



Therapy Dogs Nationwide

Paws & Read Scheme Overview

Benefits of the Paws & Read Programme

Therapy Dogs Nationwide works in schools under the Paws & Read Programme. It benefits children who are reluctant to read, unconfident readers, and children with additional learning needs e.g., autistic spectrum disorder, selective mutism, learning difficulties, emotional and social difficulties, speech, language and communication difficulties

Insurance, Disclosure and Barring Service and Parental Control

Therapy Dogs Nationwide carry public liability insurance with an indemnity limit of £5,000,000. If you require a copy of the insurance certificate please contact our registered office.

All our volunteers are registered with Therapy Dogs Nationwide and have been reference checked. We ask the schools to undertake disclosure checks if the volunteer does not have one to show you.

The dogs have all been temperament assessed before they can register for Therapy Dogs nationwide, but school staff should supervise children to ensure that they act in a responsible way around the dogs.

How to get started

We recommend that the school becomes familiar with the “Bark & Read” standards published by The Kennel Club. The overall management of the Paws & Read programme is the responsibility of the school. Weekly sessions are recommended. Staff involved should be comfortable and enthusiastic about the programme.

At the start of term, the school and their Paws & Read volunteer need to agree which sessions are to be covered. At the end of term, a certificate will be presented to each participating child either in class or in a special assembly. There is a suggestion that the end of the week may be better for sessions, so that the children look forward to their session and the teachers could use it to motivate them throughout the week.

If you require any further information on the Paws & Read programme please use the contact details below.

103 Home Farm Road, Woodchurch, Wirral, CH49 4LG

enquiries@tdn.org.uk

07840 994003

Registered Charity 1167622



Therapy Dogs Nationwide

Paws & Read – FAQ's

Aims of the scheme

To improve communication and literacy skills of children by reading to a Therapy Dogs Nationwide registered dog.

How it works

Most adults are apprehensive about speaking in public. It is very daunting. Children are no different and research shows that they can be nervous and stressed when reading to others in a group. However, when a Paws & Read dog enters the group the child becomes less stressed, less self-conscious and more confident as the dogs are non-judgmental. Before long the children start to look forward to the reading experience as they are going to read to their new friend, the Paws & Read Therapy Dog. TDN dogs provide comfort, encourage positive social behaviors, enhance self-esteem, motivate speech and inspire children to have fun.

How can you help with your registered Therapy Dog Nationwide Dog?

The teacher will remain in charge of the reading session. The children will be selected by their teachers as those who would benefit best from this intervention, normally children who lack confidence, or who have difficulty with reading or children with a short attention span. The teacher chooses and provides appropriate books. It is suggested that the sessions for each child should be no longer than 15 minutes.

The Paws & Read dog is kept on lead at all times and under full control of the TDN volunteer. The children are also told how much the dog enjoys hearing stories. Children should be able to sit close so that they can interact with the dog.

Helpful hints and tips

If your Paws & Read dog falls asleep, tell the children he is just closing his eyes so he can concentrate on the story.

Tell the children that the dog is really enjoying their reading to him.

At the end of the session every child should have the opportunity to stroke the dog. This is a BIG reward.

Registered TDN volunteers or schools interested in the Paws & Read programme please use the contact details below.

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Therapy Dogs Nationwide

Paws & Read Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

Therapy Dogs Nationwide's policy towards child protection and safeguarding is to ensure that no encounter with any child up to the age of 18 inclusive, made by any volunteer of the Charity, or by any dog registered with the Charity for the delivery of the Charity's service, shall result in harm: medical, physical, mental or psychological, to that child. This policy applies both to children visited by the Charity's volunteers or any junior family members with whom they may come into contact.

It is the responsibility of the establishment to undertake a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check on the volunteer.

No prospective applicant will be admitted to volunteer with the Charity unless two written references have been obtained certifying that the applicant is of good character. Those references will be checked by the Charity and in the event of any doubt directly with the signatories.

No visit is to be made on behalf of the Charity, except to an establishment registered with the Charity.

Volunteers who make visits to registered establishments must display the correct photographic ID badge issued by the Charity throughout the visit.

Throughout the visit, the dog must be kept on lead and under full control of the volunteer at all times.

No visit may be made on behalf of the Charity to any child in the care of an establishment without the presence of a member of the staff in attendance.

No visit may be made on behalf of the Charity to any child who would otherwise be in isolation.

