



**Guide
Dogs**

Sponsor
a Puppy



Isabella & Sprout

**Sprout has qualified
as a buddy dog!**

Pupdate 6

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Hello, I'm Kerry, and I'm pleased to let you know that Sprout has been partnered with my family as a buddy dog.

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Isabella and Sprout are the perfect partnership.

Isabella was born with global development delay, meaning that she has delayed development across areas including motor skills, speech and emotional intelligence. Isabella was also born with nystagmus, a vision impairment in which the eyes make repetitive, uncontrolled movements.

At three months old, I was told that Isabella would never learn to walk or talk, and that she'd struggle to form relationships. Despite this, I worked tirelessly alongside a physiotherapist and, at five years old, Isabella can walk perfectly – she loves to run!

Isabella is non-verbal with limited vocabulary, but she communicates well via Makaton, which is a form of sign language.

We don't know how bad Isabella's vision is as she's not able to tell us. At home, she's able to get around perfectly well and it's easy to forget that she has a vision impairment at all. When we go out, we notice it more. She isn't able to see where one thing stops and another begins, so things like kerbs and steps are difficult and she falls over a lot.



Welcoming Sprout

When Sprout first arrived, he made himself at home right away – he was straight on my bed! Sprout's got a cheeky character and he loves to steal toys – especially dolls. He never breaks them; he'll just carry them around or spread them out in the garden. He and Isabella are the perfect match – both cheeky and stubborn! Sprout can always make Isabella laugh and she's often in hysterics over his antics.

We've been teaching Sprout Makaton and he's picking it up quickly! He knows the signs for 'sit', 'wait' and 'go' already, so Isabella can take responsibility for feeding Sprout in the mornings and evenings.

Isabella can sometimes become frustrated and experience meltdowns, crying and screaming. Sprout is so tuned into Isabella; as soon as a meltdown starts he'll go and lick her all over and this works to switch her focus and calm her down – it's incredible! They've got such a bond already. Isabella has a story before bed each night, and Sprout loves to join. He'll jump up on the bed beside her and listen to a bedtime story; it's really sweet.

It's not just Isabella that Sprout has helped. He's also made a world of difference to Isabella's brother and

sister, Oliver (16) and Lacey (9). They look forward to waking up and seeing him in the mornings and he gets them out for walks in the countryside.

Looking ahead

I think the future is going to be challenging for Isabella. The world is a harsh place for those that are different. Isabella doesn't get accepted by other children the way her brother and sister do; she doesn't get the same party invitations or have the same social interactions at school. We're hoping that Sprout will fill some of that void and provide her with the companionship and love that she deserves.

Having Sprout has already encouraged Isabella to want to communicate more with people around her – because she wants to tell them about Sprout! Whenever he does something cheeky or funny, she loves to tell anyone we meet and we're hoping that this new motivation to communicate will help develop her speech.

Sprout has brought so much laughter and happiness to our home; we can't imagine life without him now. He's slotted into our lives so easily and has become a beloved member of the family. I can't thank you enough for sponsoring Sprout; he has changed our lives! Thank you.

Meet Kerry and hear how Sprout has settled into life as a buddy dog. Scan the QR code with your smartphone or go to:

guidedogs.org.uk/puppy-sprout





“ Sprout has brought so much laughter and happiness to our home; we can’t imagine life without him now. ”

Kerry, Isabella’s mum



Thank you so much for sponsoring Sprout!

Around two million people in the UK are living with sight loss that has a significant impact on their daily lives. Of those, around 180,000 find it difficult to leave their home alone. Our aim is to help people with sight loss to live the life they choose.

Your generous support makes this possible and we are so grateful to each and every one of our sponsors. Thank you!



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