

**Principal: Mr D McGilloway**

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7<sup>th</sup> November 2022

Dear Parents/Carers,

We are pleased to announce that we will be introducing our own school dog and will be joining The Dog Mentor Programme. The Dog Mentor Programme has built upon the benefits of the human-animal bond by providing children positive experiences with dogs that can help them educationally, developmentally, emotionally and socially.

Over the last nine years The Dog Mentor Programme has been proven to have a positive impact on children in all areas including self-esteem, behaviour, peer relationships and better engagement skills. These improvements then result in improved academic achievement.

Miss Smith will be bringing her dog, and our school dog, Fleur into school to work with children from Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> November. We envisage that The Dog Mentor Programme will enhance the positivity of the school environment and we look forward to the impact The Dog Mentor Programme will have on our children. Full training has been given to both Fleur and our staff that will work with her in order to ensure that the welfare of everyone involved is maintained as a top priority.

Please find some FAQs below which may help with any questions or concerns you may have.

Please feel free to visit The Dog Mentor's website and Facebook page for more details and to see some of the schools that have introduced their dogs into school:

[www.thedogmentor.co.uk](http://www.thedogmentor.co.uk)

[www.facebook.com/thedogmentor](https://www.facebook.com/thedogmentor)

I hope that you share our excitement, please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.

Yours Sincerely,

Danny McGilloway  
Principal

Can't wait to meet you all



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*Maximising students'  
abilities, ambitions  
and academic potential*



## Dogs in School - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Most frequently asked questions relate to the following areas:

- Allergic Reactions
- Risk Management



### Allergic reactions

Parents and educators may be concerned about potential allergic reactions to dogs within the school environment. The Dog Mentor ensure full cleanliness and grooming requirements minimising allergic contact. Staff, visitors and children known to have allergic reactions to dogs must not go near the dog. All visitors will be informed on arrival that there is a dog in school via a sign displayed in the reception area and canteen area of the school.

### Risk Management

- **Supervision** - Fleur's handlers will supervise her at all times, children will not be left alone with the dog. The dog will be kept on a lead when moving between classrooms or on a walk and will be under the full control and supervision of the trained handler.
- **Animal maintenance** - The Dog Mentor requires regular veterinarian checks for their dogs along with regular evaluations of their handlers to maintain their certification status. The Dog Mentor handlers are trained to watch for potential harm to either a child or the dog and are primarily responsible to manage the animal when on site.
- **Hygiene** - In the interest of health and hygiene handlers will ensure the dog is toileted when taken out for short walks in the grounds. Only staff members will clear this away appropriately leaving no trace on the ground, cleaning the area with disinfectant if needed. Fleur will be taken to a specific area of the grounds for this purpose.
- **Fear of dogs** – Some children have a fear of dogs, these fears may be based on prior negative interactions or from parents warnings to be careful around dogs which instils an emotional response of anxiety. Where children engage as Dog Monitors or engage with Fleur as part of her timetabled day this is done voluntarily. Fleur will spend time in spaces where other children are able to avoid unwanted contact. Experience and research has also shown that with proper guidance and handling, children can learn to overcome their fear of animals and with it, grow in respect and appreciation of them.