

A close-up photograph of a dog's face, focusing on its nose and the surrounding fur. The fur is long, shaggy, and has a mix of dark brown and grey tones. The dog's nose is dark and textured. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

# Leoni

## Your puppy update

Hearing Dog puppy Leoni update  
30<sup>th</sup> June 2020

This update has been provided by the Volunteer Puppy Trainer as well as the Dog Training Instructor responsible for Leoni's training.

Leoni's daily routine:

She is woken at 7.30am and has a play with the children in her family. Breakfast follows, which is obviously a great part of the day. After breakfast comes the morning walk, where her trainer, Mandy, takes the opportunity to do some training. Together they practice off lead heel work, recall and the 'watch me' command which will help Leoni focus when there are distractions such as other dogs or people.

After the morning walk comes a little time to relax, an opportunity to play with her toys and of course a nap!

Lunchtime is next with another opportunity for learning, together they practice hearing dog commands such as 'wait' where Leoni must wait patiently to get her food.

In the afternoon Leoni has another relax, play with toys and a nap before playing with the children again – who also help with her training.

A second walk followed by her daily groom and dinner at 6pm.

More playtime, relaxing and napping followed by bedtime at 11pm

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Her volunteer puppy trainer, Mandy says of Leoni:

“She is friendly and playful young lady who loves a cuddle and a tummy rub. She absolutely loves to take her toys for a daily walk around the garden and her favourites are her sausage dog and frog! She loves those two toys so much but also likes to chew them too, in fact, both are missing limbs.

Leoni does love a good roll in the grass especially if it has been cut and the cuttings have dried out slightly, it was the same in the spring with the frosty mornings – she just loves a good stretch and roll.

Leoni is a very good problem solver, I think her motto is ‘there’s always a way!’ for instance she is really good at getting onto the sofa for a snooze, even though she’s not allowed to, despite all the obstacles we put into place! She somehow always seems to work out how to do it. It is something we are working on though.

Before lockdown we had started to visit lots of shops, cafes and even the doctors for a range of different environments but this has become a lot more difficult since lockdown. To try to continue helping her cope with ‘new’ environments we have had to get a little imaginative. We have set up a ‘café’ in our garden and played some café noises so she can practice her settle and tried to recreate other scenarios too like setting up distractions for her to walk passed whilst she practices off lead heel work, She is doing really well.

Since lockdown we have been doing our training sessions online rather than face to face. Topics covered have been varied – dog body language and helping Leoni learn how to behave around other dogs, finding hidden objects which will help Leoni when she starts her sound work training, obedience training and obstacle courses.

We have also started the first stage of training to teach Leoni to touch with her nose – which will be how she eventually alerts her deaf partner to sounds.

But we don't just do training with Leoni, we introduce her to as many people as we can, including the postman, shop assistants, workmen, children and relatives which will build her confidence for when she is working.

She also gets plenty of opportunity to meet and play with other dogs every day on her walks whether that is in the local park or on the beach!

The training we are currently working on is the 'wait' command; we ask her to wait and then turn our backs or do something else for 20 seconds. She is getting really good at this and very patient, this patience will help in the future when her deaf partner is talking to a friend or sitting in a café!

Leoni however, isn't always that calm when being groomed, she does get very excited, so we are working on rewarding her for being calm when being groomed and will gradually increase the length of time she will tolerate it for.

Leoni recently achieved her puppy 3-star award and is now working towards the puppy 4-star award while she waits to go into 'big school'. The puppy awards are a way of breaking down the puppy's training into achievable, age appropriate tasks. To pass the puppy 3-star award Leoni demonstrated, amongst other things, an ability to deal with distractions and temptations and a good level of resilience in new and strange environments.

