

Friday 20th September 2024

Dear Parents / Carers,

GERTIE - OUR SCHOOL THERAPY DOG

I am writing to inform you that Gertie, our therapy dog will be back in school with us again this year.

We decided to have a School Therapy Dog last year and as a school we have reached out to Nationwide Therapy Dogs who are a national charity where volunteers take their own dogs into establishments to provide comfort, distraction and stimulation. 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.

Therapy dogs have had their temperament tested and some dogs from Nationwide have over 10 years of experience. Gertie and her Diane will be coming into school fortnightly to work with pupils throughout the whole school. Gertie is a Bernedoodle (Bernese and Poodle mix). This breed is a low shedding dog in order to minimise the chance of allergic reactions.

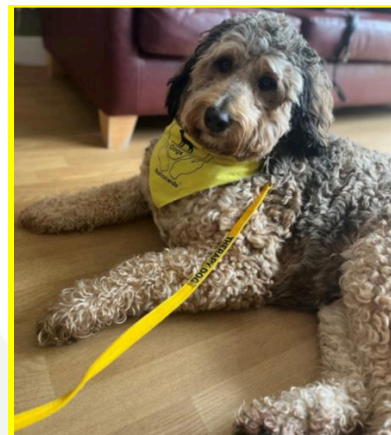
There are various other schools within the trust that have therapy dogs and have shared the huge range of benefits across school. There will always be a designated member of staff present during any interaction with pupils. A full risk assessment has been completed, and is available on request.

The date of Gertie's first official visit this academic year is Thursday 3rd October between 1pm - 3pm.

Please could you complete the reply slip below and return to school if your child has a fear or allergies to dogs.

Kind regards,

Miss Wendy Brown
Wider Curriculum Lead



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The Forest School
Every Child, Every Chance

GERTIE - SCHOOL THERAPY DOG

I wish to notify the school that my child has a Fear / Allergy / Dislike of dogs (please provide full details below)

Name of Student:

Name of Parent / Carer:

Full details:

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Parent / Carer Signature: