



Moulsham

Junior School

Sharing, Supporting, Striving, Succeeding

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Headteacher: Mrs M Staley B.A. Q.T.S. N.P.Q.H.

Deputy Headteacher: Mrs G Moores B.Sc. P.G.C.E.

8th September 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

I pleased to let you know that after great success last year, we will once again be working with Essex Therapy Dogs. We are fortunate enough to welcome two dogs and their handlers into our school a couple of times a week which has been of great benefit to many children.

The following outlines the benefits of the work that Essex Therapy Dogs do and the steps the school has taken to ensure their success:

What are the benefits of a school dog?

- A calming effect on pupils;
- Improved behaviour and concentration, reduced stress and improved self-esteem;
- Encouraging expression, participation and confidence for all children;
- Fostering a sense of responsibility;
- Motivating pupils to think and to learn, as most children have a high level of natural interest in, enthusiasm for and enjoyment of animals;
- Encouraging respect and thereby improving pupils' relationships with each other, parents and teachers;
- Teaching children to nurture and respect life;
- Helping children build confidence in reading;
- Improving attendance;

How has the school planned for this?

- A full risk assessment has been written
- When the dog begins working with children, consent will be sought for each child to have direct contact
- All contact will be carefully planned and children will not be left unsupervised with the dog - a member of our staff and the dog's owner will be present at all times.

What about allergies?

- All areas of the school are vacuumed daily and surfaces are wiped down daily
- Movement around the school will be controlled
- Any child working with the dog will wash their hands before returning to the classroom.

You can find out more information here: <https://essextherapydogs.co.uk/>.



Whilst there are many children who will be excited about the prospect of seeing/working with a dog, we recognise that some children may have had upsetting experiences and thus have a fear of dogs. Our therapy dogs will only be in direct contact with children that want to work with them. The dogs have completed training that helps them to remain calm and be gentle around children. Furthermore, experience and research has shown that with proper guidance and handling, children can learn to overcome their fear of animals and grow in respect and appreciation for them.

If for any reason you would not like your child to have **direct** contact with the dog or they have an allergy which means they must not come into **direct** contact with the dog, please email the school office and we will add them to our no contact list.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Staley
Headteacher