This picturebook is a follow-up by this partnership to 15 Things not to do with your Granny, and then 15 Things not to do with a baby, which was well reviewed, and it features the same mixed-race family with a boy and a girl, both equally involved in the care of their puppy.

It starts with some general guidance: Sometimes (puppies) do things they shouldn’t, but mostly they are lovely. A bit like you, in fact. Puppies should have bright eyes, a licky tongue at one end and a waggy tail at the other, which means they are happy and healthy. Then we note some things not to do, some of which are patently silly, but children will enjoy knowing this. Hang-gliding, playing Dad’s tuba, having the remote control, helping with the gardening, shopping all are rejected. Don’t teach her to chase butterflies - she already knows how to do that (and of course she doesn’t catch one). It’s disappointing to this former librarian that the library is shown as a place where the puppy has to be quiet (the girl’s finger on her lips) rather than a place where only guide dogs are allowed at all (a hitching place outside is normally provided) ? that silent stereotype does persist in spite of all the noisy activities that go on in libraries. Anyway, after the silliness, we come to the final double page-spread with the sensible suggestions: do cuddle her, play with her, make sure she gets plenty of exercise and the right food etc.

Margaret McAllister is an experienced author specialising in books about animals, with some, e.g. her series about the island of Mistmantle?, for junior readers and some picture books. The illustrations are fun, and cover the end papers, too. Holly Sterling is National Karate Champion and a 4th Dan karate instructor as well as a talented and award-winning illustrator! Her books include a series on Feelings: Everybody feels? (angry/ happy/ sad/ scared) showing children of a wide variety of ethnic origins, and a recent anthology she illustrated: Over the hills and far away was selected by the Guardian as one of the 50 best culturally diverse children’s books.

This is fun, and children who like dogs, or are getting a new puppy, will probably enjoy it hugely.