



# St Columba's School Bayswater

32 Roberts Street  
BAYSWATER WA 6053  
PO Box 61  
BAYSWATER WA 6933  
Tel: 08 9208 2700  
Fax: 08 9370 3985  
admin@stcolumbas.wa.edu.au  
www.saintcolumbas.com.au

Grow in Faith    Seek Wisdom    Live in Peace

14 May 2020

Dear Parents

## Wellness Dog - Donnelly

We are very excited to introduce you to the newest member of the St Col's family, our school wellness dog, Donnelly. Donnelly is 5 month-old Cavoodle. His breed was chosen as they have an excellent temperament and are hypoallergenic. He is simply beautiful and has the spirit of St Columba's already coming through in his personality.

The benefits of a wellness dog are well documented, and include:

- A calming effect on students and staff;
- Enhances positive behaviour and concentration;
- Enhances self-esteem and self-worth;
- Promotes for the children a sense of belonging and acceptance;
- Increased participation in social experiences for children;
- Encouraging a sense of responsibility and respect for life;

'Pet therapy' is widely accepted as benefiting a child's wellbeing and communication skills. Studies have shown that the presence of companion animals can improve the wellbeing of children and lower the rate of anxiety simply by making the environment happier, more enjoyable and welcoming. Dogs are increasingly being used in schools with great success as they are just happy to see you. There is something about Donnelly that draws us to him. He bounces up to us with excitement and love. There is something about feeling safe when Donnelly is around.

Donnelly is cared for by Mrs Peta Santella. Donnelly will grow up in the school environment becoming fully accustomed to the routines of the day and supportive of students within the school.

Donnelly will be based in the Administration Building when he is at school, which is secure and separate from the classrooms. Children will be able to interact with Donnelly at certain times under adult supervision. Donnelly will be kept on a lead when moving between classrooms or on a walk and will be under the full control and supervision of an adult.

It is accepted that interacting with animals is not for all children, but that for many it has the potential to provide many positive benefits. Any parent who does not wish their child to interact with the dog, or who wishes to discuss their concerns is invited to email or phone Deb Klatt, Assistant Principal, to inform her of their wishes. Please also ensure your child's medical record is up-to-date and the school has been made aware of any allergies.

**Permission for your child to have some contact with the school dog will be presumed if no communication with Deb Klatt is made by Friday 22 May 2020. Contact email address: [deb.klatt@cewa.edu.au](mailto:deb.klatt@cewa.edu.au)**

Thank you for your support with the introduction of Donnelly into our school. We very much look forward to seeing Donnelly within our classrooms over the coming months, working with our children.

Warmest regards

Art Lombardi  
Principal