

MARCH 2018

Great Gaddesden CoE VA School

For Pupils Aged 3-11

Just before half term we had a very special visitor to our school.....Enzo the hearing dog. Enzo kindly brought his trainer Nicky Pritchard with him, and together they went into every classroom in the school talking to the children about the amazing work that hearing dogs do. Enzo loved showing the children how he leads Nicky to the door when he hears the doorbell ring and how he lies flat on the floor next to Nicky as a warning when there is a fire or smoke alarm. The children also learned that Enzo hears the alarm clock in the morning and then jumps onto his owner's bed to wake her by gently licking her face! All the children from Nursery through to Year 6 loved having Enzo in their classrooms, and it certainly looked like Enzo had fun at Great Gaddesden School. It was amazing to see him working and he even managed to resist the temptation of the packed lunches at nose level in the Early Years classroom!

Nicky and Enzo have been training together for about six months; Enzo has recently passed his hearing dog exams and will soon be going to live with his owner to begin his life as a hearing dog. I am sure he will be a wonderful companion as well as providing life-changing support. A huge thank you to Nicky and Enzo for coming to school and giving us all such an amazing insight to the wonderful work that hearing dogs do. We look forward to meeting the next puppy-in-training!

If you have any hobbies or interests or passions that you would like to share with the school, please do contact us. We are always exploring opportunities to inspire the children beyond the curriculum.

As part of Mrs Wickens' introduction to the School she met with every staff member and talked about what they love about the school, and what they might like to do differently. As a result of this Mrs Wickens now knows that the annual Egg Rolling in the Churchyard is not to be missed! It is a **great** Great Gaddesden tradition. However, many staff did express a wish to improve behaviour and table manners at lunchtime. So we have introduced the Finer Diner award. Each week there is a new aspect of table manners to focus on, like putting your knife and fork together at the end of the meal, or not eating with your elbows on the table. Good table manners are recognised as part of the Celebration Assembly every Thursday morning. At our recent Governors meeting it was amusing to hear the parent governors talking about the (not always complimentary) feedback the children have been giving on their own parents' table manners!

It was lovely to hear the laughs and chatter of our Early Years children in the water meadows one sunny Friday morning as I walked my dog. The children were walking to the little bridge over the river in the water meadows and their delight in exploring outdoors was clear to see and hear. At their class assembly at the end of term the children talked about their muddy walk and how they played pooh sticks in the river. We are very fortunate to be surrounded by beautiful countryside and we increasingly try to use this to inspire learning.

With very warm wishes.

Alison Wilkinson
Chair of Governors