

6th March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to inform you that we have a new member of our school community, Mr Bramble. We have decided to have a Dog Mentor. The dog will belong to Ms Vincent and will be living with her on a full time basis. There will be a period of integration into the school and he will not be in direct contact with any children until he has fully completed training. Bramble will be trained to be a dog mentor and we hope he will be ready to work with children in a few weeks.

Let me introduce you to Bramble...



Bramble is a 10 week old Labradoodle who will be trained as a dog mentor and used to support all of the children within our school. Over the next two terms he needs to spend time in school getting used to his surroundings, and all of us!

I understand that there may be some questions and hope that the information listed below will answer some of your queries. However, if you do NOT wish for your child to have any direct contact with Mr Bramble, then please complete and return the opt-out form attached.

**What are the benefits of a school dog?**

- A calming effect on pupils;
- Improved behaviour and concentration,
- Reduced stress and improved self-esteem;
- Encouraging expression, participation and confidence for all 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;

Cont...



- 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;
- Improving attendance;
- Further promote our pupils well being.

**How has the school planned for this?**

- A full risk assessment and policy has been written and will be available on the website in the coming weeks;
- When the dog begins working with children, consent will be sought for each child to have contact
- All contact will be carefully planned and children will not be left unsupervised with the dog
- When not working, the dog will be based in one of the school offices

**What about allergies?**

- Our dog is a Labradoodle breed which means that he is a hybrid and the breed has been created to be able to interact with people that are allergic to dog's hair;
- Labradoodles are intuitive, social and affectionate dogs who are very intelligent and able to quickly learn many things;
- All areas of the school are vacuumed and surfaces are wiped down daily;
- Movement around the school will be controlled and supervised at all times;
- Any child coming into contact with the dog will wash their hands.

**How can I find out more information?**

We aim to update you with Mr Bramble's activities and progress on our website and Twitter account.

I know there will be lots of parents and carers who support the new addition to our school however, if there are any further questions please talk to a member of the Leadership team on the school gate or write to me in person. Any parent who does not wish their child to interact with the dog, is invited to complete the opt-out form attached.

Yours sincerely

**Kathryn Freame**  
Head of School



TO : SCHOOL OFFICE

I do not wish my child to have direct contact with Mr Bramble

Child's Name..... Class.....

Parent Signature..... Date.....