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School Dog Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q: What type of dog is the puppy?

A: Max is a Cavapoo. This breed is known to be child friendly, calm, gentle mannered, demonstrably affectionate yet sensitive and have an outstanding trainability.

Q: Who is the legal owner of the dog and who pays for its costs?

A: Max is Mrs Crossley's family dog; she will bear the costs associated with owning the dog; the school budget will support insurance.

Q: Will the dog be from a reputable breeder?

A: Yes. We have researched breeders and have chosen a reputable breeder. Max was specifically chosen for his temperament.

Q: Has a risk assessment been undertaken?

A: Yes, a full risk assessment is in place, which will be reviewed regularly. We have carefully considered having a dog in school and sought advice from many sources, including other schools that successfully have a school dog.

Q: Who is responsible for training?

A: Mrs Crossley is the legal owner of the dog and as a result, will be responsible for his training. Appropriate professional training is being undertaken and Max is working towards a PAWS Therapy Dog for Schools Assessment.

Q: How will the dog be toileted to ensure hygiene for all?

A: In the interest of health and hygiene, Max will be toileted off the school site. Thus there will be no chance of the children coming into contact with faeces. Our policy of no dogs on the school grounds is still applicable however as Max will be a working school dog he is exempt from this.

Q: How will the dog's welfare be considered?

A: Max will be walked regularly and given free time outside. He will be kept in the headteachers office and will only have planned and supervised contact with children and visitors. He will have his own space in the office where he will not be disturbed. Max will be carefully trained over a period of time and will have unlimited access to food and water. We will work carefully to ensure Max's welfare is always considered

Q: How will this be managed where children have allergies?

A: Max has been chosen for being a breed of dog that has hypoallergenic properties, in fact, Mr Crossley is allergic to dogs. However, children will not need to touch Max, which will relieve the possibility of allergic reactions, however small. We already manage a number of allergies at school and this will be no different for children and adults that are allergic to dogs. Individual needs will always be met and we are happy to work with parents to put additional control measures in place for individual allergies.

Q: My child is frightened of dogs; how will you manage this?

A: Access to Max will be carefully managed and supervised and children do not need to have close contact with him if this has been expressed by parents. We hope to work closely with parents of children who are fearful of dogs to alleviate their fear and to teach them how to manage this.

Q: Will other dogs be allowed in school? A: St Ives has a 'no dogs' policy, however because Max is training to become a working school dog, specific rules apply to him and him alone. Max will also be fully insured to carry out his role thus allowing him to be on the school site. Other therapy dogs attend the school site and these rules apply to these dogs as well.



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