



Rejected by its mother, the young meerkat has to be hand-fed every two hours round the clock.

Food, glorious food helps orphan Oliver to flourish

PLEASE SIR, can I have some more?

There are no Mr Bumbles at St Andrews Aquarium when it comes to ensuring a hungry little orphan is well fed.

This tiny meerkat, named Oliver Twist after Dickens' most famous urchin, was rejected by his mum and so staff have had to step in to feed the little mite — one of a dozen meerkats living at the aquarium — by hand. They are taking it in turns

to work round the clock to ensure the youngster gets fed every two hours.

Born at the aquarium on January 19, he is still small enough to hold in the palm of your hand.

Displays manager Andrew Whiston said: "Maternal rejection in the animal kingdom is largely unexplained but, for whatever reason, poor Oliver Twist has been left out in the proverbial cold by his mother.

"While we ordinarily don't like to interfere with nature's course we certainly weren't prepared to see any harm come to this little man, which means, in very simple terms, that we have stepped in to feed and nurse Oliver until he matures.

"Our team is literally working around the clock to care for this little fella and, once he's bigger and stronger, we hope to be able to reintroduce him back into the pack."