



Diocese of Birmingham

ST LAURENCE CHURCH JUNIOR SCHOOL

Bunbury Road, Northfield, Birmingham B31 2DJ

Telephone: 0121 464 6499

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Headteacher: Mr Andrew Murphy

Friday 13th September 2024

Dear Parents, Carers and families of Year 3 children,

We are pleased to detail that we are currently part of 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 in different schools, 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. We have started to see the same effect at St. Laurence Church Junior School.

Mrs. Tapper, our School Business Manager, brings her dog Pip (who has been through a full vetting process) into school every day of the week apart from Wednesdays. A full and extensive risk assessment is in place and both Mrs Tapper and Pip are already trained and have 12 months experience working with children at another school.

The Dog Mentor Programme has had, and I am sure will continue to have, a positive influence on the school environment as a whole and on our children. It is our intention that Pip will sometimes be on the school gate welcoming children and parents as well as being part of intervention work. Full training has been given to both Pip and our staff that will work with Pip in order to ensure that the welfare of Pip and everyone involved is maintained as a top priority. Please note that Pip is a working dog and as such cannot come into contact with other dogs during her working day. We ask that you do not bring your own dogs onto the school premises at any time, thank you.

Children will be introduced to Pip in a whole school assembly and more information will be sent out to the parents of any children selected to work with Pip in the setting.

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

www.facebook.com/thedogmentor

We understand that there may be children who suffer from allergies or who are afraid of dogs. Therefore, all children and parents are given the option not to partake in any activities with Pip by opting out. Please email enquiry@stlrcj.bham.sch.uk if you would like your child to opt out of any activities involving Pip or would like a further

discussion regarding this. Please email by Friday 20th September. I hope that you share our excitement, please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mr. Murphy". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a thin, curved horizontal line that spans the width of the signature.

Mr A Murphy, Headteacher