



## To **Aspire**, **Endeavour** and **Thrive** Together

9<sup>th</sup> September 2022

Dear Parents/Carers,

We are pleased, and excited, to introduce Lilo the dog, our new member of the staff team at Glossopdale. Alongside Lilo we have the opportunity to bring a variety of different small animals to enhance the learning experience of students at Glossopdale School these include a hedgehog, lizard and rabbit.

We are always looking for innovative ways to develop the daily experience we offer our students. It is proven that having animals within school delivers significant benefits to students and also to the working environment and social dynamic of the school. Having given it serious consideration and researched thoroughly the benefits we are going to trial this throughout the Autumn term.

There is no cost to the school as Lilo, a 4 year old cocker spanie,l is owned by Mrs Taylor who is our Family Support Manager. Lilo will be looked after by Mrs Taylor out of school hours and be based within the Family Support office during the school day whilst offering support in other areas across the school. The other animals will be brought into school on an infrequent basis in order to support students where needed as part of direct work.

Lilo will be introduced to the school environment gradually with the view to her attending initially on a Monday and Wednesday. Lilo is already trained and has recently passed her PetsAsTherapy assessment. We intend to utilise her and the other animals in a variety of ways:

- **To support attendance:** There is a greater enjoyment of being in the school environment, improved attendance and a willingness to participate and Lilo will be on duty on the school gate.
- **To support behaviour:** Researchers report that students can identify with animals and, with empathy for the animals, can better understand how classmates may feel.
- **To support emotional development:** Animals can be a friend for students to talk to about their problems or to help students to feel calm.
- **To support social development:** Dogs are especially useful for building self-esteem; learning about positive and negative reinforcement, responsibility and boundaries. With the presence of a 'calm and well-trained dog', students find social support and peer interaction.
- **To support reading:** Students who might be embarrassed to read aloud to the class or even adults are likely to be less scared to read to an animal. It might be less stressful to read aloud to an animal than to a teacher or a peer. Animals are used to encourage struggling readers to practise reading aloud.
- **To support individuals:** The animals can work with students on a one-to-one basis (under adult supervision) to support students going through upsetting/difficult times or even those who are scared/phobic of animals.
- **As a reward:** Dogs will be gentle and loving, but at the same time be enjoyable. Students could be rewarded with spending time with the dog or one of the other animals, walking, grooming, playing with or training.

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**Executive Headteacher:** Mrs. D. McGloin

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**Glossopdale**   
School & Sixth Form

The information in this letter should be shared with other person(s) with parental responsibility for your child.



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Lilo's wellbeing is paramount and an appropriate timetable will be developed to support her within school. Her main place of residence will be in the Family Support office on the first floor. Whilst moving around the school, the dog will be kept on a short lead and will always be with an adult. A policy and supporting risk assessment will be in place and made available on the school website. However, if your son/daughter has a specific allergy to animals please email [btaylor@glossopdale.school](mailto:btaylor@glossopdale.school) to inform us.

Please also find attached a list of FAQs that should help any queries you may have. If any questions remain please contact [info@glossopdale.school](mailto:info@glossopdale.school) for the attention of Mrs Taylor.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs D McGloin  
Headteacher



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## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Who is the legal owner of the dog and who pays for her costs?**

The dog's legal owner will be Mrs Taylor who will care for her out of school hours in her home and will bear all the costs associated with having a pet dog. The School will support the costs associated with her work in School (insurance, staff training) where appropriate.

### **Who is the legal owner of the other animals that will be on site?**

The other animals are also owned by Mrs Taylor and she is fully insured and has a license with Cheshire East council which allows her to use them for educational and supportive purposes. Including animal therapy.

### **Is Lilo from a reputable breeder?**

Lilo was rescued as a puppy almost 4 years ago so her breeder is unknown. Lilo has been assessed for use as a therapy dog by Pets As Therapy a reputable charity that are nationwide. Lilo is a lovely nature and is used to working with a variety of different adults and children.

### **Will she be a distraction?**

The dog will be kept in her own space in the Family support office. She will have access to an external area that is off limits to students and will only come into contact with students who are happy to have contact with a dog (with parental / carer permission) under strict supervision. We will be careful to ensure that time spent with the dog is shared amongst students. The dog will also attend meetings with staff to support further socialisation, following consultation with staff beforehand.

### **Has a Risk Assessment been undertaken?**

Yes a formal Risk Assessment has taken place. We have carefully considered having animals in school and sought advice from many sources, including other schools that successfully have a School Dog. There will also be a School Dog Policy, available to view on the School Website shortly.

### **Who is responsible for the training?**

Mrs Taylor will be the legal owner of the dog and as a result, will be responsible for her training. As Lilo is almost 4 years old she already has basic commands in place.

### **How will Lilo be toileted to ensure hygiene for all?**

In the interest of health and hygiene the dog will be toileted in a sectioned-off area of the School site where students have no access.

### **When will the animals come into School?**

It is recommended that a school dog integrates gradually into School life in order to support her socialisation of a new setting. She will complete a phased introduction over the summer term to see how she gets on. The other animals will initially be brought in on Mondays or Wednesdays to support school life as and when the need arises.



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### **How will the animals welfare be considered?**

The animals are already used to visiting various different sites for short periods of time. They will initially come to School for a few hours each day and this will gradually be built up. Lilo will be regularly walked either by Mrs Taylor or another member of staff and have plenty of opportunities to use the designated toileting area. Lilo will be kept in the Family support office and will only have planned and supervised contact with students and visitors. All animals will be provided with unlimited access to water, a bed and enrichment. Professionals will ensure all the animals' welfare is always carefully considered.

### **How will this be managed where students have allergies?**

In order to interact with the animals, students will not need to touch them unless of course they wish to do so, this will relieve the possibility of allergic reactions. We already manage a number of allergies at school and this will be no different for students and adults that are allergic to dogs or any other animal. Individual needs will always be met and we are happy to work with parents to put additional control measures in place for individual allergies. Lilo sheds very minimally, she is given a high quality food and regularly groomed to reduce the possibility of any allergens. If this is a concern please email [btaylor@glossopdale.school](mailto:btaylor@glossopdale.school)

### **My son/daughter is afraid of dogs, how will you manage this?**

Access to Lilo is carefully managed and supervised and students do not need to have close contact with her. We hope to work closely with students who are fearful of dogs (at parental request) to alleviate their fear and to help them manage this. If this is a concern please email [info@glossopdale.school](mailto:info@glossopdale.school) for the attention of Mrs Taylor.