



*Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School and Nursery*  
Headteacher Mr C Beazeley  
Windermere Road, Southend on Sea, Essex, SS1 2RF  
Phone: 01702 414200  
Email: [office@sacredheart.southend.sch.uk](mailto:office@sacredheart.southend.sch.uk)



**4th September 2025**

**Dear Parents/Carers,**

Milo is our school dog and is now a regular and much-loved member of our school community at Sacred Heart Catholic School. He is a 5-year-old Shihpoo — a crossbreed between a Shih Tzu and a Poodle. This breed is known for its gentle temperament and hypoallergenic coat, making Milo an ideal companion for a school environment.

In school, we regularly discuss with the children the rules, expectations, and benefits of having a dog in school. Milo joins our existing therapy dog, Bertie, and together they contribute positively to our pupils' wellbeing.

**Benefits of having a school dog include:**

- A calming effect on pupils
- Improved behaviour, concentration, reduced stress, and enhanced self-esteem
- Encouraging expression, participation, and confidence
- Fostering a sense of responsibility
- Motivating pupils to think and learn
- Promoting enthusiasm and enjoyment through interaction with animals
- Encouraging respect and improving peer relationships
- Teaching children to nurture and respect life
- Supporting work with our most vulnerable pupils
- Helping children build confidence in reading
- Improving attendance
- Further promoting our whole-school wellbeing agenda

The use of dogs in schools is becoming increasingly common, with proven emotional and mental health benefits. You may have seen similar initiatives being introduced in hospitals and other settings.

*Headteacher: Mr C Beazeley*  
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Milo's main base is in the school office, a secure area separate from classrooms. He is always supervised and kept on a short lead when moving around the school. All children could interact with Milo, and we are mindful of those who may feel anxious. No child will ever be forced to engage with him.

We hope Milo will continue to bring joy and comfort to our pupils and become an established part of life at Sacred Heart. If your child is happy to interact with Milo, no further action is needed.

However, if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

**Yours sincerely,**  
Mrs Kerri White  
**SENCO**

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