



Headteacher: Sharon Hunt
Milborne St Andrew First School
Hopsfield
Milborne St Andrew
Dorset
DT11 0JE

13th September 2017



GREENWOOD TREE
ACADEMY TRUST

Dear Parent

We are delighted to say that we are able to work with the Pets As Therapy charity.

This charity operates in schools around the country, helping children to read with specially trained support dogs. It has been proven to help children develop literacy skills and build confidence, through both the calming effect the dogs' presence has on children and the fact that the dog will listen to the children read without being judgemental or critical. This comforting environment helps to nurture children's enthusiasm for reading and provides them with the confidence needed to read aloud.

The children will be selected by teachers as those who would benefit most from this intervention; normally those who lack confidence, or have difficulty with reading or attention deficit. We shall be contacting parents directly to invite their child to join the project although it will not include Reception children at present. The teacher and child will choose and provide appropriate books. The sessions for each child will be about 20 minutes. A member of staff will be in the sessions initially but after a while they will run independently.

Elsie is a cockapoo and has passed all the training required to be a reading and therapy dog, her owner is Marion Lee, an ex-Head teacher who lives locally. The school has met with Elsie and Marion and risk assessments have been written. Elsie will be on a short lead with her owner at all times and will not be in the playground or other common areas.

We hope you will agree that this is an exciting new opportunity to help our children and we are very much looking forward to working with Marion and Elsie.

Regards

Audrey Andrews