

**PETS AS
THERAPY**
Read2Dogs



Our P.A.T dog Merlin comes in to listen to us read every week. The benefits of Merlin's visits are huge!

Research shows that children can become nervous and stressed when reading to others in a group. However, when a PAT Dog enters the group, they often become less stressed, less self-conscious and more confident as the dogs are non-judgemental. Before long children look forward to the reading experience as they are going to read to their new friend.

PAT Dogs provide comfort, encourage positive social behaviours, enhance self-esteem, motivate speech and inspire young people to have fun. The teacher or teaching assistant is in charge of the reading sessions at all times. The children are selected by their teachers as those who would benefit most from this intervention; normally children who lack confidence, or have difficulty with reading or attention deficit. The teacher chooses and provides appropriate books. It is suggested that the sessions for each child should be no longer than 15 minutes.



We are really privileged to have a local PAT dog, Merlin, who visits Tilstock CE Primary School every Wednesday morning.

Merlin has completed training and all relevant checks through PAT dogs and comes in with his owner Rev. Armstrong. The school has conducted an appropriate risk assessment and Merlin is taken into a classroom and kept at all times on a lead and under the control of Rev. Sue.

The children are also told how much Merlin enjoys hearing stories. Merlin is always seated in his special comfy bed on a lead, but the children are allowed to sit (perhaps on cushions) close, so they can interact with him.



