

## Parent Information

### Who/what is Canine Assisted learning?

Canine Assisted Learning (CAL) provides animal assisted interventions, activities and support to state, independent and specialist schools, colleges and universities across the UK.

CAL are at the forefront of animal assisted interventions in schools in the UK and are committed to improving the emotional wellbeing of children and young people.

### Why have a school dog?

Having a school assistance dog is a powerful tool to aid positive mental wellness. Research has shown that dogs can improve the well-being of children, reducing their anxiety levels and increasing concentration levels. Our CAL dogs are non judgemental and provide comfort and relaxation for those children who need it most. Having a school dog makes the school environment happier and a more enjoyable place to be.

*Some of the benefits of a school dog:*



How do children feel when spending time with a school dog?



What will the school dog do on a day-to-day basis?

Your school dog will have a routine that enables them to thrive and love being in school, with their welfare being paramount. Our school dog day will include sessions with the children, as outlined below, as well as lots of rest, play and enrichment activities away from the children.

Your school dog will:

- Take part in 1:1 emotional regulation sessions
- Take part in walk and talk sessions
- Help to support with learning and literacy
- Help children gain confidence
- Take part in small group sessions
- Take part in wellbeing sessions

Handling a dog

Children will learn the principles of good pet ownership and be taught how to handle dogs safely and responsibly.

A risk assessment and additional insurances will be in place, created by both your school and Canine Assisted Learning to ensure all areas of health and safety have been addressed.

Your school dog will have a quiet space in between sessions to rest. A designated member of staff will have responsibility for the dog throughout the school day.

### **What about the children who have allergies?**

With guidance from CAL the school will have contingencies in place for allergies, ensuring allergens from the dog are kept to a minimum.

Parents and staff will be asked to inform the school if their child has any allergies so that they may manage this appropriately and minimise contact if they so wish.

### **Children / staff who have a fear of dogs?**

For those who are afraid of dogs, the introduction of a dog into their environment may be a scary thought, however it can be the first step to helping overcome these fears and phobias. With the support and guidance of CAL's experienced team to provide specialist sessions on dog phobias, your school will put a plan in place for each individual to whom this is relevant.

### **Health**

Your school dog will live as part of their main handler's family, they will be up to date with vaccinations, be wormed, groomed and very well cared for.

### **Hygiene**

There will be a designated area for your school dog to be toileted which will be away from the children. After each interaction with the dog, children will be asked to wash their hands thoroughly.

If you have any further questions, please consult your school or contact us on:

07594 649 422

[info@canineassistedlearning.com](mailto:info@canineassistedlearning.com)



<https://www.canineassistedlearning.com/>