



## Cherry Tree Hill Primary School

Lime Grove, Chaddesden, Derby DE21 6WL

Telephone: (01332) 673520

Email: [admin@cherrytree.derby.sch.uk](mailto:admin@cherrytree.derby.sch.uk)

Website: [www.cherrytreehillprimary.co.uk](http://www.cherrytreehillprimary.co.uk)

Twitter: @cherrytreederby

**Headteacher: Mr P. Appleton B.Ed (Hons) NPQH**

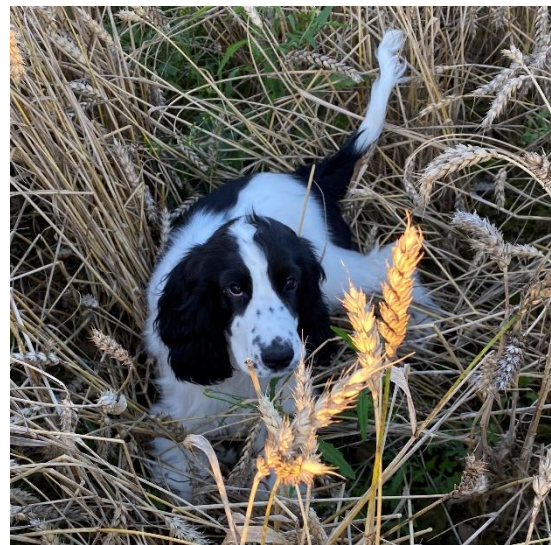
25.09.2020

Dear Parents,

For quite some time now, I have been considering the possibility of a School Dog and last year, my wife and I began to look for a dog which was suitable to work with children. We found a Kennel Club registered breeder who would help us select a dog which would be suitable to work in school as well as be a perfect family pet.

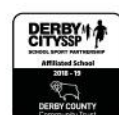
We received a call in May to say that a litter had been born. Gwen is a black and white Cocker Spaniel who lives in my house with my family.

The research shows that there are distinctive benefits for the whole school community if having a school dog is structured in the right way. After her assessment, we now know that Gwen is an appropriate dog for us and we are planning to gradually introduce Gwen to working at our school. The three primary areas of benefit for this will be pastoral, learning support and rewards. We see enormous benefits that caring for animals will bring to our children. We are also aware of Health and Safety planning and have developed a robust risk assessment and routines to keep all members of our community safe and to ensure Gwen is happy and secure.



Of course, we have ensured the safety of children as a key priority. We selected a Cocker Spaniel as they are highly sociable dogs who want to be around people. I have spent the summer training her at a dog training school and she will be attending dog play sessions when not in school to enable her to socialise even more. We continue to train Gwen weekly and over the next few weeks, I will be bringing her into school to help her get used to the environment.

I know that there may be some children, parents and staff who do not wish, or are not able to be involved with our school dog. If, for any reason, you wish to ensure this is the case, please contact the school office ([admin@cherrytree.derby.sch.uk](mailto:admin@cherrytree.derby.sch.uk)) to let them know. We will then collate a list to ensure that we are all aware of who has opted out.





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Proposed benefits will include:

- Learning, including reading in particular.
- Self-esteem and interest for all children, especially for some of our most vulnerable groups.
- Anger management.
- Bereavement support.
- Developing responsibility.
- Reducing stress.
- Love and support for groups of children.
- Knowledge and understanding of animals.
- A feel and sense of community.
- Some curriculum involvement and benefits.

Answers to genuine concerns:

- The school dog will be professionally trained prior to fully working in the school and this training will continue.
- Children will not be left unsupervised with Gwen and there will always be adult supervision from staff who are experienced with dogs.
- No child, or adult, will need to come into contact with Gwen unless they want to.
- Gwen will be fully insured in and out of school.
- The temperament of Gwen has been assessed by a vet and a trainer to identify her suitability to work in a school.
- There is a signposted and fenced off area for dog toileting
- Hand cleansing facilities are available after contact with Gwen
- Gwen will not be left at school overnight and will not be in school every day for her own well-being. She will need a rest too!

If you would like any further details please do not hesitate to contact us. We will keep you up to date with progress and hope you will get the chance to meet Gwen in the not-so-distant future.

Thank you,

Mr. Appleton.

