



14/09/2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Exciting News – Welcoming Our School Dogs



We are delighted to share some exciting news with you. This September, Meon Way Federation will be welcoming two very special new members of our school community: Chelsea and Button, a mother-and-daughter pair of Cavapoo dogs.

Cavapoos are well known for their gentle, friendly nature and are considered a low-shedding, hypoallergenic breed, making them particularly suitable for working in educational settings. The dogs will be carefully introduced to school life and will always be supervised by staff members. Their welfare and the safety of our children will remain our highest priorities at all times.

Why Have School Dogs?

Research and experience from schools across the country show that school and therapy dogs can have a significant positive impact on children's wellbeing, learning and emotional development. The presence of a calm, friendly dog can help children to:

- Feel more relaxed and reduce anxiety.
- Develop confidence and self-esteem.
- Improve social and communication skills.
- Learn empathy, kindness and responsibility.
- Support emotional regulation and wellbeing.
- Increase engagement and motivation in learning.
- Encourage reluctant readers to read aloud in a non-judgemental environment.



Animal-assisted activities have been shown to support children's emotional wellbeing and can help create a calm and nurturing environment in which children feel safe and ready to learn.

How Will the Dogs Be Managed?

We understand that parents and carers may have questions about how the dogs will be cared for within school. Comprehensive risk assessments and procedures are in place to ensure that the dogs are introduced safely and responsibly. The dogs will:



ASPIRE, CREATE, ACHIEVE

meonwayfederation.org.uk

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE
We invest in wellbeing

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE
We invest in people Standard

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- Be fully vaccinated, health checked and insured.
- Remain under the supervision of school staff at all times.
- Have designated areas within the school.
- Never be left alone with pupils.
- Be removed from any situation where they appear uncomfortable or unsettled.
- Be included within the school's health and safety and emergency procedures.



Choice and Inclusion

We recognise that not all children are comfortable around dogs, and some may have allergies, worries or previous experiences that affect how they feel.

No child will ever be made to interact with the dogs. Participation in any activities involving Chelsea and Button will be entirely optional, and alternative arrangements will always be available where needed. Children who do not wish to have contact with the dogs will be fully respected and supported.

Important Information for Parents

To help us ensure the safety and wellbeing of all pupils, we ask that parents and carers review and update their child's medical information on the Arbor App before September, particularly regarding:

- Allergies (including animal allergies)
- Asthma
- Medical conditions
- Phobias or anxieties relating to dogs
- Any other relevant health information
- Accurate and up-to-date information enables us to put appropriate support and arrangements in place for every child.

Looking Ahead

We are incredibly excited about the positive impact Chelsea and Button may bring to our school community. We believe they will become much-loved members of the federation, helping to support pupils' emotional wellbeing while enriching their school experience.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Sara Paine

Executive Headteacher