



The Hospital Dog

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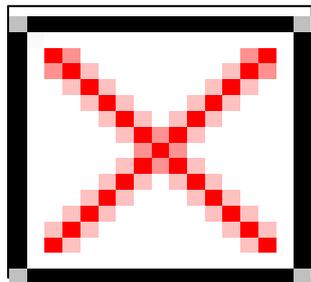
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Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5



Every newly published picture book by Julia Donaldson arouses huge curiosity. There is a frisson of expectation; will one be filled with delight? And yet again, readers' expectations are fully met. This tale is one of kindness, bravery and a very daring dog. It is brilliantly illustrated with very strong characterization. Here is a dog, a Dalmation called Dot, is she quite ordinary? NO, SHE'S NOT! Dot is the much loved visitor to the Wallaby Children's Ward. She is patted and stroked and cuddled, bringing constant good cheer to crying babes and sulky teenagers. Everyone loves Dot! In predictably catchy, bouncy rhyme, we follow Dot's rounds with each child and their families, smiles abounding. Rose, Dot's dotty owner, also cheerfully greets everyone with big-hearted smiles. One of their last visits is to a little deaf boy called Joe, who is packing his bag to return home. Joe and his Mum share the lift down to the exit with Rose and Dot. Once out in the road, CATASTROPHE! Whilst the adults turn to talk to neighbours, Joe spots a friend on the opposite side of the street. Of course he cannot hear a car coming?. Only Dot sees the imminent danger, dashing after Joe, pushing him back. Alas, Dot herself is hit by the car as it squeals to a halt. At the vet's an x-ray on the wall shows the badly broken leg. The vet says, 'Don't worry. It's not a disaster. The leg will be fine after six weeks in plaster.' Poor Dot is devastated. No daily swims in the sea with Rose, no rides on the bus, no visiting children at the hospital for six whole weeks. But what a wonderful ending! Children from Wallaby Ward now come to visit Dot, laden with flowers, cards and above all, pats and strokes, expressing friendship and happiness. When on a visit to a children's hospital in London, Julia Donaldson was impressed by the positive impact visits from furry friends made upon sick children and their families. This book will slot into a very special place with many families and classrooms, and with Sara's wonderfully rich illustrations, should join their top selling **The Detective Dog**. It will generate much therapeutic conversation amongst readers and their families.

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