A primary school has changed its policy regarding treats being taken to school. *St. George’s* had a tradition of youngsters bringing in treats to share on their birthday, but it was halted as part of the school’s attempt to get a Healthy Schools Plus status. This initiative promotes better dietary habits in the South West. Michael Salisbury, the headmaster, defended the new policy after he claimed a culture of unhealthy eating had developed at the school. He said: “If you have a class of 30 children all bringing in cakes on their birthday, it gets to a point where there are cakes being brought in virtually every week and the children start to get too much sugar in their diets.” Teachers will now mark pupils’ birthdays with special hats, badges and flags.
Gollies

1 For more than three decades Annette Errington has been selling collectable fabric creations called Gollies, which are handmade soft dolls. But she has been told to stop supplying the Oasis Whinfell holiday park with them because a guest said they were racist. Mrs Errington says: “All this time I’ve been going there once a week to re-stock and there has never been a problem but then one day they told me that two of my dolls – Sam Gollyboy and Topsy Gollygirl – had been taken off the shelves.”

2 “I have been making these dolls for more than 30 years,” she adds. “People buy my dolls because they love them, not because they are insulting – if I thought they were I wouldn’t make them because I would never want to [3]. Now I don’t know what to do. Should I be only making white dolls? What if white people complain? I’m not happy because Sam Gollyboy and Topsy Gollygirl are part of my doll family.”

*Westmorland Gazette, 2012*
Dog Walkers in the UK
By Polly Dunbar

(1) Professional dog walking is one of the country’s fastest-growing jobs. Anyone can set up as a ‘professional’ walker. The only strict requirement is to follow animal welfare rules or risk prosecution with a fine of up to £20,000, plus up to 51 weeks in prison. There are about 10,000 registered dog walkers who claim to provide good care for dogs.

(2) An elite group of pet walkers in London and the South-East pamper the pets of, among others, celebrity clients such as Sienna Miller and Fulham footballer Danny Murphy. Firms such as Pets in The City and Very Important Pets, run by a trained veterinary nurse, belong to a premier league of companies that offer a personal dog approach. They also offer ‘gold’ packages which include feeding, trimming, shampooing and extended play sessions.

(3) These last two firms are registered with the National Association of Registered Petsitters (NARP). Its chairman, Robin Taylor, runs checks on each person applying to join his scheme. He said: “We have a code of practice: handlers can walk a maximum of only four dogs at a time. They must also take out an insurance. I believe these standards should become law for all dog walkers.” The organisation’s own scheme offers £5 million of insurance cover against a pet’s injury or theft, dog bites to passers-by or other dogs, and road accidents.

(4) But many other dog walkers do not have insurance. In the recession, unemployed people turned to dog walking for ready cash, charging from £7.50 to £20 an hour. Some walk ten dogs at a time. Dogs are often seen bundled into walkers’ vans or cars without any safety harnesses. Yet few walkers are able to __8__ such a large group of dogs, or clear up all the animals’ mess.

(5) Dr Roger Mugford, an animal psychologist, thinks it is time dog walkers were regulated throughout the country. “Dogs are sociable but there should be a limit of four per walker,” he said. “Dogs need a firm hand at all times. Owners should check out walkers before handing over a beloved family pet.”

Daily Mail, 2011
Huge Lotto Win!

GOING on holiday can leave you short of a few quid. But not so for Sandra and Martyn. They were about to leave for the airport to catch a plane to Italy when they checked their email – and found one from the National Lottery telling them they had won. Martyn said: “I logged on to my account. It took me ages to spot the amount and even then, I thought the e-mail was wrong. The jackpot prize was £10.7 million but how much had we won?” Before he could check it out, they had to leave. Sandra said: “We weren’t really in Italy. We were there physically but, mentally, we were all over the place. We just didn’t know what to expect. Mentally, we were just airy-fairy.”

Two of their three children are getting married this summer and they all have student debts their parents want to pay off. Martyn added: “I thought someone was scamming us, to be honest. I spent a week thinking this cannot be true. The timing is just too right.”

