Thurssday 23th September

Dear Parent/Guardian

Dear Parent/Carers,

At Craven PRS we are committed to building up our sense of community and belonging for our young people, whether they are with us for a few weeks, a few months, or longer.  One of the ways we believe our students can build up their approach to responsibility is through having a ‘school dog’, Bandit.  Bandit lives with one of the Senior Leadership Team, Ms Arthurs, and is trained to be a calming influence around people.

Shape, rectangle

Description automatically generated



The research behind this decision is compelling and has shown that there are distinctive benefits for the whole school community if the approach is structured in the right way.  The three primary areas of benefit for this will be pastoral, learning support and reward.  We see enormous benefits that caring for animals will bring our students.  We are also aware of Health and Safety planning and have developed a robust risk assessment and routines to keep all members of our community safe and to ensure that Bandit is happy and secure.

Of course, we have ensured the safety of our students is a key priority.  Bandit was selected for his calm and even temperament and has been assessed by… from …who is a qualified trainer and has done extensive work with other local schools in training their school dog, as well as training other therapy, medical and assistance dogs.  We are very grateful for her support, wisdom and expertise.\*\*\*\*\* Who has assessed him?  Dog trainer etc – if not, can we link with another school for advice or recommendations.

We appreciate that there may be some students, parents and staff who do not wish, or are not able to be involved with our school dog.  If, for any reason, you wish to ensure this is the case, please contact the school office to let them know.  We will then collate a list to ensure that we are all aware of who has opted out.  We have attached a simple reply slip to the bottom of this letter to allow you to respond in writing.  Should you have other questions, concerns or queries, please do phone the school office.

**The benefits will include:**

* Learning, including reading and literacy.
* Self-esteem and interest for all students, especially for some of our more vulnerable young people.
* Anger management.
* Bereavement.
* Developing responsibility.
* Reducing stress.
* Caring and support for groups of students.
* Knowledge and understanding of animals.
* A feel and sense of community.
* Some curriculum involvement and benefits.

We believe that having visited schools who already have a school dog and having researched the project fully, having a school dog here on some days with us at Craven PRS will provide significant benefits.

If you would like any further details, please do not hesitate to contact us.  We will keep you up to date with any changes and hope that you will enjoy hearing about the student’s stories of their day with Bandit in the building and that you may have the opportunity to come and meet him yourself, should you wish to do so.

**Best wishes**

**Mr A Haughey (Head Teacher)**

**………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**Please return to Craven PRS by no later than Friday 24th September 2021**

**I am happy for my son/daughter: FULL NAME……………………………………… to engage with activities with the school dog, Bandit.  I confirm that they have no known allergies which school should be aware of.**

**OR**

**I am not happy for my son/daughter: FULL NAME……………………………………… to engage with activities with the school dog, Bandit.  I confirm that they have no known allergies which school should be aware of which leave me concerned that they are around Bandit.**

Yours sincerely

Andrew Haughey (Headteacher)