

The Story of Alfie

Homelessness can be a difficult subject to explain to children.

Alfie's story can be read to pupils to help develop an understanding of how homelessness sometimes happens and the effects it can have on people.



Ever since he was a young, Tom had wanted to be a soldier...

So when Tom reached 17 he applied to the Army and was accepted, starting before his 18th Birthday. He loved being part of a team, learning so many new skills and visiting lots of different places, including countries that he had never been to before. Tom loved being in the army but missed his closest friend, Alfie a cute, floppy-eared dog. Whilst Tom was away, Alfie stayed with Tom's Mum where he was very happy.



Unfortunately, after a couple of years in the Armed Forces, Tom became unwell. Due to his illness he was sent home and eventually discharged (that means he had to leave the Army). Although Tom was now able to be back with his dog Alfie in their own home, he was sad at losing his job in the Army.

Tom eventually recovered from his illness but found it very difficult to get a job. This led to lots of problems. He couldn't afford to fix his car when it went wrong making it even harder to get a new job. Tom started to get into debt (that means he owed lots of people money and that is not a good thing). Without earning any money Tom struggled to pay the rent on his house and to buy Alfie's food. It wasn't long before their landlord (the person who owned the house) asked them to leave.

But where could they go? Tom's Mum could no longer look after them. His friends were mainly in the Army and so they couldn't help either. He was very sad, which made Alfie sad too.

One morning, Alfie noticed that Tom started to pack up a rucksack. He put on his coat and found Alfie's lead. "Come on boy," he said to him – "it's just you and me now". Alfie couldn't understand what was going on. What he did notice was that they were out walking for a very long time.



They walked all day, even when it got dark. Alfie was now very hungry and tired. They stopped in a park and he watched Tom start to look through the bin. Alfie helped (dogs have a great sense of smell) and he found a left-over sandwich that they shared.

That night, Tom and Alfie slept under a bush in the park. It was cold, uncomfortable and they were hungry. They were 'homeless'. Sadly, this went on for weeks. They had nowhere to sleep, nowhere to wash and very little food.

One day things started to change. Tom had been talking to another homeless person who told him about Alabaré, they were a charity that helped homeless people. The next day, Tom and Alfie visited Alabaré's Drop In Centre. The people here were really nice and also welcomed dogs. They gave them food and talked to Tom about ways they could help. It didn't take long for Tom and Alfie to settle in. Tom was able to get a new job after finishing his training courses with Alabaré. They are now looking forward to moving into their own home once again.



Did you know?

Homelessness has increased by 169% since 2010 in Britain

Dept of Communities & Local Govt, 2017

Every day, 120 families become homeless in England

Shelter, March 2018

12,300 people are sleeping rough every night

Crisis, 2018

There are 160,000 homeless households in Britain

Crisis, 2018

12,000 people are living in cars, tents or public transport

Crisis 2018

Alabaré supports thousands of homeless people every year but many more need our help.

With your school's support we can be there for more homeless and vulnerable people in need.

Alfie's story is available to download from
alabare.co.uk/schools