Metro News, 2009
Wind and Waves

Wind and waves may sometimes cause slightly rough rides. They may cause discomfort and, if severe enough, even injury. The boat can rock violently because of the waves and this can cause new injuries or aggravate existing conditions. Seats closer to the back of the boat offer a smoother ride and are more comfortable.
Missing Out

My brother and I – we’re 14 and 12 – want to have a PlayStation 3 (PS3). We would happily pay for some of it, but our parents don’t want to talk about it. How can we get them to change their minds? We can’t bear being the only teenagers missing out!

• I’m 15 and last summer me and my brother faced the same dilemma. He was itching to get a PS3 ever since it came out. Let me tell you the only way you can get your parents to chip in to buy a PS3, is to beg like you have never begged before. Beg like tomorrow will never come. It may well be your only chance.

Abdul Kassim, London

• I wouldn’t have a clue what a PS3 is, but I do know plenty about skills that will take you forward into adult life. Bleating “it’s not fair” is not likely to cut any ice with adults, but presenting your case in an informed and rational way could well do the trick.

If your parents are reluctant to even discuss the issue, prepare a written report to give to them for consideration and include the reasons why you would like a PS3.

Helen Howard, Lincolnshire

• You are not the only teenagers missing out; the world contains millions of teenagers who do not have many things you take for granted – like food for example, let alone a PS3.

Life is not fair to them either, but in a more life-threatening way. There is a bigger world out there.

John Bap, by email
A good way is to persuade your parents that they can’t really do without the PS3, rather than saying everybody else has one.

Make a big point about learning the value of hard work through paying your contribution and promote the other features of the console, e.g., it doubles as a CD/DVD player etc.

Failing this, just sulk around the house until they cave.

**Paul Booker, Oxford**

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I would like a second home in Brazil, preferably on the beach with a private jet to whizz me back and forth from London. I, too, am prepared to pay for part of it.

When you find a way of convincing people to buy stuff for you, let me know.

**Richard Cook, by email**

For more ideas go to guardian.co.uk/money then click on Blogs and Personal Effects.

**Reply** Email your suggestions to personal.effects@guardian.co.uk or write to us at Personal Effects, Money, The Guardian, Kings Place, 90 York Way, London N1 9GU. There’s a £25 National Book Token for the best answer. And do you have a problem readers could solve? Let us know.
Replica Town

Justin McCurry

(1) It may be the only place in the world where it is acceptable to let children work and where parents look on with pride as their offspring slave over hot stoves or pursue criminals through the streets.

(2) While millions confront the spectre of unemployment, the recession has failed to materialise at KidZania. It is a scaled-down replica town in the Tokyo suburbs. It invites children to act out their fantasies, whether it is flying a passenger jet and acting on stage, or the less glamorous tasks of issuing driving licences and delivering parcels. Its buildings, vehicles and other features are scaled down to two-thirds real size to accommodate its young inhabitants. They have more than 50 jobs to choose from during a typical five- or six-hour shift, with each job lasting about 30 minutes.

(3) The park, which opened in October 2006, attracted 950,000 people in its first year and has been fully booked every day ever since. Aimed at children aged two to fourteen, the first KidZania opened in Santa Fe shopping mall in Mexico City in 1999 with the name City of the Children. It proved so popular that a second Mexican park was developed in Monterrey, followed by KidZania in Tokyo. More have been built in Jakarta, Nishinomiya in Japan, and Lisbon, with plans to open one in Dubai later this year.

(4) After paying an admission fee, KidZania’s young toilers select a job, change into uniform and start work. On-the-job coaching is guaranteed, and parents are banished to viewing areas. In return for their labour they are paid in kidzos, the park’s official currency, which can be exchanged for goods and services at KidZania complexes anywhere in the world.

(5) There have been no reports of redundancies, wildcat strikes or unpaid overtime. And retirement – voluntary or otherwise – is still a long way off.

The Guardian, 2009
ENVIROMENTAL HAZARD

Hamish enjoys his walkies. Doris always takes him through the park, past the school and the library. And Hamish does his business in the park, outside the school and in front of the library.

Doris doesn’t see why she should pick it up. She’s had dogs since she was a girl and no one picked up after their dog in the old days – so why should she start now.

