

15.1.23

Dear Parents/Carers,

As you will have seen and heard we have been successful through application for Poga to join our school family.

Poga is a pup who will be trained by ADNI to become an AAT (Animal Assisted Therapy) dog. It is important to note that during Pogas training the time he spends in school and around people is planned to ensure that the training is at his pace.

It is recommended that parents/guardians take time to look at the ADNI website for further information on the benefits of having Poga in our school (link on school website).

In the past our pupils benefitted greatly from spending time with Koko and we soon realised the amazing benefits of spending time with a therapy dog for our pupils.

In line with the six principles of nurture and our zones of regulation, spending time with Poga will provide endless benefits;

- ❖ Dogs teach children about responsibility – by children having to remember to feed and give water to the dog it can give them a sense of importance and satisfaction that they may not get from other responsibilities.
- ❖ Dogs teach children patience – they do not always do as they are told first time!
- ❖ Dogs teach children compassion – just like us dogs feel pain and emotion.
- ❖ Dogs teach children about socialisation – by the children learning how to interact with a dog they can better learn how to socialise with other children.
- ❖ Dogs are fun – they greet you with a wagging tail every day and put a smile on your face, even on a bad day.

Poga is a member of ADNI which means he has public liability insurance. This means he will be able to come into school. Poga will regularly go to the vet for yearly vaccinations, flea and worm treatments.

Poga will be based in The Sunshine Room which is separate from the classrooms and the children will only be able to interact with her under strict supervision and as long as parental permission has been given.

With parental permission, over a period of time, children who are fearful of dogs can be supported in approaching, handling and in gaining confidence in managing their fear. I hope the children will gain a lot of enjoyment from having a school dog and there will be pictures on the website of all that he does.

We are all so excited about the arrival of Poga and for the next few months there will be weekly training for Ciara & Ann Marie in Belfast with ADNI.



## Permission for Poga



### PLEASE READ CAREFULLY AND RETURN THIS SECTION TO SCHOOL

Please complete the permission note below if you are happy for your child to spend time with Poga.

Also, it is important that everyone is aware of Poga being a little pup and like every pup he will explore with his paws, mouth and teeth-; mouthing and chewing are very normal puppy behaviours and although we will closely monitor at all times there are no guarantees that incidents could occur such as pulling clothes (teething and play) and use of claws to explore (environments and people) we will support this age and stage process and teach the children how to respond appropriately.

I/We the parents/guardians of \_\_\_\_\_ give my child permission to spend time with Poga.

I understand that Poga initially is a puppy in training and supported by ADNI in this journey.

Time spent with Poga will be supervised by the Sunshine Room staff.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Pupils may be featured in social media platforms, news articles and our school website to promote the amazing work of ADNI and time with Poga. Please inform us below if you would not like your child to participate in this.

Any Information you would like to add in relation to your child spending time with Poga:

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*Please get in touch in you have any further enquiries.  
regarding our newest member of the Knockavoe family.  
will be upcoming fundraising events to support the initial cost of Poga,  
his training, equipment, food, insurance etc  
As a school we are so grateful for all the support from our parents,  
families and wider community in...*

*"Reaching for a Brighter Future".*



Article 23

Article 31

