



12th July 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

Dog Mentor

We are very excited to share with you the news that we are planning to have a very special new member of our Ely College pastoral support team joining us in September. His name is Ralph, and he is a 10 month old Cockerpool!

We will be working closely with The Dog Mentor, who will be training Ralph's owner, Catherine Seymour, and five other handlers from our Ely College staff. Jenny from The Dog Mentor has trained over 410 dogs to work in schools across the country over the last 11 years - you can find out more about the work she does and the impact of Dog Mentors on her website: www.thedogmentor.co.uk

We understand that there may be some parents and students who might be nervous about a dog joining us. In order to allay some fears please note the following:

- Ralph will be fully trained by Jenny before interacting with our students and a comprehensive risk assessment of Ralph and our site will also be completed in advance.
- Ralph will only be interacting with students in the company of a trained handler.
- Ralph will have 'quiet' places to rest during the day away from the students and his working hours will be closely monitored.
- No student who does not want to interact with Ralph will be forced to do so.
- All students and staff that will be interacting with Ralph will be given special training ('Are You Ralph Ready?') in order to make sure that their experiences together are positive and enjoyable.

We are sure that in no time at all Ralph will be a vital and much-loved member of our school, but if you do have any further questions or queries, please let us know: office@elycollege.co.uk

Yours faithfully

K. Wickham

Keeley Wickham
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