



## Tilly Pup-date – January 2020

Happy New Year! What a fantastic start to the academic year I had! I came back to school in September after passing my first ever assessment. I was sooooo nervous! Since then I have been in school and I am beginning to be more 'visual'. I walk round school every day and I have started to go in to classrooms and practice 'settling' on my settle mat – eventually I should be able to sit through a whole lesson on my mat and 'watch' the children doing their learning. In October, I was visited by our charity – Dogs Helping Kids (DHK) – and I passed assessment 2. This was all about me! This was my welfare test. The charity came to look round school and see me and

the children in action. DHK are all about dogs and they need to be certain we are being looked after appropriately and have the facilities that we need. I came out with flying colours. They were very impressed with how calmly I walk around school and how the children help me with my learning and ignore me as they walk around school. They liked my space in Mrs Parker's office which is safe for me with very few visitors and they also approved of my toilet area which is set away from the children and up behind the staff car park. They did ask for me to have some water stations around school, and now I am out and about more these will start to appear.

I was 18 months during the holidays! My first day when I was just 10 weeks old seems like a lifetime ago! Looking forward, I have 6 more assessments over the next two years. I am now allowed to do two short sessions each week with children and I am going to raise my profile around school. I am hoping to be out and about more but to be able to do this I am relying on all my friends **and their adults** to continue to ignore me. Unfortunately, whilst I am 'working' I can't be petted or approached, I am very focused and to continue to pass my assessments we need to stick to the rules!

We are still looking for a sponsor. If you or your family members know of any local businesses or companies who would be willing to sponsor me over the next 12 months then please do get in touch with Mrs Parker. So far, with fund raising and donations, there have been minimal costs to school and we hope to keep it that way.

I've loved coming back to school after the holidays and have enjoyed seeing my friends and listening to their exciting news. I continue to go to Tiverton every 2 weeks to further my training and there will be a workshop day in Barnstaple followed by assessment 3!

I hope all my friends at school and their families had a great Christmas and winter break and I look forward to seeing everyone more during this term. Don't forget you can follow my journey on Facebook - 'Tilly the Birchfield School Dog' or on Instagram - 'tillytheschooldog'.

**Tilly**

