

21st October 2020



TANFIELD
SCHOOL

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Revision and Oakleigh the school dog letter October 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

Your child has begun their Cycle 1 assessments (years 7-10) or their mock exams (year 11) this week. Last Friday they created their own revision timetable during the afternoon meeting. Subject teachers have uploaded revision materials to Google Classroom, we have provided paper knowledge organisers and each student has been given an assessment timetable. A website has also been shared with students, that contains tutorial videos and other resources to help them with revision. Please can you read over your child's timetable and watch the tutorial videos with them, so that you can support them in their efforts. The website is revision.tanfieldschool.co.uk.

This week and the week starting the 2nd November every student will be expected to follow their revision timetable for homework. Every morning their advisors will be checking for evidence that they have revised the previous evening. This evidence can be 'Look, Cover, Write & Check' work, flash cards or something else appropriate. If there is no evidence provided by the student then parents and guardians will get a message each morning to alert them of this.

We really appreciate your support with this.

Secondly, we are very excited to introduce you to a new member of staff who we will be welcoming to Tanfield School.

Oakleigh was born on May 5th 2019. She is a miniature Poodle who is in training to become a school dog and is set to become an integral part of our school community.

Therapy dogs have been working in schools across the UK for a number of years and are commonplace in schools in the USA and Australia. Numerous research studies have shown the benefits of therapy dogs in schools.

Evidence indicates that benefits include:

- Cognitive – companionship with a dog stimulates memory, problem-solving and game-playing
- Social – a dog provides a positive mutual topic for discussion, encourages responsibility, wellbeing and focused interaction with others

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- Emotional – a school dog improves self-esteem, acceptance from others and lifts mood, often provoking laughter and fun. Dogs can also teach compassion and respect for other living things as well as relieving anxiety.
- Physical – interaction with a furry friend reduces blood pressure, provides tactile stimulation, assists with pain management, gives motivation to move, walk and stimulates the senses
- Environmental – a dog in a school increases the sense of a family environment, with all of the above benefits continuing long after the school day is over.
- Reading – reading to dogs has been proven to help children develop literacy skills and build confidence, through both the calming effect the dog's presence has on children as well as the fact that a dog will listen to children read without being judgemental or critical. This comforting environment helps to nurture children's enthusiasm for reading and provides them with the confidence to read aloud.

Oakleigh will gradually be introduced to the school environment, accessing a small number of classrooms throughout the day, and the yards during break and lunchtime. While Oakleigh is being exposed to her new environment and to ensure social distancing remains in place for the safety of both staff and students, Oakleigh will not be in any physical contact with students.

We hope you will join us in welcoming Oakleigh in becoming part of Team Tanfield and embrace all that she has to offer the school. More information about this can be found in the Tanfield School dog policy. We understand some parents, carers and students may have some concerns, please see the frequently asked question section. Any parent who does not wish their child to interact with Oakleigh, please contact the school via email enquiries@tanfieldschool.co.uk with the heading "School dog" or via telephone 01207 232 881. For updates on Oakleigh, we aim to put a regular blog onto our website and social media platforms to update parents, carers and students on the progress of our school dog.

Yours sincerely,



Mr S Clough
Headteacher

