



St Mary of the Angels Catholic Primary School

Head Teacher: Mrs H Thorpe BA Hons QTS

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Dear parents and families,

We are currently journeying through the process of preparing to welcome an assistance dog to school. I am delighted that we will soon be able to introduce you to Wispa, who is a beautiful chocolate brown hypo-allergenic labradoodle puppy.

We hope that Wispa will become an integral part of the school family and play an important part in our commitment to ensuring the mental health and wellbeing of all of our children.

We will be introducing Wispa later this term, training her as a school dog, and in time possibly a fully qualified Pet Therapy Dog. Wispa will live with Miss Hennessey in her family home and will visit us in school. We hope to build up her visits for her to become a full-time member of staff!

I am sure that many of you will be incredibly supportive and enthusiastic about this development and may have experienced therapy dogs in other schools or workplaces. However, I also appreciate that some might have concerns about this and I want to put your mind at rest if this is the case.

In preparation for our new arrival, we have liaised closely with other schools that have already successfully introduced a school dog into the environment, and we will continue to work with these schools to share and develop best practice.

To answer questions that you may have, we have set out the benefits of a school dog and tried to address any concerns through a range of resources. All of this information, as well as our proposed risk assessments and draft policies are also now live on the school [website](#) for parents to view.

In order for your child to be able to meet Wispa, and in the months ahead, work with and play with Wispa, we will need your permission. Please follow [this link](#) to complete a very short form. Without your permission, your child will not be able to meet and greet Wispa. This form can also be used to share any information you feel is relevant with us.

I am thankful for everyone's support to bring an assistance dog to school, especially to Miss Hennessey and her family. If you have any worries, concerns or questions, please do come and see me or Miss Hennessey.

Kind regards,

Helen Thorpe

Mrs Thorpe

Headteacher



Mass times at St Mary of the Angels Church – Sunday @ 9.00am