

Wednesday 11th January 2017

The Bramble Chronicle

Many of you will know that we have been on the waiting list for a School Dog from Guide Dogs for the Blind for a considerable time. Before Christmas we decided to explore another option after extensive research - that of training a puppy ourselves and having it accredited as a Pets as Therapy dog.

Bramble Hughes was purchased by the Hughes family just before Christmas. He's a fourteen week old Flatcoated Retriever puppy and he had his first day in school on Monday. Bramble was chosen specifically with his future work at Dorin Park in mind. Flatcoated Retrievers have a history of working as assistance dogs for disabled or deaf people. Although they are usually too lively to be effective as guide dogs, there are some Flatcoat guide dogs about. Flatcoats are a fun-loving breed who love people and being busy and having a job to do.

When Bramble is old enough he will be working with individual children and whole classes in a range of different ways. We'll send you more information about this in his next Chronicle. Bramble is now having his puppy training, getting used to the school and is already meeting some of our pupils. **With this in mind, please complete the slip below if there is anything you need to make us aware of about your child and dogs and we will accommodate this.**

Bramble is now being trained by Jane Hughes, Kerry Attwood and Michelle Milligan. His training will be specifically tailored to his role at Dorin Park. He has started working with 6P in their animal care class and he will work with other groups as he gets older. As a puppy, Bramble still needs lots of sleep during the day so he won't be doing too much just yet. Living at home with the Hughes family means he's used to children of different ages, including pre-school, and enjoys being handled by children as well as adults.

We know there will be some children and adults with allergies to dogs and for that reason Bramble's coat will be treated with a product called Petal Cleanse which reduces allergens on the dog's fur. However there may be some people with more severe allergies who will need to be kept away from him so **please return the reply slip if this affects your child.**

We'll send you another Bramble Chronicle soon to let you know how he is getting on!

If needed, please circle the points that apply below and return this slip to school (FAO Kerry Attwood).

Name of pupil _____

1. My child is anxious around dogs and will need introducing carefully to Bramble
2. My child is very frightened of dogs – we will contact you directly about this to see how you would like to proceed
3. My child has a mild allergy to dogs – we will work with you to monitor if Petal Cleanse works for your child
4. My child has a severe allergy to dogs and should not come into contact with them – we will contact you directly about this

Signed _____