Don’t be like Doris.

Ensure your dog does not foul our public spaces. Always pick up after your dog and if possible dispose of the waste in an appropriate bin.

Find out more with the Kennel Club
0870 606 6750
www.crufts.org.uk

THE KENNEL CLUB
Making a difference for dogs
Dog-Eared Cat

By Andrew Levy

(1) He looks perfectly happy playing in the sand and relaxing in a rowing boat. But you can almost guarantee that somewhere, the small child who owns him is far from content. For Meare Kat, named after the tea shop outside which he was found, is lost – and he needs your help to get him home.

(2) The toy cat was handed in by a customer on a busy day when lots of families had come into the tearoom. The shop’s owner Liz Everett set up an internet campaign. So far, 500 people have joined the Facebook page to help.

(3) On this page, Meare Kat says: “I’ve had a lovely day out, now I’m ready to go home.” He adds: “I’ve lost my family. We were having a lovely day by the seaside in Thorpeness, Suffolk, on Sunday May 18. Then they left me behind. If I belong to you, or you know my owner, please get in touch. I’m sure the person that owns me is very upset. Please share this page and spread the word.”

(4) Liz Everett, who has two grown-up children, said: “I don’t know how old the cat is – he could have been passed down. But he could be a modern toy which has had many cuddles and that’s why he looks so well-loved.”

(5) The 59-year-old, who started the Meare Shop and Tearoom in 1986 with her late husband Chris, explained how distressed her own son, now 38, became as a child when his favourite bear went missing. That’s why she’s trying so hard to find Meare Kat’s owner.

(6) Do you recognise Meare Kat? If you have information that could help reunite him with his owner, please contact the Daily Mail news-desk. Write to Paul Dacre, The Daily Mail, Northcliffe House, 2 Derry Street, London W8 5TT

Daily Mail, 2010
Pull the other one…!  

By The Daily Telegraph Reporter

1 A ONE-LEGGED convict was able to wander undetected after a security company fitted a tracking device to his false limb.

2 Bret Ravenhill, 29, who lost his left leg in a motorbike crash six years ago, was ordered to wear an electronic tag after he was convicted of possessing cannabis. But when a security worker came to fit the tag she failed to notice that one of his limbs was prosthetic.

3 Ravenhill, a forklift truck driver from Barnsley, South Yorkshire, explained what happened. “I thought she would realise straight away but she never bothered to turn up my trouser leg or look underneath my sock. I just left things as they were for a joke. I didn’t break my curfew once but I could have been out living it up every night. I’m no danger to the public but what if they’d done the same thing to an armed robber?”

4 Ravenhill had to wear the tag under a probation order which banned him from going out at night for three months. He said that staff from the security company G4S checked his tag every night for four weeks but still failed to notice his disability. In between checks he would prop his artificial leg in a corner and wear a spare. A spokesman for G4S said: “We conduct our monitoring operation under rigorous procedures which include carrying out an assessment of the leg that is being tagged. It would appear that in this instance the procedure has not been followed and we are conducting a thorough investigation into the matter now that it has been brought to our attention.”

5 The Justice Minister, David Hanson, said: “I am very concerned about these very serious allegations and will be speaking to the chief executive of G4S about this incident.”

*The Daily Telegraph, 2009*
Hair Heroine

CELEBRITY hairdresser Paul Edmonds gives his verdict on supermodel Karen Elson’s new style – the sharp bob.

Karen Elson has been sporting a show-stopping new hairdo at London Fashion Week. This razor-sharp, chin-length bob is the haircut of the moment – perhaps because it’s practical and easy to style, yet still chic. All of the models are having it done, but it looks particularly great on fiery redhead Karen, as it accentuates her sharp cheekbones and shows off her beautiful long neck. As well as looking gorgeous, this cut is practical for autumn and winter, as it will help you avoid the dreaded ‘hat hair’ haystack.

Daily Mail, 2012
This napkin is made from 100% recycled stock (PRET’s sustainability department is militant, we’re trying to make the world a cleaner place). If PRET staff get all serviette-ish and give you a lot of napkins (which you don’t need or want) please hand back the excess napkins and give our personnel the evil eye. Don’t waste.

