



CANFORD HEATH INFANT and JUNIOR SCHOOLS

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TEACH Trust Poole

Trust Excellence Aspiration Collaboration Honesty

Article 29: Children have the right to develop their personality and talents to the full.

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are sure that many of you have heard of schools that have benefitted from a school dog. Many of you may have met our TEACH Trust dog, Ava, who sometimes visits our school with Mrs Carter. Whenever Ava visits our school, she is warmly welcomed and the children absolutely love having her here.

You may also be aware that we do have a 'Caring Canines' dog, Alfie, who comes in one afternoon a week and spends time with some of our children. These sessions are really valuable and the impact on these children is fantastic. By having these visits, we have seen first-hand the incredible benefits that a school dog can bring.

Therefore, after a great deal of thought and consideration, especially with regard to health and safety and best practice (as well as investigating how other schools manage having a dog and speaking at length about the benefits that it brings), we have made the decision to introduce a school dog to Canford Heath Junior School. Caring for an animal can bring enormous benefits for children, especially for certain groups of pupils who may struggle with emotional or social behaviour. In addition, there may be pupils who simply do not have the opportunity to look after animals at home. There are enormous benefits for children that caring for animals can bring. At Canford Heath, we believe this will be an invaluable experience for all of the children.

Research shows that the benefits include:

- Self-esteem and interest for vulnerable groups
- The opportunity to take care of an animal which some children may not otherwise have
- A sense of responsibility
- Curriculum involvement
- Nurture benefits of having a pet

Of course, this is not a decision which has been taken lightly. There are health and safety issues concerning a school dog as well as necessary paperwork, including a detailed and thorough risk assessment, which will be regularly reviewed and updated. The dog has been carefully chosen to ensure that all these needs are met and it will be a Cockapoo breed, due to the non-shedding nature of their fur, their friendly nature, their ease and willingness to be trained and their evidence success at being school dogs.



Canford Heath Infant School Canford Heath Junior School



[canford_heath_infant_school](#) [canford_heath_junior_school](#)





Here is a picture of our new member of staff, who is called Teddy!

Teddy will have a training and socialisation schedule put in place from when he is very young, so that he is used to and comfortable in the school environment and in the company of children. The children will take part in some training to ensure they know how to behave around the dog and any child who does not want to come into contact with Teddy, for any reason, will not have to. This is also the case for any adults who either work in school or who may be visiting, so if your child has a dog allergy, they will not need to come into contact with him.

Teddy will be based in our office initially and will be gradually introduced to the children. After training, we are hoping that he will also spend time in the pastoral care rooms, where he can listen to children read and be a support to them. There will also be opportunities for children to walk him at lunch and break times, alongside an adult and in a designated area.

We are sure that some parents may have some concerns, to help ease some of these, we will always make sure that:

- Pupils are never left unsupervised with the dog
- The dog will not be free to wander the school – he will be in the head's office or on a lead whilst moving around school
- The dog will have his own area, which is fenced off, for when he needs to go to the toilet and he will also be walked regularly
- The dog will belong to Miss Williams and he will go home with her in the evenings, weekends and holidays. No school money will be used for the dog in anyway at any time so it will not cost the school any money.
- Anybody who has allergies or does not want to come into contact with the dog, does not have to. Please inform the school if this relates to your child.
- Any visitor who does not want to come into contact with the dog, does not have to.

If you have any further questions, concerns or any feedback, please contact the school office and we will be happy to discuss this with you. The Risk Assessment has been placed onto the school website for anyone who wishes to take a more detailed look.

We think that Teddy will be a fantastic addition to the school team and we are confident that he will have a positive impact on the school.

We are sure that you will look forward to meeting him in due course.

Yours faithfully,

M. Wilson

Mr Wilson
Headteacher

A.C. Williams

Miss Williams
Deputy Headteacher



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