



**Eccleston Mere Primary School**  
Saleswood Avenue, St.Helens, WA10 5NX  
Telephone: 01744 734829  
E-mail: [ecclestonmere@sthelens.org.uk](mailto:ecclestonmere@sthelens.org.uk)  
Headteacher: Mr. R Mugan

### **Therapy Dog**

Dear Parents / Carers,

We are delighted to announce that our previous therapy dog handler, Chris Hughes, will be returning to school with her new border collie therapy dog, Storm. Chris will be joining us from Therapy Dogs Nationwide to deliver a Paws & Read Scheme which is recognised by The Kennel Club. The 'Paws & Read Scheme' is an initiative whereby sociable and specially trained therapy dogs help children to develop a passion for reading.

Research suggests that some children can be nervous and uncomfortable when reading aloud in a classroom environment, especially those that are struggling. The 'Paws & Read' programme allows these children to read to a therapy dog as they are non-judgemental, attentive and perfect listeners.

A therapy dog, along with their handler, attending school once a week can raise not only the reading standard of the children but it can also help with self-confidence, self-esteem, behaviour and emotional welfare while teaching children how to behave appropriately around dogs.

Therapy Dogs Nationwide also offer intervention packages that target pupils personal and social development. Some programmes may be offered to individual children for bespoke support.

Our therapy dog, Storm, will predominately be based in Reception and KS1 classrooms, once a week, to support children with their reading. Chris and her dog, Storm, may also offer support to children on a 1:1 basis across school.

If you do not wish for your child to take part in any support, please send an email or app message to the school office.

Many thanks,

Mrs S. Cain  
Deputy Headteacher

