



Brackenfield SEND School
Long Eaton
Derbyshire
NG10 4DA
0115 973 3710
enquiries@brackenfield.derbyshire.sch.uk



16th June 2021

Re: Result of School of Consultation

Dear Parents/Carers,

Last half term I consulted with yourselves, staff, governors and children about having a school pet dog. The response has been overwhelmingly positive from all involved. As a result, our school dog

Teddy will be joining us week beginning 5th July. Teddy's mum is a CavaPoo cross called Betty. Betty works as a therapy dog in an old people's home for people with dementia, where she is a very much loved lapdog. She is owned by one of the nurses in the home. Teddy's dad is a miniature toy poodle who lives on a farm and is very good with children. Teddy has been selected specially because of the calm and friendly nature of his parents (and siblings in a previous litter), his likely small stature makes him less intimidating than larger animals and due to being an F1bb CavaPoo Poodle cross will have a non-shedding allergy friendly coat. Teddy will be owned by myself and my family and will accompany me to school as regularly as possible.

Initially Teddy will join us on a puppy risk assessment. The purpose of the early few weeks in school prior to the holidays is for socialisation. This is a key developmental stage for puppies, and it is important that he acclimatises to the sounds and smells of school and also has the opportunity to meet lots of people. As with all puppies he will be teething, we will not be able to guarantee he will not try and mouth. For this reason, the children will be introduced to him and will be more than welcome to come and see him but there will be limited physical interaction. Teddy will undertake puppy school of a suitable nature to be a school dog at the age of 9months- 1year, all being well, he will undertake PAT training. He will be a 'School Pet Dog' not a therapy dog in the first instance and it is our intention that he will take a greater role in school as he matures. The decision to introduce a puppy to school has been very deliberate due to the nature of our children and the need to desensitise and train the dog in situ, for instance not to be spooked by loud or sudden noises.

Please can I reassure you that the welfare of the children and the dog is of the utmost importance, the risk assessment will identify key measures to ensure both, including ensuring that the dog has appropriate areas to rest, feed and toilet. The dog will be extremely well looked after. He will live with me and my family (my husband and I and our two young children Poppy and Betsy). He will come to school most days and will be based safely in my office. He will undergo thorough and rigorous training (beginning with puppy classes) and have a carefully planned induction programme to school. Veterinary Surgeon Emily Newbry will oversee Teddy's physical health and will work alongside us with regards to training.

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Parents have requested for Teddy to have his own section on the Newsletter. I am sure he will have plenty of news to share with you all.

When consulting with parents there were two main themes - one that children really benefited from the relationship they have with either their own pet dogs or those of family members and on the flip side, many parents were worried that their children do not see the danger of unfamiliar animals and will approach them and touch them regardless of size or presentation. A key role Teddy will play will be teaching the children the life skill of asking an owner if it is OK and safe to interact with the animal and how to safely do this. The children will be made aware of where he is in school and where he is allowed to go, so any children who are nervous of animals know where he will be. He will never be unaccompanied.

Thank you to all parents who consulted with us on this decision. Two of our parents have written testimonials to share their families experience of welcoming dogs into their homes.

'Arthur can be very nervous of dogs but when he's used to them, he loves playing with them.'

'When my brother and his family got Archie, he became a very big dog so for a while we didn't visit them and they would visit us without bringing Archie.'

'A couple of weeks ago we were able to visit my brother and his family, and, despite Archie's size, Arthur soon relaxed when he realised Archie enjoys playing fetch just as much as our dog Ozzy does!'

Joanne

'We got matched with Diamond on 20th August 2020 who was going to be 3 the next month and placed by Guide Dogs. Ella used to pet her little sister Isabelle who has curly hair, and from a very young age Isabelle did pressure therapy to calm Ella down without being asked, crawl to Ella and just lie on top of her which sometimes stopped a meltdown from getting too far. Also we were getting very restricted on where we could go and also on own personal care.'

'As a family we had discussed alternative therapy for Ella but as Ella developed a very good relationship with and said her first words at nearly 4yr old to a Guide dog we decided to look into this as we had heard good things about dogs and children and now witnessed it firsthand.'

'We tried one charity and after years of waiting they just didn't understand our Ella's needs.'

'Eventually we got a slot with guide dogs Buddy Dog scheme and so pleased.'

'Isabelle can now concentrate on being a child born a big little sister carer.'

'Diamond helps myself with depression and getting me out and Joel with anxiety and relaxing after work but primarily Ella's improved loads.'

'As a family we go to new places, Dimey does the pressure therapy now either by leaning on her or putting her head on Ella's knee.'

'Ella developed her own calm down which she does with calm breathing 1-2-3.'

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When Ella had a bad fall Diamond brought her a blanket to the sofa as she was shivering with shock to cover her up.

We have been for walks to different places on holiday and gives Ella more confidence.

Using the fact that we don't want Diamond to get sick we have to keep her clean and brush her teeth and hair just like we do it is slowly reminding Ella to do the same.

Don't be fooled like all dogs she has her moments! Like jumping up (adults) when excited and stopping in the middle of the road day dreaming when crossing it! Well, this is why she is a Buddy Dog, carer changed guide dog!!

Ella says "Diamonds my best friend, she helps keep me safe and calm I love her so much she the best wonder dog ever"

Nicola

[Please use this link to tell us if you child has any allergies, phobias, previously bad experiences with dogs or related medical issues we need to know about.](#)

If you have any further questions, please contact us via the parents@brackenfield.derbyshire.sch.uk mail box.

Your Sincerely

Mrs Turner
Head Teacher



Teddy Turner
Brackenfield School Dog

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