PRET CREATES

HANDMADE NATURAL FOOD

AVOIDING THE OBSCURE CHEMICALS ADDITIVES AND PRESERVATIVES COMMON TO SO MUCH OF THE ‘PREPARED’ AND ‘FAST’ FOOD ON THE MARKET TODAY
Aaron ‘Wheelz’ Fotheringham

1 Aaron Fotheringham is an 18-year-old wheelchair athlete from Las Vegas, Nevada. Aaron was born with spina bifida, a birth defect of the spinal cord. For Aaron this means his legs don’t work. He is the third of six children, all adopted. Just last week Aaron, also known as Wheelz, landed the ultimate stunt: a double back-flip in a wheelchair. He recorded it on video in front of a crowd of friends and family.

2 What does Wheelz have to say about his extreme feat? “I don’t even think of myself as disabled or whatever, because I’m not. If life gives you limits, you should push them.” He has been encouraged by his parents to do anything he wanted – and that included dozens of landings on his head, face and back until he finally perfected the landing he had worked so hard at mastering. He started riding at skate parks at the age of 8. The first time was scary, and he fell. But that didn’t stop him from trying again. From then on he was hooked.

3 Over the last four years Aaron has trained to do progressively more difficult tricks; carving, grinding, power-sliding, and spinning are just a few of his accomplishments. He became a worldwide sensation when he landed the first ever back-flip in a wheelchair. Today he is the only person to ever land a double back-flip in wheelchair extreme sports.

4 He enjoys showing young kids with disabilities that a wheelchair can be a toy, not a restriction. He loves helping younger children learn how to handle their chairs in new and different ways and teaching them a trick or two. Aaron has a passion for what he does. Not only because it is a lot of fun, but also because he wants to change the world’s perception of people in wheelchairs. At public events, he gladly shares his time with journalists – but not until he has first visited the kids in wheelchairs who have come to see their hero perform.

5 Aaron has always seen his condition as an opportunity. Because he’s been able to have such an impact on so many people – and because he is having so much fun – he doesn’t regret having what most would call a ‘disability’. “If someone came up to me with a magic wand and it was like, ‘Do you want to walk?’ I’d probably say no,” he said, “because why would you want to walk when you can roll?”

For more information on Aaron check out his website and read his incredible story and the exciting things he has planned for the future of extreme wheelchair sports.

digitaljournal.com, 2011
### Six of the best Trolley Cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trolley Case</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Website</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Heys Trolley Case</td>
<td>£89</td>
<td><a href="http://www.johnlewis.com">www.johnlewis.com</a></td>
<td>This cute orange and black cabin-sized hard-shell case is certainly eye-catching but also very hard-wearing. Additionally, it comes in zebra, snake, giraffe, checks, plaid and polka dot.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Samsonite Trolley Case</td>
<td>£229</td>
<td><a href="http://www.samsonite.co.uk">www.samsonite.co.uk</a></td>
<td>This metallic blue cabin-sized case with an attractive ridged exterior is deceptively light. It also has a strong tubular pull-handle with a “bungee” action to take some weight when you’re pulling it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hybrid Trolley Case</td>
<td>£395</td>
<td><a href="http://www.liveluggage.com">www.liveluggage.com</a></td>
<td>Comes with a flat motor with rechargeable battery system built into the wheels. Its antigravity handle is designed to put 85 per cent of the weight on the wheels, making it much easier to pull along.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kipling Trolley Case</td>
<td>£185</td>
<td><a href="http://www.kipling.com">www.kipling.com</a></td>
<td>A gorgeous pink case with a foldable and compact design that allows you to reduce the case to a small volume. It offers plenty of space with zipped and mesh pockets and also includes a padlock.</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Lewis Trolley Case</td>
<td>£75</td>
<td><a href="http://www.johnlewis.com">www.johnlewis.com</a></td>
<td>Medium-sized and ultra-light but a tough case that comes in royal blue. It has four wheels and can move 360 degrees at ease. A particularly good size case for that long weekend away.</td>
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*Daily Express, 2010*
‘Seeing-eye Dog’ is a Rat

1 Dani Moore uses a rat perched on her shoulder as a service animal to alert her to spasms from a disabling condition. Daniel Greene’s service animal is a snake wrapped around his neck to help him predict epileptic seizures. But these creatures and many others are no longer acceptable as service animals under new federal law. The new rules limit service animals to dogs and housebroken miniature horses.

