ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Principal: Mr M McLoughlin

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Christ is the centre of our school community where we live, love and learn together.

Friday 23rd June 2023

Dear Families,

Re: Introduction of a Mentor Dog at St. Thomas More Catholic Primary School.



I am pleased to announce that both the Lumen Christi Catholic MAC and School Standards Committee (Local Governing Body) at St. Thomas More have provisionally agreed for a Mentor Dog to be introduced to our school community.

This is my 3-year-old Cockapoo named 'Rosie', who has already been working in a primary school since she was six months of age. She was first introduced at St. Patrick's in Coventry after the second lockdown to help the children with their return to school by being a point of contact to support designated children with their emotional well-being. The Cockapoo breed is renowned for their kind-nature. They are also classed as hypoallergenic which means that they produce less dander, hair and saliva, which may reduce their impact on those with mild or moderate dog allergies.

Rosie has had a massive impact on the emotional health and well-being of children, staff and parents over the last two years and forms part of the intervention offered to support and reward children in school. Indeed, Rosie was the only member of staff named in St Patrick's very positive Ofsted report.

A mentor dog at St. Thomas More will provide our children with the benefits of the human-animal bond, in providing positive experiences with dogs that will help them educationally, developmentally, emotionally and socially. Rosie has been part of an onsite risk assessment here at St. Thomas More and accredited training through 'The Dog Mentor' programme.

Additional school-based and online training will be undertaken to support the school in maximising the power of the Dog Mentor programme. Additional members of staff will also be trained as handlers to support with future intervention programmes with Rosie, and also in supporting her general well-being in school.

I know from personal experience the positive impact the relationship between the human-animal bond has when a dog works alongside children who may need help with their personal growth and in creating a positive mindset.

If you have any questions or queries, please direct these to the enquiry@sttommor.bham.sch.uk by Friday 30th June 2023 (4pm). The aim will be to address any questions during the week commencing Monday 3rd July, for Rosie to then start on a part-time basis from Monday 17th July.

I know that Rosie will have a positive impact on so many people as part of our school community.

Yours Faithfully,

M. McLoughlin
Principal