

Academy School Dog

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are very excited to introduce you to our new academy school dog. Chewie (AKA Chewbacca) is an 18 week old (non-molting) Cockapoo and belongs to myself (Mrs Nevell).



A full risk assessment has been completed which will be available on our website. Chewie and myself have also been and are continuing to attend puppy classes to develop his recall and socialisation skills. He has bundles of energy and loves playing with children and other dogs.

Evidence has shown that having a dog in school brings positive benefits to many children, particularly in terms of their well-being and engagement in learning. Other benefits are:

- 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 – they do not always do as they are told first time!
- Dogs teach children compassion – just like us dogs feel pain and 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.

Chewie regularly goes to the vet for yearly vaccinations, flea and worm treatments. The children will only be able to interact with him under strict supervision and as long

as parental permission has been given. He will start school school on Tuesday 5th September and will be in school every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. He will be based in Mrs Nevell's room but will be out on the school gate to meet and greet children in the mornings and of course when he needs exercising and toileting. When he 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 reading, nurture groups and also if children are finding it difficult to come into school.

I hope the children will gain a lot of enjoyment from having a school dog and there will be pictures on our school website. Staff will be speaking to the children about how to act safely and sensibly around dogs as part of the children's PSHE lessons.

We recognise that some children can be highly anxious or frightened of dogs. With this in mind, I will lead an assembly next week so that the children can meet Chewie, ask any questions and hopefully reassure them. However, if you would like to refrain your child from being in contact with the dog, then please let us know. If you have any individual questions or queries, please do not hesitate to speak to myself.

Yours sincerely,

Nicola Nevell