



Hemington Primary School

"To enable, encourage and equip all children to achieve their best through an inspiring and nurturing environment."

Hemington
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Headteacher:
Alun Randell

Friday 30th January 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

School Dog

I am writing to inform you that it is my intention to introduce a School Dog at Hemington Primary School.

Why have a School Dog?

Children can benefit educationally and emotionally, increase their understanding of responsibility, respect, kindness, love, friendship 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.

The dog will be my own dog, Rosie, an English Springer Spaniel. Rosie is eight years old and has an impeccable temperament. She was previously a school dog at Midsomer Norton Primary School for two years where she helped motivate children, reassure children who may be anxious coming into school and read with children. As she renews her role as School Dog, she will be rigorously re-assessed by a registered clinical animal behaviourist to ascertain that she continues to be competent and safe to work within a school environment.

Rosie will be further assessed on an annual basis to check her ongoing suitability to work within our school.

Who is responsible for the School Dog?

As Rosie is mine, she will be my responsibility. The amount of time Rosie spends in school will be gradually developed but she will very much be a part-time school dog, attending one or two half days each week. When not in school, she will continue to be cared for at home by my wife.

Risk Assessment

The school carries public liability insurance for Rosie as a School Dog. The school will undertake a risk assessment prior to the dog joining the school. The children and staff will receive training as well. This will include meeting and greeting dogs, safety around dogs, canine body language, responsible dog ownership and positive training.

Any child who we feel might benefit from working with Rosie, will only do so with written parental consent. They will also need to follow a strict hygiene regime following contact with the dog.

It has been proven that working and playing with a dog improves children's social skills and self-esteem. Many studies have been undertaken that give credit to the benefits of dogs in the school. There is no better place to educate our children on how to treat animals than that of the school environment. Animals in schools can encourage children to respect all life, teach responsibility, motivate those children who are often not that attentive, help calm children down and improve academic achievement.

In addition to this, if children are wary of dogs, they can be supported in approaching, handling and gaining confidence in managing their fears, through the presence of a specially trained dog in school.

Allergies

You will need to make the school aware if your child is allergic to dogs. If this is the case, then we will ensure that your child keeps a safe distance away from Rosie.

Rosie is highly socialised and strict supervision of children at all times will prevent any injuries from occurring. Rosie will only be assessed as suitable to be a School Dog if she is seen to be gentle and loving with children at all times.

Over the next few weeks, Rosie will gradually be introduced. She will be based in my office, but will often be seen on a lead with me in classrooms, at playtime and around the school.

If you have any concerns, please do not hesitate in contacting me.

Yours sincerely,



Alun Randell

Headteacher