



**THE BULWELL
ACADEMY**
*Creative
Education
Trust*

24 September 2026

Dear parents and carers

We are writing to you, as we do each September, to give you some information on our school therapy dog Barry and to gain consent for your child to interact with him. Often, an opportunity or desire to work therapeutically with Barry can occur during the day and so we ask parents to 'opt out' of consenting to contact with our therapy dog. This allows us to use him to his maximum potential and allow him to interact with and enjoy the company of as many of our amazing students as possible.

Barry is a fully qualified Therapy Dog having received his certification in the summer. Barry is a Bossi-Poo (Boston Terrier x Poodle), known for their hypoallergenic fur. He is an extremely friendly dog who loves to spend time with people. He is in school every day, and lives with Miss Carrick in the evenings, at weekends and in the holidays.

We are aware that some of our students may have phobias or allergies and so we have some dedicated 'Barry-free' zones across the academy. During the school day Barry will never be in the courtyard or in the E/F blocks. However, he will be out the front of school in the MUGA area during lessons and breaktimes. In addition to this, if you have any specific concerns about possible contact with Barry, then please do not hesitate to contact Miss Carrick and we will put a plan in place to mitigate any concerns.

We know that spending time with animals can boost our students in many ways. As a result, Barry's handlers are from a variety of areas within the school: literacy, safeguarding, attendance, The Bridge, ELSA and the Year 11 team. He loves nothing more than cuddling up to students and popping a paw on them while they read or receive support from school staff. As an academy, we believe in a therapeutic approach to school life and working with Barry is one key aspect of that.

Sessions with Barry will often include taking him on to the field to walk him and play catch, teaching him his basic classroom commands, learning tricks and walking him around the site.

Please be aware that when Barry is playing with his ball on the field, he is off the lead.

The sessions with Barry will always be with one of his dedicated handlers and they are timetabled carefully during the day to allow Barry to get some good rest in between!

In providing consent, you are also agreeing that your child understands these key guidelines:

- *The child must not approach the school dog without an adult being present*
- *The child must approach the school dog slowly and calmly (with voice and movement)*
- *Keep noise levels to a minimum, with low voices, during interactions with the school dog*
- *The child is responsible for washing their hands with soap and water, after an interaction with the school dog*



- *Only the authorised adult will be allowed to participate in the dog's toileting needs, and any issuing of food.*
- *If at any time, the child feels unhappy or uncomfortable, they must inform the authorised adult immediately, when interactions will stop.*

Please log into the Arbor App to opt out if you DO NOT wish for your child to have contact with Barry. You will find this under Activities - Trips - WLFS: Working with Barry-Opt Out

If you have any further questions, queries or concerns, please just let us know.

Yours sincerely

K Carrick

Miss Carrick

Associate Assistant Principal for Year 11 and Barry's Main Handler

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