

**Our All Souls,
School Dog**

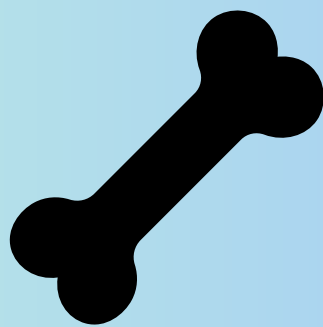


TOFFEE

We would like you to meet our newest member of the All Souls' team, Toffee. He is a cockapoo who is going to be trained to become our school dog



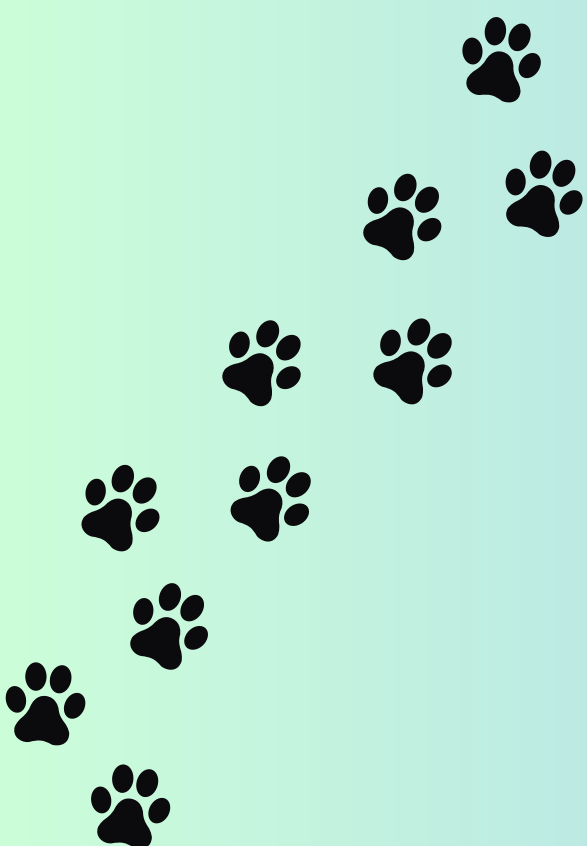
There are many benefits for having a school dog and they can be used to support children with different aspects of their lives as well as teach them about responsibility, patience and socialisation. We hope that Toffee will be able to support in areas such as reading, nurture, attendance and quiet areas during playtimes. All interactions with Toffee will be strictly supervised by an adult and he will remain on a lead when he moves around the school and when he spends time with children.



A risk assessment has also been carried out to ensure everyone, including Toffee, can remain safe and happy.

Toffee belongs to Mrs Walker who will be responsible for his care and training. He will regularly go to the vets for all vaccinations, worm and flea treatments.

Currently, Toffee is 4 months old and at the very inquisitive puppy stage! At the moment, he is coming into school on Thursday mornings and Friday afternoons so that he can get used to our busy school environment and begin meeting the team. Toffee will not attend school if he is too tired or unwell.



Toffee has also begun puppy classes with Best Behaviour School for Dogs and his training has got off to great start. Best behaviour will support Toffee with his role as our school dog and evaluate his behaviour and suitability.

We sincerely hope that the children will gain a lot of enjoyment from having a school dog and we look forward to sharing pictures on our school website and Facebook page.



Children will only be able to interact with Toffee if we have had parental consent. Please complete the Microsoft Form that we will send out so that we can update our records.



Common Questions

Why have a therapy dog or well-being dog?

Dogs cannot speak but they can be very good listeners and can show great empathy. School dogs can work with and support children through difficult times, including support those with anxiety and depression, those who find friendships challenging or in any case when comfort is needed. They become a non-judgemental, non-demanding and unconditional friend.

Many adults are apprehensive about new and challenging situations, which can be daunting. Young people are no different. Research shows that young people can become nervous and stressed when in difficult circumstances or when pressures of life are high. However, when a risk assessed, passive and friendly dog enters the group, they often become more relaxed, less self-conscious and calm. Therapy dogs provide comfort, encourage positive behaviours, enhance self-esteem, motivate communication and inspire young people to have fun.

I thought dogs were not allowed on school site and I have been told not to bring my pet dog onto the playground; what is the difference?

Schools comply with Health and Safety at Work Act and are required to consider the act when agreeing to have animals on school site. Other considerations such as Risk Assessments and Public Liability are acted upon. It is true that most schools, including All Souls' have a general 'no dog' policy, and with good reason. Allowing pets on site that have not been correctly risk assessed or without a specific purpose can lead to difficulties, as access to them is not managed or controlled by the school, or indeed accountable to it.

Therapy animals are managed and introduced to the school over a period of time, starting with short orientation visits ensuring that the animal is comfortable with the environment. They become familiar with the setting and children are given time to adjust. Most importantly they are subject to a controlled risk assessment. Their role is directly overseen by a staff member whilst general pets are not. It is key to remember that animals used as therapy or for other specific purposes are more than pets, they are working animals with specific tasks.

My child does not like dogs and is frightened of them.

Experience with the school dog is optional and offered to children - it is not an enforced action. Any child who is fearful of dogs will not have to directly be with Toffee, although they may see him around the school. Children will always be informed if he is to be present when they enter a room or are in the vicinity. Children will always have a choice and access to Toffee will always be closely controlled and risk assessed. There will be the option available for children who are fearful of dogs, to gradually build their confidence with and understanding of dogs over time.

My child has an allergy to dogs

As with children who are fearful of dogs, no child will be made to work directly with Toffee and therefore the risk of allergy reaction is minimal.

The school successfully manages many allergy risks and an allergy to animals will be managed in the same manner. Toffee is a poodle cross No child will be made to be with Toffee if they have an allergy or fear. The consent form has an option to tick for allergies.

If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to ask.

All Soul' Dog Charter -

- **All parents/carers must complete the permission form before children are allowed access to the dog.**
- **The school dog will be the only dog allowed on school premises.**
- **The dog will be kept on a lead at all times when he is moving around the school.**
- **The dog will attend vet appointments when necessary to ensure he is in good health and up to date with all vaccinations, worm and flea treatments.**
- **Staff, parents and children will be informed of the days the dog is in school. Signs will be used on the door to highlight which room he is in.**
- **Experience with the school dog is optional and not enforced.**
- **Children will not be left alone with the dog and there will be appropriate adult supervision at all times.**
- **Children will be taught and reminded what appropriate behaviour around the dog is.**
- **Children should not eat close to the dog.**
- **Children should never go near or disturb the dog if he is sleeping, eating or drinking.**
- **Children will not be allowed to play roughly with the dog.**
- **Children will not be encouraged to feed the dog.**
- **Children should always wash their hands after handling the dog.**
- **Children will not be allowed to crowd around the dog as this may cause him to feel anxious.**
- **All visitors will be informed if the school dog is on the premises.**
- **The school dog will be included in the fire evacuation procedure under the supervision of Mrs Walker.**
- **If the dog is unwell he will not attend school.**
- **A risk assessment has been completed to ensure everyone, including the dog can remain safe.**
- **Any concerns will be reported to and dealt with by the headteacher.**

