

Dear Parents

I am writing to let you know that I have recently consulted with the staff about the possibility of getting a School Therapy Dog. This is as part of the on-going provision for well-being and mental health at school. The staff and governors are in agreement with this idea and so now I am consulting with you.

Obviously, bringing in any animal to school is not something to be approached lightly, both for the animal's sake and for the sake of the children and adults in school.

The dog would belong to Mrs Roper and would be living with her on a full-time basis. It would be a cavapoo, a breed known for their mild temperament and hypoallergenic coat. Cavapoos are also friendly, gentle, love children and are responsive to emotional states.

As well as school pets teaching all children responsibility and providing a source of pleasure and learning, we would also be keen for our school dog to be used as a source of comfort and relaxation for children and adults.

The plan would be as follows:

After Christmas there would be a long period of integration into the school, so that the school dog could become fully accustomed to the school environment. Until Covid-19 restrictions are reviewed the dog would remain in Mrs Roper's office and would not come into any contact with children. Mrs Roper's office is secure and separate from classrooms. During this time the school dog would undertake training.

The school dog would always be kept on a short lead and would always be with a member of staff. You would be able to see the school dog policy on the school website and there would also be a full risk assessment, which would be reviewed regularly.

Our long-term plan would be for all children at school to have opportunities to have contact and quality time with the school dog. Children would also receive training about how to care and behave safely around dogs, from the Dogs Trust. <https://www.dogstrust.org.uk/>

Whilst we are at a very early stage in this process, it would be helpful to know whether you support this idea. I would be grateful if you could complete the survey by clicking on the following link. <https://forms.gle/9XwyPnn13iyyUycG6>

The deadline for completing this survey is Friday 27th November.

Kind regards

Kate Baptiste

Headteacher