Lulu and Bailey Fact file

Lulu and Bailey are owned and cared for by Mrs Leatham. They are two Cockapoo crossbreed dogs who are 9 and 3 years old respectively. They are very gentle, exceptionally friendly and love spending time with people.

Why have dogs in school?

Dogs teach children responsibility. Having to remember to feed, provide water and show support for a dog can give children a sense of importance and satisfaction that they can't get from school or other chores. The relationship that develops can be life-changing for a child and a great support system as they themselves continue to grow and develop.

Dogs teach children patience. Dogs do not always do as they are told first time! Dogs help children to develop care, consideration and empathy.

Dogs teach children compassion. Just like humans, dogs feel emotion and pain. They are prone to injuries and the infirmities of age during their relatively short lives.

Dogs teach children about socialisation. Like most of us, dogs are social animals who enjoy and need attention and affection. By learning how to interact with a dog, children can learn how to better socialise with other children. If they can learn the social cues of a dog, then interacting with humans who can talk is much simpler!

Dogs will promote children's enjoyment of being in school. A greater enjoyment of being in the school environment and a greater willingness to learn and participate. In addition, they will hopefully improve attendance if used as an incentive.

Dogs promote wellbeing. A range of individual benefits for pupils working towards personal goals including developing social and emotional skills.

Dogs increase confidence, enjoyment and progress when reading. Research has shown the benefits of children reading aloud to dogs: reduced anxiety, increased fluency and improved confidence.

Dogs are fun. Last, but certainly not least, dogs are a lot of fun. They greet you with a wagging tail every day and can cheer you up even on your worst day. Many people have studied dogs in an attempt to decipher their behaviour and understand their abilities to improve learning and children's socialisation. However, you just have to witness the interactions between dogs and children to realise the potential for greatness.

Introduction to Alfie and Lulu

They were bought as family dogs and have grown up with Mrs Leatham's three children. Both dogs are very loving and (mostly!) well behaved; we believe that they will become real assets to our school.

Guidelines to interaction with the School Dogs

- Under no circumstances will children have close interaction with the school dogs unless they want to.

- At all times interaction with the school dogs must be controlled and safe for adults, children and the school dogs themselves.

- If the guidelines are not followed interaction with the school dogs will be stopped immediately. At all times of interaction there must be an authorised adult who takes the leading role when interacting with the school dogs.

The following guidelines must be followed when interacting with the school dogs. These guidelines apply to all adults and children.

- Never enter the school dog's room without an authorised adult.

- If the door/baby gate to the school dog's room is shut make sure you knock and wait for the authorised adult to let you in. Never let yourself in as the school dogs might not be ready.

- There must be an authorised adult present during all interactions.

- Always approach the school dogs calmly (voice and movement).

- Always approach the school dogs slowly.

- Never run up to the school dogs.

- To start an interaction the back of a hand will be offered for the school dogs to sniff.

- Keep noise levels low during interaction with the school dogs.

- Only the authorised adult can move any of the school dog's resources, including food and treats.

- Only the supervising adult can participate in the school dogs toileting needs.

- Whilst the dogs are new to the school no visiting adult or child will give them any food/treats.

- There must not be any interaction with the school dogs whilst they are eating.

- After all interactions with the school dogs hands must be washed with soap and water/ hand gel