



## NEWBOTTLE & CHARLTON CEVA PRIMARY SCHOOL

*Every person matters, every moment counts "I can do all this through him who gives me strength"*

Green Lane, Charlton, Banbury, Oxon OX17 3DN. Tel: 01295 811480

Email: [bursar@newbottle.northants-ecl.gov.uk](mailto:bursar@newbottle.northants-ecl.gov.uk)

Headteacher: Mr Peter Smith

Chair Of Governors: Lady Hayter

### School Dog

Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

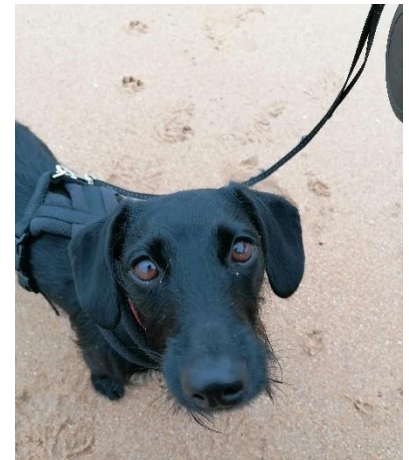
I am writing to inform you that we will soon be adding a new member to our school community after getting approval by the school's governing body. We will be welcoming a dog into school to support children and staff.

A variety of animals, including dogs, are becoming an ever-popular and worthwhile addition to schools across the country. Children can benefit educationally and emotionally, increase their understanding of responsibility and develop empathy and nurturing skills through contact with a dog.

In addition to these benefits, children take great enjoyment from interaction with a dog. We value the development of children's well-being along with their spiritual, moral and social education as highly as we value academic achievement. We believe a school dog will be a unique way to enrich all areas of the children's wider education, skills and well-being.

Nova is a 3-year-old Dachshund/Patterdale terrier cross and has a very friendly temperament including when interacting with small children.

This dog is owned by myself and as I live close to the school, she won't be living on site as other school dogs do but will spend up to 4 hours a few times a week in school.



The dog's main place of residence will be my office but may also go into other intervention rooms including the Library or Tree house. She will always be on a short lead and will be with a member of staff, but mainly myself. We are looking to build up her specialist support through some specific dog training but she will start by supporting children in school who need some small help with emotions and also to those children who go above and beyond in different areas of school life to reward them for their effort.



You will be able to see the school dog policy attached to the school newsletter email and it is also on the school website). This gives all the details of how Nova will be used in school and the benefits in her addition to our school community. Please can I reassure you that the welfare of the children and the dog is of the upmost importance, the risk assessment will identify key measures to ensure both, including ensuring that the dog has appropriate areas to rest, feed and toilet and will be reviewed regularly. If at any point it comes to light that Nova does not actively enjoy life in the school environment, then she will no longer attend.

We will build up her time in school from January 2023 to support her adjustment into school life. It is accepted that interacting with animals is not appropriate for all children but that for some it has the potential to provide many positive benefits. You will find some FAQs about having a school dog which you will also find within the school dog policy. If after reading the documents, you have any other questions or concerns, please do contact us.

Please then complete the consent form attached to let us know whether you are happy for your child to interact with Nova. They will not be allowed to have any interaction with her until we have the reply slip back.

We hope students will gain a great deal of enjoyment from having a school dog and that is a positive addition to our school community.

Kind regards,

Mr Peter Smith  
Headteacher

### **School Dog Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ): To publish to parents**

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

A The legal owner of the dog will be Mr Smith. He will bear the costs associated with owning he dog; the school budget will support liability insurance and training costs only where appropriate.

**Q Will the dog be a distraction to students' learning?**

A The dog will be kept in Mr Smith's office or other intervention rooms. The dog will also attend meetings with staff to support further socialisation, and support staff well-being, following consultation with staff beforehand.

**Q Has a risk assessment been undertaken?**

A Yes, we have carefully considered having a dog in school- see risk assessment in policy.

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

A In the interest of health and hygiene our school dog will be toileted when taken out for short walks around the grounds in the front of the school where children won't be playing.



**Q What if my child is scared of dogs? Will they be forced to be in the same room as the dog?**

Mr Smith or an appropriate adult will ensure the school dog only comes into contact with children who are happy to have contact and have parental permission for this, under strict supervision. A student will not be forced to be in contact with dog at any time against their wishes. 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 using evidence-based interventions such as graded exposure.

**Q How will the dog’s welfare be considered?**

A The dog’s welfare will be carefully monitored. She will not stay in school all day but have up to 4 hours on the school grounds while also resting at home and going for walks.

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

A Children will not need to touch the dog or be in the same room as the dog at any point which will relieve the possibility of allergic reactions. 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.

**Permission for Interaction with School Dog**

Name of Child/Children..... Class:.....

I give permission for the school dog to interact with my child/children.

I give permission for the school dog to interact with my child/children but they will require further support with this as they are nervous around dogs.

I don’t give permission for the school dog to interact with my child/children.

Any allergies or information we need to be aware of:

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Signed.....