

# Charlestown Community Primary School and Nursery



Head teacher: Mrs A Collis  
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Tel: 0161 740 3529  
Website: [www.charlestown.manchester.sch.uk](http://www.charlestown.manchester.sch.uk)

Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2022

Dear parents and carers

As you may have heard, Charlestown has decided to take on a school dog! This decision has been made following extensive research, discussions with the Chair of Governors and meetings with experts and other schools that have a School Dog.

A full risk assessment has been completed which will be available on our website. Hugo is currently 8 weeks old and is a golden retriever, coming from a line of great temperament dogs and will be cared for and belong to myself. This has not been a rushed decision. I have researched and seen the many benefits of having a school dog. These include:

- Dogs help children regulate their emotions.
- 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 and interaction skills
- Dogs teach children compassion – just like us, dogs show 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.

Hugo will have public liability insurance. This means he will be able to come into school. Hugo will also regularly go to the vet for vaccinations and have flea and worm treatments. Hugo will be based in my office which is separate from the classrooms and the children will only be able to interact with him under strict, trained supervision and as long as parental permission has been given.

He will initially be in school every day but away from the children, finding his feet and getting to know his surroundings before the children arrive and when they go home. In time, and with expert advice and training from <https://www.thedogmentor.co.uk/> he will begin to move towards becoming a dog mentor. You may see him on the gate as we begin to get him used to school life, but if he has his working coat on, please ask before stroking him. The training programme is intense but very much in the interest of the dog's welfare and the children.

When Hugo is moving around the school he will be on a lead and always with an adult. We hope he will be able to support children in school in areas such as emotional regulation, reading, nurture groups and so much more. 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 he does and documenting his adventures as he grows.

If you have any individual questions or queries, please do not hesitate to speak to myself or contact the office.

Please complete and return the attached slip by Friday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2022. It is planned that Hugo will begin to be in school from Monday 28<sup>th</sup> February.

Kind regards

Mrs A Collis  
Headteacher

### **Letter of consent regarding School Dog**

Please complete and return by Friday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2022

Name of ALL children and classes

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Please tick the circle as appropriate:

- I am happy for my child to be involved with all aspects of caring for the school dog, including groups and supervised lunchtime walks.
- My child is a little nervous of dogs, but I am happy for them 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

Signed ..... Parent/Carer