



You are Precious in My eyes.

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School Dog Consent

Here at St Joseph's School, we have a school dog, Stanley.
Stanley is a Schweenie (daschund/shih tzu mix) who belongs to Mrs Cooper.

There are many benefits to having a school dog;

- Cognitive – companionship with a dog stimulates memory, problem-solving and game-playing.
- Social – a dog provides a positive mutual topic for discussion and encourages responsibility, wellbeing and focused interaction with others.
- Emotional – a school dog improves self-esteem, acceptance from others and lifts mood, often provoking laughter and fun. Dogs can also teach compassion and respect for other living things as well as relieving anxiety. Studies have shown that the presence of companion animals can improve the well-being of children and lower anxiety levels, simply by making the environment happier and more enjoyable.
- Physical – interaction with a furry friend reduces blood pressure, provides tactile stimulation, assists with pain management, gives motivation to move, walk and stimulates the senses.
- Environmental – a dog in a school increases the sense of a family environment, with all of the above benefits continuing long after the school day is over.
- Reading – reading to dogs has been proven to help children develop literacy skills and build confidence, through both the calming effect the dog's presence has on children as well as the fact that a dog will listen to children read without being judgmental or critical. This comforting environment helps to nurture children's enthusiasm for reading and provides them with the confidence to read aloud.

Some concerns you might have;

My child is allergic to dogs

It is understandable that some of you may be concerned about possible allergic reactions to a school dog. However, Stanley will be subjected to the most thorough cleanliness and grooming regime. He will also only be allowed in situations with pupils who voluntarily wish to work with him.

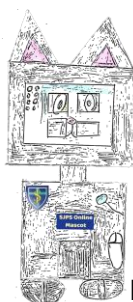
Will Stanley be properly cared for?

Stanley will be extremely well looked after.

He will live with Mrs Cooper and her family and will come to school most days.

Stanley will undergo training so will be extremely well-behaved.

Whilst Stanley is in school he will have access to a dog crate where he can relax during the day. Stanley will visit the vet regularly for all his injections as well as regular check-ups. If Stanley is unwell for any reason he will stay at home.



Parish of St John XXIII

My child is scared of dogs

Some children may have had upsetting experiences and thus have a fear of dogs (or another animal). Stanley will only be in contact with children whose parents have given their permission. For direct contact with Stanley, however, Stanley's training will help him to be calm and gentle around children. Experience and research have shown that, with proper guidance and handling, children can learn to overcome their fear of animals and grow in respect and appreciation for them.

The school has a 'no dogs' policy

Our school does have a 'no dogs' policy, however because Stanley will be known to the children, will always be accompanied by an adult and will also be fully insured to carry out his role this allows him to be on the school site.

If you **do not** wish your child to come into direct contact with Stanley for whatever reason, please do not hesitate to contact the school office and your name can be added to the 'no contact' register.

Many thanks for your continued support

CMonaghan

Mrs C Monaghan
Headteacher