There is more information on our website about the Puppy Star Awards <https://www.hearingdogs.org.uk/training-our-puppies>"

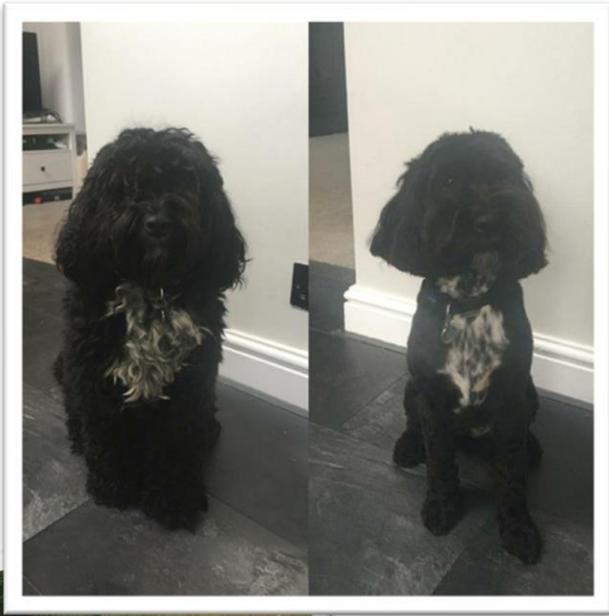
Leoni's Dog Training Instructor says of Leoni:

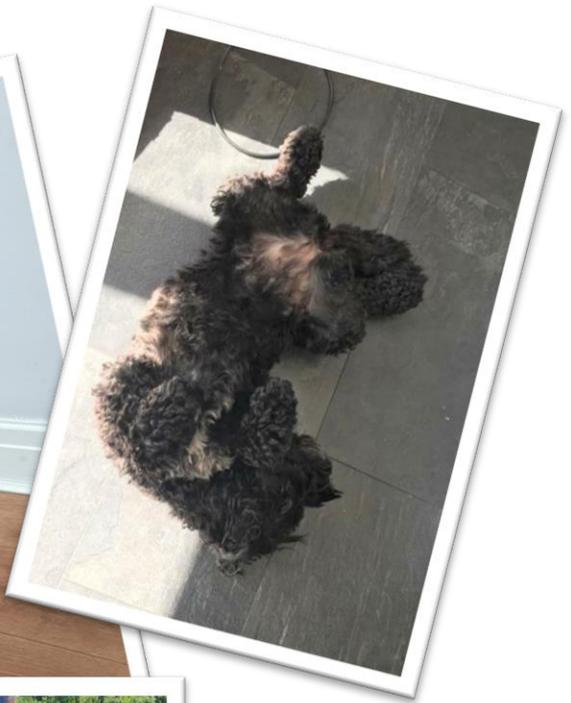
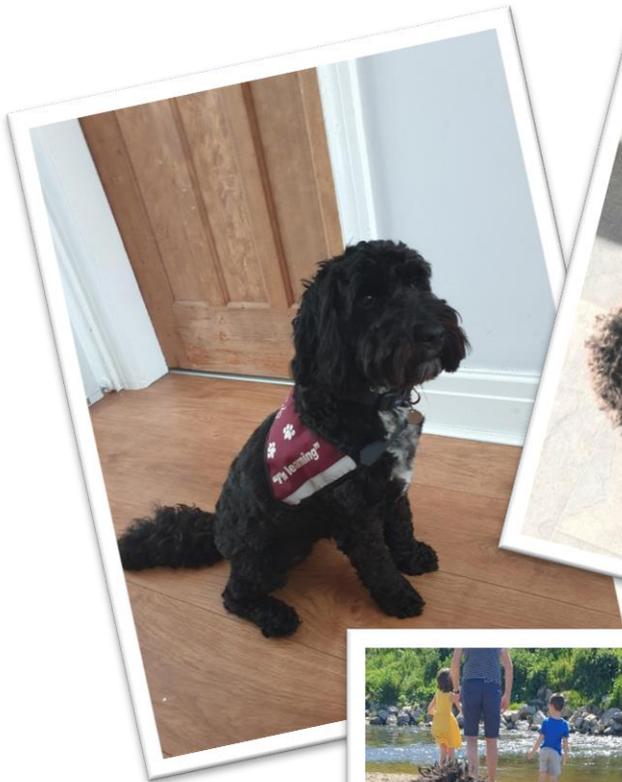
"Leoni is a lovely dog and she has adapted really well to the changes we have faced since being in lockdown. I think she has had a great time with the children being off school too.

Leoni is now matched to a deaf person, which means we have her future partner in mind, and are beginning to train her to that individual's needs, and she is now waiting to head into the final stage of her training.

I am really looking forward to seeing how she gets on!"







**Thank you for sponsoring her!**