



Sitwell Infant School

Headteacher: Mrs K. Peart

Grange Road, Rotherham

South Yorkshire S60 3LA

Phone: 01709 531855

E-mail: office@sitwellinfantschool.co.uk



9th December 2021

Dear Parents & Carers,

I am writing to let you know that Sitwell Infant School will have a new member of staff from January 2022 – a school dog! This decision has been made following extensive research and discussion with other schools that have a school dog. A full risk assessment has been completed which will be available on our website. Alf is 20 months old and his breed is a Lhasapoo. This is a cross between a Lhasa Apso and a Toy Poodle. This breed is hypoallergenic which means he does not malt and should not cause issues for any children with allergies. Outside of school he lives at home with me and my family. Alf regularly goes to the vet for yearly vaccinations, flea and worm treatments and he has accessed training from the Dogs Trust to support his wonderful behaviour.

Over the past year, I have researched and seen the many benefits of having a school dog, some of these are listed below:

- Dogs teach children about responsibility – by children having to remember to feed and give water to the dog it can give them a sense of importance and satisfaction that they may not get from other responsibilities.
- Dogs teach children patience – they do not always do as they are told first time!
- Dogs teach children compassion – just like us dogs feel pain and emotion.
- Dogs teach children about socialisation – by the children learning how to interact with a dog they can better learn how to socialise with other children.
- Dogs are fun – they greet you with a wagging tail every day and put a smile on your face, even on a bad day.

When in school, Alf will be based in my office which is separate from the classrooms and the children will only be able to interact with him under strict supervision and as long as parental permission has been given. He will initially be in school every Monday. When he is moving around the school he will be on a lead and always with an adult. We hope he will be able to support children in school in areas such as outdoor learning, reading, nurture groups and also being around the quiet areas on the playground at playtimes.

With parental permission, over a period of time, children who are fearful of dogs can be supported in approaching, handling and in gaining confidence in managing their fear. I hope the children will gain a lot of enjoyment from having a school dog and there will be pictures on the website and Twitter of all that he does. Please complete and return the attached slip by Friday 7th January. It is planned that Alf will begin to visit school from Monday 10th January. If you have any individual questions or queries, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs K Peart

Headteacher



SCHOOL
MEMBER



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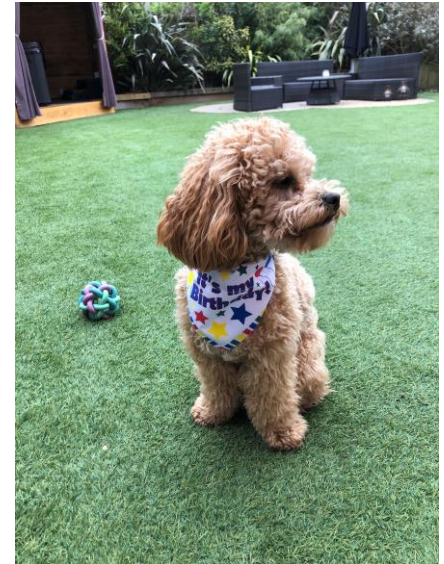
Letter of consent regarding School Dog

Please complete and return to school by Friday 7th January.

Name of child/ren

Class/es

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Please tick as appropriate:

- ☐ I am happy for my child to be involved with all aspects of caring for the school dog, including supervised lunchtime walks.
- ☐ My child is a little nervous of dogs, but I am happy for him/her to be involved with all aspects of caring for the school dog, including supervised lunchtime walks.
- ☐ My child is fearful of dogs, but in time, I would like them to work with the dog to develop their confidence with and understanding of dogs.
- ☐ My child has an allergy which means they must not come into contact with the dog.
- ☐ I **do not** give permission for my child to come into direct contact with the dog.

Signed Parent/Carer

Name Date



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