



# Bradfordville Public School

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## Braddy's Pet Therapy Team

Dear Parents,

It is with great excitement that we continue our school initiative to support the health and wellbeing of students in our Braddy school community. Our Assistant Principal Learning and Wellbeing, Mrs Fleming, completed specialised training with her dog CC in 2022, to become a certified human-canine therapy team.

Mrs Fleming and CC have completed specialist training through Therapy Dogs Australia and as part of this training, CC has demonstrated a suitable temperament, a high-level of manners and good impulse control and as a result has been deemed suitable to work with children within a school environment. In addition, Mrs Fleming has demonstrated appropriate animal handling skills and a sound awareness of animal welfare topics supporting them to be a proficient dog handler to a Therapy Dog.



CC is a five-year-old mixed breed. She enjoys pats, cuddles and playing with balls. She likes belly rubs, leaning against you to remind you to pat her and learning new tricks like shaking hands! CC can be playful and is always eager to meet new people. CC has a short coat that is medium shedding. You may get some tan coloured hair on your uniform after visiting her. We have a special clothes roller so we can remove as much as we can before you leave.

Research continues to acknowledge the positive impact animals have on our health and wellbeing. Through the development of the human animal bond (HAB), we can experience reductions in blood pressure, increased oxytocin levels (associated with love and bonding), a reduction in cortisol levels (stress hormone) among many other beneficial physiological and emotional responses. As animals are non-judgmental and provide an unconditional love they not only assist in increasing the engagement between teacher and student but also assist as an intrinsic motivator to support participation.



Through CC's presence within the school environment it is envisaged that she will support student engagement, assist with social skill development, aid with self-regulation and calming, among many other benefits. CC will be engaging with students in a variety of ways including (individual interventions, small group and class interventions) as well as a presence across a range of school events.

**Interacting with CC is completely voluntary.** All students and staff may choose to interact with CC if they feel comfortable. CC will be closely monitored and managed using verbal commands, leads, and a halty-collar to manage her behaviour throughout the school site. Due to the busy nature of a school environment it will not be possible for CC to attend the school each day. CC's coping and fatigue will be closely monitored to ensure she is happy and managing the many requests for cuddles, walks and talks each day.

Understandably, some parents will have concerns about their child's interaction with an animal within the school environment. These concerns may relate to your child's fear or phobia of animals, or a health and safety concern. We would like to assure you that all precautions are being taken to minimise risks and as a result, a risk management plan is available for your perusal should you wish to better understand our planning. In addition, further information about commonly asked questions and concerns is available on the attached document for your consideration.

**If you do not wish to consent to your child having any interactions with CC please ensure you discuss this decision with your child. You are also required to complete a 'Non-Consent or Consent Withdrawal' form which is attached to this letter.** Completing this document will ensure the school is aware of your decision and will support staff to monitor your child's proximity to CC. It will also be your child's responsibility to ensure they express their concerns with relevant staff and not approach CC if parent permission has been withdrawn.

Should you wish to discuss any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Ms Coupe via the school office. Please also contact the school office should you wish to attain a copy of the risk management plan, commonly asked questions and concerns document, information about zoonosis or to request a 'Non-Consent/Consent Withdrawal for Animal Interaction Form'.

Finally, as CC has undergone specialised training to ensure her suitability to a school environment, we remind you that no unauthorised animals are to enter the school premises without the prior written permission of a member of our school leadership team.

We thank you for your ongoing support and look forward to sharing some exciting adventures of CC's time at Braddy.

Mrs Heather Fleming  
AP Learning and Wellbeing

Ms Ketryna Coupe  
Principal



## Non-Consent or Consent Withdrawal



**PLEASE FILL OUT IF YOU DO NOT ALLOW YOUR CHILD TO**



## **INTERACT WITH THE SCHOOL THERAPY DOG**

**Therapy Dog Handler:** Heather Fleming AP Learning and Wellbeing

**School:** Bradfordville PS

**Student's Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date of birth** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Name** \_\_\_\_\_

By signing this form, I acknowledge the presence of a therapy dog within the school environment and:

1. Wish to make you aware of a fear or phobia my child has developed in relation to interacting with dogs. In response to this fear,

- I would like to discuss strategies to support my child to work toward positive and safe interactions with the Bradfordville PS therapy dog.
- I would like to withdraw permission for my child to interact with or be in the presence of the Bradfordville PS therapy dog.

2. Withdraw my permission for my child, to interact with or be in the presence of the Bradfordville PS therapy dog within the classroom environment. This decision could be due to the following reasons.

- I confirm that my child or I have a current medical condition or allergies that may prevent us from interacting with animals safely and therefore wish to avoid interactions with the Bradfordville PS therapy dog.
- In acknowledgment of the risks associated with working with animals including risk of injury or damage to property, I wish for my child to avoid interactions with the Bradfordville PS therapy dog.
- For an unstated reason which I do not wish to discuss, I request that interactions between my child and the Bradfordville PS therapy dog are avoided.
- Other concern: \_\_\_\_\_

By signing this form, I also confirm that I have discussed this decision with my child and they are aware that they are not to interact or approach the Bradfordville PS therapy dog or move into their proximity at any time.

Parent /Legal Guardian Name (Please Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

I \_\_\_\_\_ (Student) am aware that I am not to approach the Bradfordville PS therapy dog or move into their proximity. I am aware that it is my responsibility to let a staff member know if I am uncomfortable and to remove myself from the Bradfordville PS therapy dog/s proximity.

Student Name (Please Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_