



St Michael and St Martin Catholic Primary School

Belgrave Road, Hounslow, Middlesex TW4 7AG

Headteacher : Mrs N Duggan

Chair of Governors : Mrs Sandra D'Souza- Zerkhfaoui



Learning our faith, Living our faith, Loving our faith

9th January 2020

WELCOME KERMIT - OUR SCHOOL DOG



Dear Parents / Carers

I am writing to inform you that we will have added a new member to our school community, please meet Kermit.

As a school we have been considering introducing a school dog for some time.

There are many benefits of having a school dog, and we have conducted extensive research, as detailed below:

- ❖ Studies have shown that the presence of companion animals can improve the well-being of children and lower anxiety levels, simply by making the environment happier and more enjoyable.
- ❖ Dogs in the classroom can be used to calm fears, relieve anxieties and teach skills.
- ❖ Over a period of time rigorous research has been carried out to ensure that we have selected the most suitable breed of dog for our school, pupils and staff. We have chosen to have a Cockapoo. Research shows that Cockapoos are intelligent, devoted, loyal and hypoallergenic. They are patient, friendly, affectionate, love children and adapt well to new situations.
- ❖ A visit has taken place to a local primary school where a school dog is already successfully in place. This school shared with us their experience about the positive impact the dog has had across the school.
- ❖ Prior to purchasing the puppy Mrs Duggan and Mrs Bell visited the home of the breeder to ensure that the puppy's temperament and that of its parents, is suitable for interaction with children.
- ❖ The puppy has been immunised and wormed in line with the Kennel Club's stipulations.
- ❖ The school dog will live with Mrs Duggan.
- ❖ Our school dog is a low shedding dog in order to minimise the chance of allergic reactions.
- ❖ There will always be a designated member of staff present during any interaction with pupils.

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A full risk assessment has been completed, and is available on request.

Please follow the link to read this wonderful article about why every school should have a dog:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-47655600>

Although Kermit's main place of residence is, either in my office, the main school office or Mrs Bell's office he is available for children to pat and play with under strict supervision at certain times of the day. Kermit is also able 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. Kermit will visit classes from time to time and will even assist with certain lessons (when a dog is useful as a visual aid!).

Please complete the parental permission form below. It would also be helpful to have information concerning any dog allergies or fears your child might have.

We hope that our children will gain a great deal of enjoyment from having a school dog and that Kermit will enjoy being a very valued member of our school community.

Yours sincerely

Mrs N Duggan
Headteacher

Please return this slip to your Class Teacher by **Friday 17th January 2020**

Name of Child: _____ Class: _____

PLEASE CIRCLE THE RELEVANT COMMENT:

I **give / I do not give** permission for my child to have supervised access to the school dog, Kermit.

My child is **frightened/ is not frightened** of dogs

My child is **allergic/ is not allergic** to dogs (please give details)

Any other comments:

Signed : _____ Date _____

Please inform the school if any of these details change subsequently