

Important Information regarding Our School Dogs – Frankie & Reggie

Dear Parents/Carers

I am so excited to be able to tell you about our 2 additions to the Dee Point Primary School team who joined us last year. They are Frankie, a springer spaniel and Reggie a Labrador. They are used to support our children throughout the school.

They have had specialist training to allow them to work with children. Over the last few years, we have undertaken a significant amount of research and are aware of many benefits to having a school dog, including:

- a calming effect on pupils, particularly those with behavioural or learning difficulties;
- improved behaviour and concentration, reduced stress and improved self-esteem;
- encouraging expression and participation in more withdrawn children;
- fostering a sense of responsibility;
- motivating pupils to think and to learn, as most children have a high level of natural interest in, enthusiasm for and enjoyment of animals;
- encouraging respect and thereby improving pupils' relationships with each other, parents and teachers;
- teaching children to nurture and respect life;
- helping children build confidence in reading. Please see separate article link below.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-families/how-dogs-could-make-children-better-readers-a7645616.html>

Our school dogs will also undertake training to work with children who have special needs, suffer bereavement or who are upset in any way and in need of calm, comfort and space before being able to tell an adult what has upset them.

Frankie & Reggie will also be available to work with children (and adults) who have had bad experiences with dogs or other animals. With parental permission, over a period of time children who react fearfully to dogs will be supported in approaching, handling and gaining confidence in managing their fear. While the dogs main place of residence will be in the Art Therapy Bus (Reggie, Monday & Tuesday) and the Outdoor Y1 Classroom (Frankie, Thursday & Friday) which are secure and separate from the classrooms, children will be able to interact with the dog under strict supervision at certain times of the week as long as parental permission has been given. The dogs will not be given access to other visitors without supervision and mutual consent. Please understand that we will do everything we can to reassure children who are fearful and that under no circumstances will they be forced to meet with the dogs.

Attached are a series of frequently asked questions which I hope will answer any queries you may have, but do come and ask any of us if you have any other concerns or questions. The “Dog in School” policy will be available on the website shortly. We hope the children will gain a great deal of enjoyment from having their school dog and that he, very quickly, becomes an established part of life at Dee Point.

Please return the slip below to the office. In order to meet strict GDPR regulations, the return slip must be returned as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,



Dave Williams
(Headteacher)

Frequently Asked Questions

Q Who is the legal owner of the dog and who pays for its costs?

A. The legal owner of the dogs are Miss Kural – Frankie & Mrs Latimer – Reggie. They will care for the dogs out of school hours and will bear the costs associated with it; the school will pay for any additional costs that may incur as a result of the dog being in school (for example, additional insurance and high level of training).

Q Is the dog from a reputable breeder?

A. Yes. We have done much research and have chosen a reputable dog from a reputable breeder.

Q Will the dog be a distraction?

A. The dog will be kept in specific areas of the school. These areas are separate from the classrooms/ playground area to ensure they only come into contact with children who are happy to have contact and have parental permission for this, under strict supervision. We will be careful to ensure that time spent with the school dogs is shared among the children fairly. We will also ensure that children who do not have permission for direct contact with the dog are still able to participate in a number of ways, should they wish to do so.

Q Has a risk assessment been undertaken?

A. Yes, we have carefully considered having a dog in school and sought advice from many sources, including other schools that successfully have a school dog. There is a School Dog Policy, available to view on the Website.

Q Who is responsible for training?

A. Mrs Latimer & Miss Kural are the legal owners of the dogs and as a result, will be responsible for his training. Appropriate professional training has been completed and funded by the school.

Q. How will the dog be toileted to ensure hygiene for all?

A. In the interest of health and hygiene both dogs will be toileted in an area of the school site where children have no access. Thus there will be no chance of the children coming into contact with faeces. While he is in training any accidents that happen will be cleaned immediately and in an appropriate and hygienic way. Any children in close vicinity to the dog will be removed while thorough cleaning takes place.

Q How will the dog's welfare be considered?

A. The dogs will be exercised/walked at lunchtime; parents will be able to give permission in advance to allow their child to be able to walk with a member of staff and the dog during that time. This will also be used as a behaviour reward. The dogs will only have planned and supervised contact with children and visitors. The dogs will be carefully trained over a period of time and will have unlimited access to water. We will work closely with other professionals to ensure the dogs welfare is always carefully considered.

Q How will this be managed where children have allergies?

A. The breed of dogs has been chosen for its hypoallergenic properties, however, children will not need to touch the dogs which will relieve the possibility of allergic reactions however small. We already manage a number of allergies at school and this will be no different for children and adults that are allergic to dogs. Individual needs will always be met and we are happy to work with parents to put additional control measures in place for individual allergies.

Q My child is frightened of dogs; how will you manage this?

A. Access to the dogs is carefully managed and supervised and children do not need to have close contact with it unless permission for this has been given. We hope to work closely with parents of children who are fearful of dogs to alleviate their fear and to teach them how to manage this.

Q My child must not be licked by the dog because of our religious beliefs. How will the school manage this?

A. The dogs will be trained not to lick. However, we will try hard to ensure that the children do not come into contact with saliva, but if they do, we will contact parents of children for whom this will be an issue, as soon as possible to let them know that their child will need to wash before praying.