

St Katherine's Church of England Primary School

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Head Teacher: Mrs A Taylor

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Thursday 24th March 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to let you know that St. Katherine's have decided to take on a school dog. This decision has been made following extensive research, discussion with other schools that have a school dog and has been approved by St Katherine's Governors. A full risk assessment has been completed, which will be available on our website. Professor Woofingstein (Fi for short) is a 14 week old cavapoo and belongs to Mrs Brown.

There are many benefits of having a school dog:

- 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

While Professor Woofingstein may be on school property for short periods of time, to adjust to being around the sounds and smells of our school, she will **not** have any contact with the children until she has passed the Kennel Club gold award. This will ensure her behaviour and temperament is of a high standard. More information about this award can be found through the link on the website. Before meeting Fi, the children will attend a workshop led by the Dogs Trust on how to safely approach and be around dogs.

Fi regularly goes to the vet for check-ups, flea and worm treatments. She will be based in the Quiet room, which is separate from the classrooms and behind a closed door. The children will only be able to interact with her under strict supervision and only as long as parental permission has provided. When she is moving around the school, she will be on a lead and always with a supervising adult. Movement around school, will be mindful and planned in advance to ensure that there is no contact with those children without permission to meet her. A letter for consent will be sent home separately for you to complete and return.

We hope that she will support children with reading and nurture activities. With parental permission, over a period, children who are fearful of dogs can be supported in approaching, handling and gaining confidence in managing their fear.

I hope that children will gain a lot of enjoyment from having a school dog and there will be pictures on the website of all that she does.

If you have any individual questions or queries, please do not hesitate to speak to Mrs Brown.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Taylor
Headteacher



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