-shedding dog in order to minimise the chance of allergic reactions.
* There will always be a designated member of staff present during any interaction with the pupils.
* A full risk assessment has been completed and is available on request.

Any parent/carer who does not wish their child to interact with the dog is invited to write to me to inform me of your wishes. Alternatively, please feel free to contact me on the telephone. Also, if your child has any known allergies to dogs, then please inform me.

Yours sincerely

**Dr Kiran Peart**

​Academy Lead

Park School Teaching Service & Wellbeing Centre

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