

Headteacher: **Mr. S. Dix**
e-mail: dix@hollywood.bham.sch.uk

Hollywood Primary School
Pickenham Road
Hollywood
Birmingham B14 4TG

Telephone:
0121 675 7711
Facsimile:
0121 675 6299

Dear Parents/Carers

7th September 2016

I am writing to inform you about our latest addition to the Hollywood Team. Daisy is an 8 week old miniature Labradoodle, chosen for her friendly and gentle temperament and low-shedding hair. Daisy was selected following research into her breeding (her parents were identified as being very placid and good natured and were known for producing similar pups). Labradoodles are suitable for working with children who have allergies due to their low shedding hair (although we cannot guarantee children will have no allergic reactions to her).

We have been advised to place her in the school environment from a young age under strict control and are receiving specialist advice and training for handling procedures in school.

We have carried out a great deal of research and found that there are many benefits educationally and emotionally in having a school dog. Children can develop empathy and nurturing skills through contact with pets as well as experiencing great enjoyment from interaction with dogs and puppies.

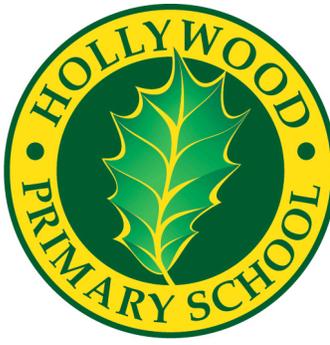
Research has shown that reasons to have a school dog include:

- Improved behaviour: where children showed more confidence and responsibility, parents reported that children seemed more interested in school as a result of having a dog in school.
- Attendance: improved as children can be encouraged back into school using caring for the dog as an incentive.
- Social development: schools are using dogs to help children build self – esteem; learn about positive and negative reinforcement, responsibility and boundaries. Children use dogs to help communicate, teach kindness and empower children.
- As a reward: dogs will be gentle and loving, but at the same time full of fun and enjoyment for the children. Those children, who have performed well during the week or have made good progress in a certain subject, may be rewarded with spending time interacting with the dog. Walking, grooming, playing and training are some of the responsibilities children will be allowed to undertake. It has been proved that working and playing with a dog improves children's social skills and self-esteem.
- Support: dogs can work with students on a one to one basis and will especially help those children who have been through upsetting times. The dog will bring joy to all the children she meets. Children who struggle with communication and social interaction can find a reassuring friend in a dog.
- Reading programmes with dogs are doing wonders for some children. Children who might be embarrassed to read aloud to the class or even adults are less likely to be scared to read to a dog than to a teacher or other pupil. Dogs are used to encourage struggling readers to practise reading aloud. With the presence of "calm and well-trained dog" children enjoy social support and peer interaction.



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Daisy will embark on a 3 year training programme with an organisation called DHK (Dogs Helping Kids).
www.dogshelpingkids.co.uk

This is a charity organisation that are dedicated to training assistance dogs to work in schools with many children of all ages and have already changed the lives of many children. Daisy will be trained alongside Miss Parkes by experienced trainers who will work with staff and children to ensure they work and play together safely.

Initially Daisy will be with Miss Parkes to get used to the school environment and will visit the classes with Miss Parkes but no 1 to 1 sessions will take place for some time.

Daisy has been cleared by a veterinary practitioner for work in schools. Daisy will work with children on a 1 to 1 basis or a small group which will always be under adult supervision.

Please complete the form below if you **do NOT** wish your child to have contact with Daisy.

If you are happy for your child to have contact with Daisy then you do not need to do anything. We will seek written consent for those children who will work on a 1 to 1 basis with Daisy.

Do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Best Wishes

Mr S. Dix

I **DO NOT** want my child _____ (child's name) to have contact with Daisy the school dog.

Class: _____

Parent/Carer Signature _____



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