2 When Moore, 55, heard about the new law, she went to the City Council in Hesperia, California, where she lives, and asked lawmakers to change the rules so that she could continue using rats to alert her to spasms she can’t feel because of spinal nerve injuries, fibromyalgia and osteoporosis of the spine.

3 The rats help Moore to take her pills in time. When her rat feels Moore shaking, he starts licking her neck so she can take medication and stop the spasms before they start. She uses pudding to train her rat.

4 Moore has been using rats for 10 years. She keeps a pair, alternating them every 90 minutes. While one is working, the other is kept in a cloth and mesh cage. While working, they wear a soft leather harness and leash, which she clips to her clothing. The leash bears a tag that says ‘Please do not touch, I am working’.

5 Moore says service dogs are not an option because they’re too heavy and restless to sit on her shoulder. She says the rats are non-threatening, are bathed twice a week and never touch the ground. “Some people don’t even notice them,” Moore says. But she understands that some people have rat phobias, and she is happy to talk about their purpose to anyone who will listen. A 20-minute mall trip often turns into a three-hour excursion.

6 Despite opposition from one councilman who cited health concerns, the council now allows Moore to continue using her rats as service animals.

7 Daniel Greene also went to testify against a proposed revision of that state’s law so he could keep his snake as service animal. He wears his 10-pound red tail boa, Red Rock, draped around his neck. Red Rock will alert Greene, who stands 6-foot-6, to an epileptic seizure so he can sit down and reduce the chance of injury. Once down, he uses meditation to try to control his body and eliminate the seizure. He doesn’t know how or why his snake knows what to do. “He’s not a miracle cure, he’s an early warning system,” he says. Greene spent about a year getting the snake used to people.

   tweentribune.com, 2011
Elephant Orphans Never Forget

Baby elephants need to be reassured that they are loved and valued, so when they are orphaned their human keepers have to step into the role of parent, even to the point of sleeping with them. Keepers live with their orphaned charges 24 hours a day at the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust in the Nairobi National Park in Kenya and are encouraged to demonstrate affection through touch, just as their mothers would.

The love and attention shown to the animals is, the Trust says, crucial to the psychological well-being of the orphans, who will be rejected by wild herds if they grow up neurotic or psychotic.

“Elephants can read a person’s heart, so it is important that such love is sincere,” the Trust maintains. The devotion of the keepers, who rotate between animals to prevent the baby elephants becoming unduly attached to one individual, can be remembered by the adult creatures decades later.

After their first year, the elephants join older groups to develop the survival skills they will need as adults. The Trust has given a home to dozens of baby elephants orphaned for a host of reasons, from abandonment to getting stuck in mud.

*International Independent, 2011*
(T)hat’s the Right Attitude

by CATRIONA LOUGHRAN

A CLEVER Irish entrepreneur has set up a new business after taking an online course in knitting.

During the boom years Derek Montgomery (31) ran a successful hair salon – with Claudine and Robbie Keane among his top clients.

But the recession took its toll and, instead of battling on and hoping for the best, Derek decided to close up and embark on a new venture.

He said: “I couldn’t afford to pay the rent any longer. But there’s always money to be made somewhere and I knew there was something out there that I could do.”

He became inspired while sitting at home watching a TV programme on TV3. He said: “They featured knitting and how it has become popular with men. I found a course called ‘beads and bling’ which taught me the skills.”

He has set up a new business and developed a stunning range of head ornaments and hats. Derek, who unveils his new collection at the Affordable Craft Fair in Dun Laoghaire next week, is encouraging business people to follow his lead and start a new business.

“Never look at what you can’t do, always look at what you can do,” he said.

Irish Daily Star