



St Catherine's Catholic Primary School

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Friday 7th November 2025

Bella Grace - OUR SCHOOL THERAPY DOG



Dear Parent/Carer,

I am pleased to let you know that we will be welcoming our very first School Therapy Dog into school this year.

As a school, we have partnered with Pets as Therapy — a national charity where volunteers bring their own dogs into establishments to provide comfort, distraction, and stimulation. The therapy dogs have had their temperament carefully tested.

Studies have shown that the presence of companion animals can improve the well-being of children and lower anxiety levels, simply by making the environment happier and more enjoyable. Dogs in the classroom can be used to calm fears, relieve anxieties, and support the development of social and emotional skills.

This year, we are delighted to welcome **Bella Grace**, a **4-year-old Springer Spaniel**, who will be visiting **every other week** with her handler, **Vivienne**, to work with pupils throughout the school. Springer Spaniels are known for their friendly and gentle nature, making them ideal for working with children. Bella Grace is a well-trained, low-shedding dog, which helps to minimise the risk of allergic reactions.

Bella Grace has previously spent time in other local schools and is very much looking forward to meeting the children here at **St Catherine's School**.

During her visits, Bella Grace may take part in a range of activities with the children, including:

- Listening to children read in a calm and relaxed setting
- Going for gentle walks around the school field
- Spending quiet time in classrooms

There are several other schools within our area who also have therapy dogs and have reported a wide range of benefits across the school community.



A designated member of staff will initially be present during any interaction between Bella Grace and the pupils. Pets as Therapy have supplied a full risk assessment and is available upon request. They also have their own insurance.

Bella Grace’s first official visit this academic year will be in the next couple of weeks for a whole school assembly. You will be notified if your child will be working with Bella Grace after the assembly.

Please complete the reply slip below and return it to school office by Friday 14th November 2025 if your child has a fear of, or allergies to, dogs.

Kind regards,

Miss Amy Elsdon
Inclusion Manager

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I wish to notify the school that my child has a Fear / Allergy / Dislike of dogs (please provide full details below)

Name of Student:

Name of Parent / Carer:

Full details:

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Parent / Carer Signature:

