

SMALL TALK

PLAY PALS



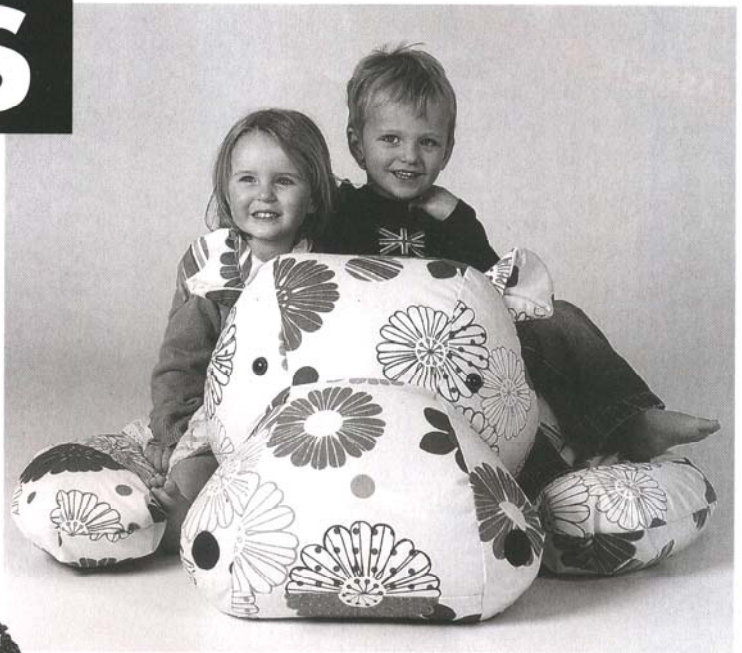
As toys get ever more interactive, **Emma Bromidge** greets some new pretend friends for children

PUPPY LOVE



Not every household can own a real dog. Now *FurReal* has a well-behaved life-size golden retriever puppy lookalike (not just for Christmas, but one

that could feature on many a Christmas list). He behaves and reacts to your command. *Biscuit, My Fun Lovin' Pup* will help children learn how much care and attention a real puppy may require, giving some measure of interactive play such as following commands like "sit up and beg" and "give me your paw". He costs £149.99 and is suitable for ages from four years. For stockists, visit the website at: www.hasbrotoyshop.co.uk.



PLUSH APPEAL FOR ANIMAL MAGIC

Large and lovable beanbags – these *Beasty Bags* are all designed and handmade in the UK and have washable, removable covers. They include cuddly rhinos (with a donation made to the Sumatran Rhino Appeal), hunky hippos, elegant elephants and lovely lions. All comply to British domestic fire and safety standards and come in a range of designer fabrics, with prices ranging from £145 to £235 (including delivery, UK mainland only). To order, call 07876-354035 or 07799-625707 (or visit the website at: www.beastybags.co.uk).

DRESSING UP A DIAMOND DOLL

In just a swish of her dress, Barbie's outfit is transformed from a day dress into a beautiful ballgown. Her necklace also lights up when she sings. Her starring role as Princess Liana in the new animated movie *Barbie and The Diamond Castle*, with her best friend Teresa as Princess Alexa, will ensure that plenty of girls, aged from three years, will want to make her acquaintance. She costs £22. For stockists, call Mattel on 01628-500303.



MEET THE MEEBA

Can you give this *My Meeba* a good home? The clever new electronic screen gadget shows that if you feed and care for the Meeba well, it will grow into an unbelievable surprise: a fully grown soft toy. The Meeba hatches when grown up from the top of the toy. It is suitable for ages from five years, but parents beware – there are 60 different *My Meeba* gadgets to collect at £17.50 each. Call 01628-500303 for your nearest stockist.



BABY ALIVE GOES POTTY

We have fed her, given her a drink and dressed her up in a favourite outfit and now it is time for *Baby Alive* to master the potty. The new *Baby Alive Learns to Potty* has 60 phrases, including "don't forget to wipe" and will sing when she is happy. She is ideal for ages from three years. She comes complete with her own potty, nappy, bowl, bottle, spoon and bib at a cost of £59.99. Visit: www.hasbrotoyshop.co.uk.

THIS ONE IS CAR-CRAZY

If there is one toy that you see brought to life at the touch of a button this autumn it will be the *Walkin' Talkin' Lightning McQueen* from the *Cars* movie. He can "walk and talk" just as you see him in the film and he has lights, voice and sounds to match. Among the stunts he performs are Dizzy Donuts, posing for the camera and taking his victory lap. At £43.99, this is suitable for ages from four years – just give him the run of the living-room. For stockists, call 01628-500303.

