



The Iver Village Junior School

Believe. Achieve. Succeed Together.

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15th March 2018,

Dear Parents/Guardians,

School Dog Permission

As you know we have been having Dudley the Dog in school on Wednesday afternoons to hear readers since October 2017. This has been a huge success and has greatly increased the excitement about reading! With this in mind we are going to introduce two school therapy dogs to IVJS. Ralph and Hugo are two small Maltese/Lhasa Apso dogs (hypoallergenic breeds so do not cause allergic reactions) which are 4 and 5 years old respectively. They have very calm and relaxed temperaments which we believe are well suited to life at our school.



As we have discovered from talking to other schools there are many potential benefits to having a school dog and we believe it will have a positive impact on various aspects of school life. Numerous research studies have shown the benefits of therapy dogs in schools. Therapy dogs have been working in schools across the UK for many years and are becoming increasingly more common as a result of the broad-ranging benefits achieved.

The points below are a summary of what we have found to be the main positive impacts for pupils:

- A greater enjoyment of being in the school environment and a greater willingness to learn and participate.
- Improved attendance.
- Improved behaviour, social interactions and sense of responsibility in the classroom.
- A better understanding of how to take responsibility for another living being, with better recognition of one's own responsibilities.
- A range of individual benefits for pupils working towards personal goals including developing social and emotional skills.
- Increased confidence, enjoyment and progress when reading.

We appreciate bringing a dog into school is a significant commitment which should be carefully understood and thoroughly planned. At the heart of the success of this endeavour will be the safety and wellbeing of the dogs as well as those that they come into contact with. We believe we have considered all aspects of safety and wellbeing for everyone involved – please carefully read the School Dog Risk Assessment which is on our website.

I would ask that you return the completed School Dog permission form stating whether or not you give permission for your child to interact with Hugo and Ralph. Please find attached a fact sheet which includes the guidelines for interacting with them which will support you in making an informed choice.

You are also very welcome to come and speak with either Miss Digweed or Miss Bjorck if you have any queries or concerns. No child will be able to interact with Hugo and Ralph without their parent's written consent but please be assured that no child will be excluded from any routine curriculum activity if you opt out.

Lastly, I just want to reiterate that the safety of the children, and the dogs, has been considered in depth and if at any point we feel that this project is not working for the school, or the dogs, it will be stopped immediately.

Miss Bjorck

Permission slip for working with Hugo and Ralph the School Dogs

I have read the school's School Dog Risk Assessment and understand that whilst every measure has been taken to minimise the risks relating to the School Dogs, there are inherent risks which cannot be completely removed.

Please tick as appropriate:

- I am happy for my child to be involved with all aspects of interacting with and caring for the school dog.
- My child is a little nervous of dogs but I am happy for him/her to be involved in all aspects of caring for the school dog.
- My child is fearful of dogs but, in time, I would like them to work with the dog to develop their confidence with and understanding of dogs.
- I do not give permission for my child to come into direct contact with the dog.

Child/ren's name(s): _____

Class(es): _____

Signed: _____ Print name: _____

Date: _____