Any visit made to a child, which is not on behalf of the Charity will not be covered by the Charity's insurance. Likewise, any visit, whether on behalf of the Charity or not, with an animal which is not registered with the Charity will not be covered by the Charity's insurance.

Dogs undertaking the Paws & Read programme must be reassessed every two years. This statement of Policy issued henceforth for the guidance of volunteers



Therapy Dogs Nationwide

Paws & Read Programme – School Application

Please fill in this information as fully as you can, as this information is vital to finding you the right volunteer to visit your school.

School Name

Address

Post Code

Phone

Contact Name

Position

TYPE OF SCHOOL -Please tick

Mainstream
Infants

Secondary
Junior

Special

Other

ABOUT YOUR PUPILS-Please tick

AGES

0-5

5-7

7-11

11-18

19+

ABILITIES Please specify

No of pupils

Parking available for visitors

Do you have any additional requirements for volunteers joining you (induction/training sessions) Please give details

Any other information

All information given to Therapy Dogs Nationwide will only be used by the Charity to update its records, it will not be passed to any outside organisation and will be kept confidential. All information is covered by Data Protection Act.

Please send or email the form to:

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Paws & Read – Sample Risk Assessment

Identifying the Risk	Risk Rating	Control Measures	Person Responsible
Hygiene concerns	Low	Only registered Therapy Dogs Nationwide to be involved as they are immunised against DHP, and up to date with flea and worming treatments in accordance with Therapy Dogs Nationwide Policy. Dogs will be free from disease or injury and in good health. Child to use hand gel after touching dog. Volunteer to ensure dog has opportunity to relieve itself outside school premises.	TDN Volunteer Responsible adult Child
Allergies to dogs	Low	All pupils on the Paws & Read programme to have parental consent and confirmation in the form of verbal consent prior to the commencement of each session.	Responsible adult Child Parent
Pupils may have behavioural problems	Medium	Responsible adult will be familiar with the “Bark & Read” guidelines Dogs must be appropriately socialised and oriented into the school environment Dogs will remain on lead and under full control of the volunteer at all times Dogs will be the sole focus of the volunteer to the exclusion of everything else. The volunteer will be able to remove the dog from any situation they deem detrimental to the dog’s welfare.	Responsible adult TDN volunteer
Members of staff maybe inexperienced around dogs	Low	Member of school staff will lead reading sessions. The Volunteer will control dog at all times. Responsible adult will be familiar with the “Bark & Read” guidelines.	Responsible adult TDN Volunteer
Fear of injury	Low	Children can only participate with parental consent and with the child’s consent prior to commencement of each session. Dogs are temperament assessed regularly to determine suitability to participate in the scheme. Dogs to remain on lead, calm and under the full control of the volunteer all times Dogs must be appropriately socialised and oriented into the school environment	TDN Volunteer Responsible adult Parent Child
Dog bites / scratches	Low	Child to be supervised by the responsible adult at all times. Dog to remain calm, on lead and under full control of the volunteer at all times. Child will be taught how to interactive with dogs prior to sessions.	Responsible adult TDN Volunteer

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Paws & Read Parental Consent Letter

Date _____

Dear Parent

_____ is delighted to inform you that we have registered for the Paws & Read programme, which is designed to give pupils opportunities to increase their confidence of, and enjoyment in reading. We have space for a small number of pupils to participate and I am pleased to inform you that your son/daughter has been chosen to take part in the programme, which will start on _____ for ___ weeks.

Your child will have a weekly session of 15 minutes, reading to a Therapy Dogs Nationwide registered dog, under the close supervision of the TDN volunteer and a member of the school staff. These dogs are specially temperament assessed dogs who normally visit in hospitals, hospices, care homes etc. The dogs will remain on lead and under full control of the TDN volunteer at all times.

Paws & Read gives children a private opportunity to practice and enjoy reading, away from their peers, to an audience that will enjoy the experience as much as your child does. This will be a special time for your son/daughter as they read their chosen book to the Therapy Dogs Nationwide dog, as well as having a chance to get to know the dog as the weeks progress. At the end of the course a special certificate will be awarded to all children taking part.

Please could you sign the consent form below and return it to _____
by _____

Thank you for your support

Yours sincerely

I give permission for _____ in Year _____ to attend the Therapy Dogs Nationwide Paws & Read programme.

Signed _____

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