



Niko

Out and about

Pupdate 2

Welcome to your February Pupdate

I do hope you and your family had a lovely Christmas and New Year.

As we try to return to normality and adapt to the new world that we find ourselves in following the turbulence of the last two years, our wonderful trainers and volunteer puppy raisers have dedicated themselves to helping our puppies on their journeys to become life-changing guide dogs. They continue to learn and progress, and we're so proud of how they have been doing in their training so far, and we're excited to find out where they'll go next. I hope that you enjoy your Pupdate, finding out what your wonderful puppy has been up to for the last few months.

I'd like to thank you so much for supporting us by sponsoring a puppy. We need people like you to be able to change the lives of people with sight loss, and we couldn't be Guide Dogs without you.

Yours sincerely,



Chris Allum

Puppy Sponsorship Manager



Niko continues his journey



Niko is truly such a good pup to have around, we've loved having him at home with us. He's been improving massively with his existing skill set. We've been busy getting out and about and have noticed that Niko does love a bit of attention! He's great with new people and loves making new friends.

Niko is a brave pup

Niko is still not fazed by anything. We were wondering how he'd react to the loud fireworks during bonfire night but he coped brilliantly. He went straight to sleep and took no notice! Our pet dog Idris can get nervous of the noise and we think that because Niko kept so calm, it helped him settle too.

He's also great at dealing with loud noises in busier environments while we're out too. We hopped on a train to Exeter and he was such a good boy. Before, Niko wasn't too keen and stayed lying down on the floor, but I've been working on making it a more positive experience for him. While on the train, he perfectly demonstrated the cue 'under', which meant he settled under my legs whilst I was sitting on the train. He was an angel! Niko's also been great getting on buses and into cars and has even ventured on a ferry. He'll be familiar with all modes of transport in no time!

“Hello, it's Karen here, Niko's Puppy Raiser. I'm excited to update you on how he's getting on.”

Niko's progress

Niko's taken everything in his stride and has grown in confidence. We've been working hard on his usual skills and he's making great progress. We've continued to work on teaching him patience during mealtimes and he waits until he hears a cue such as 'okay' before he goes to eat his food. Niko's also learnt to sit and wait by the door before we go out rather than being told to 'wait'. When we go out, we've been working on waiting by the kerb before crossing the road safely. Before, Niko would sit by the kerb but now, he's learnt to stand and wait.

Niko can get a little distracted by other dogs when we're out and about so we're working closely with our Puppy Development Advisor to improve on this. But all in all, he picks skills up superbly. He really is a clever boy!



New experiences

Niko is a joy to be out and about with. When we go for walks, I like to take Niko on different routes so that he's exposed to new and different smells. He loves to explore new places!



See how Niko is progressing his skills:

guidedogs.org.uk/puppy-niko

We went on a day out to fundraise for Guide Dogs, which was Niko's first overnight stay in a hotel, and he handled being in a new place perfectly. Despite the rain, he still absolutely loved it because he got to meet new people and received lots of attention!

I'm really proud of Niko for all the progress he has made in his journey so far. Find out how Niko's getting on in his next Pupdate.





Training – puppy to qualified guide dog

It takes around 20 months of training to transform a pup into a qualified guide dog. The pups learn basic skills and are introduced to new surroundings with their Puppy Raiser. They then venture on to Guide Dogs Training School, where they learn the foundation tasks required of a guide dog. The final stages of training focus on their partnership with a new owner, where they learn specific skills tailored to their owner's specific needs.



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