

## **School Dog**

### **Further information and answers to any initial questions or concerns you may have**

#### **How will the school plan for Bramble?**

- A full risk assessment and policy will be written.
- Parents and Carers will have an option to 'opt out' of planned contact with Bramble.
- All contact with children will be carefully planned and children will not be left unsupervised with Bramble.
- When not working, Bramble will be based in one of the school offices.

#### **What about allergies?**

- Bramble is a cockapoo and as such has a non-shedding hypoallergenic coat.
- All areas of the school will be vacuumed and surfaces are wiped down daily.
- Movement around the school will be controlled for Bramble.
- Any child working with Bramble will wash their hands afterwards.

#### **What other schools have school dogs?**

Around the country there are many schools who have their own school dog including:

- Hope Primary, who have set up their own 'dog blog', which contains a very good video explaining the benefits: <http://dexter-hopeprimary.tumblr.com>
- John Stainer Primary school: <http://www.johnstainer.lewisham.sch.uk/about-us/school-dog/>

#### **My child is allergic to dogs**

It is understandable that some of you may be concerned about possible allergic reactions to a school dog. However, Bramble will be subjected to the most thorough cleanliness and grooming regime. She will also only be allowed in situations with pupils who voluntarily wish to work with her.

#### **Will Bramble be properly cared for?**

Bramble will be extremely well looked after. She will live with Mrs Cracknell and her family and will come to school on planned days. She will then, in time, work in classes but will always be accompanied by an appropriate member of staff. Whilst Bramble is in schools she will have access to a dog crate in the offices where she can 'chill out' during the day! This is where she will spend most of her time initially in order to get used to the environment. Bramble will visit the vet regularly for all her injections as well as regular check-ups. If Bramble is unwell for any reason she will not be brought into school.

#### **My child is scared of dogs**

Some children may have had upsetting experiences and thus have a fear of dogs (or another animal). Bramble will only be in contact with children whose parents are happy for their child to do so. Experience and research have shown that, with proper guidance and handling, children can learn to overcome their fear of animals and grow in respect and appreciation for them.

#### **The school has a 'no dogs' policy**

Our school does have a 'no dogs' on site policy; however, because Bramble will be trained appropriately to be around children and interact with them, she is permitted within the school grounds. She will be on a lead at all times when moving between designated areas and will always be accompanied by a trained adult. Bramble will also be fully insured to carry out her role thus allowing her to be on the school site.

#### **Hygiene**

There will be a designated area for the dog to go to the toilet which will be away from the children at the side of the school site. If Bramble was to have an accident this would be cleared up immediately by a member of staff who is happy to do so with suitable cleaning products. Children will never be asked to handle picking up 'poo' in a bag. If children have stroked the dog, they will be taught to wash their hands afterwards.

*Please don't hesitate to contact school if you have any questions that have not been covered above. Thank you in advance for supporting us in introducing a school dog at The Limes*