

17th January 2017

Dear Parents/Carers

School Dog

I am writing to let you know that West Borough has decided to take on a school dog. This decision has been made following extensive research, discussion with other schools that have a School Dog and approval of the Governing Body. A full risk assessment has been completed which will be available on our website.

Bea is 5 years old and is a Border Collie cross German Shepherd and belongs to Miss Meakin-Scott.

Miss Meakin-Scott has researched and seen the many benefits of having a school dog.

- **Dogs teach children about responsibility** – by children having to remember to feed and give water to the dog it can give them a sense of importance and satisfaction that they may not get from other responsibilities.
- **Dogs teach children patience** – they do not always do as they are told first time!
- **Dogs teach children compassion** – just like us dogs feel pain and emotion.
- **Dogs teach children about socialisation** – by the children learning how to interact with a dog they can better learn how to socialise with other children.
- **Dogs are fun** – they greet you with a wagging tail every day and put a smile on your face, even on a bad day.



Bea is a member of the Dog's Trust which means she has public liability insurance. This means she will be able to come into school. Bea regularly goes to the vet for yearly vaccinations, flea and worm treatments.

Bea will be based in The Lodge which is separate from the classrooms and the children will only be able to interact with her under strict supervision and as long as parental permission has been given. She will initially be in school every Monday. When she is moving around the school she will be on a lead and always with an adult. We hope she will be able to support children in school in areas such as Forest School, reading, nurture groups, with attendance and also being in the quiet areas on the playground at playtimes.

With parental permission, over a period of time, children who are fearful of dogs can be supported in approaching, handling and in gaining confidence in managing their fear.

I hope the children will gain a lot of enjoyment from having a school dog and there will be pictures on the website of all that she does.

It has been arranged for the Dog's Trust to come into school and give all the children an assembly and/or a workshop on how to 'Be Dog Smart' on 24th January.

If you have any individual questions or queries, please do not hesitate to speak to Miss Meakin-Scott or myself.

Please complete and return the attached slip by **Friday 26th January**. It is planned that Bea will begin to visit school from **Monday 5th February**.

Yours sincerely

A.S. Crittenden

Mrs A Crittenden
Headteacher

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Letter of consent regarding School Dog

Please complete and return by Friday 26th January

Name of child/ren	Class/es
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Please tick as appropriate:

- I am happy for my child to be involved with all aspects of caring for the school dog, including supervised lunchtime walks.
- My child is a little nervous of dogs, but I am happy for him/her to be involved with all aspects of caring for the school dog, including supervised lunchtime walks.
- My child is fearful of dogs, but in time, I would like them to work with the dog to develop their confidence with and understanding dogs.
- My child has an allergy which means they must not come into contact with the dog
- I do not** give permission for my child to come into direct contact with the dog

SignedParent/Carer

NameDate