



Bellenden Primary School

Executive Headteacher: Mr Gregory Doey

Headteacher: Mrs Julie Ireland

Deputy Head: Mrs Alex Turnbull & Ms Georgia Horton

Dewar Street,

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SE15 4JP

Dear Parents & carers,

As you may be aware we have made a decision as a school to get a school dog called Dottie. She is a cockapoo, which means she is 1/2 cocker spaniel and 1/2 poodle. This breed of dog is a popular choice for school dogs within school communities as they are intelligent, friendly and easy to train as well as being hypoallergenic, which means children/adults who have allergies may still be able to have contact with her compared to other breeds.

The decisions to get a school dog was based on 5 key reason as listed below.

1. **Dogs teach children responsibility.** Having to remember to feed, provide water and show support for a dog can give children a sense of importance and satisfaction that they can't get from school or other chores. The relationship that develops can be life-changing for a child and a great support system as they themselves continue to grow and develop.
2. **Dogs teach children patience.** Dogs do not always do as they are told first time!
3. **Dogs teach children compassion.** Just like humans, dogs feel emotion and pain. They are prone to injuries and the infirmities of age during their relatively short lives.
4. **Dogs teach children about socialisation.** Like most of us, dogs are social animals who enjoy and need attention and affection. By learning how to interact with a dog, children can learn how to better socialise with other children. If they can learn the social cues of a dog, then interacting with humans who can talk will be a walk in the park (pun intended).
5. **Dogs are fun.** Last, but certainly not least, dogs are a lot of fun. They greet you with a wagging tail every day and can cheer you up even on your worst day.

We understand that some children may feel apprehensive coming into contact with dogs. If this is the case then those children will be supported by an adult and slowly introduced to Dottie at a pace in which they feel comfortable. Any interaction between children and Dottie will be supervised at all times by an adult who is accustomed to handling her and no physical interaction will take place until Dottie is trained.

If you DO NOT wish for your child to be in contact with Dottie then please sign below. If you do have any questions or queries please do not hesitate to speak to me.

Many thanks

Miss Crandon

I DO NOT wish for my child _____ in Year _____ to be in contact with the school dog.

Signed _____

Date _____

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