



The Ripley Academy and Sixth Form



Executive Headteacher: **Mrs H Frost-Briggs BA (Hons)**
We are **AMBITIOUS**. We are **COMMITTED**. We are **PROUD**.

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome to our school therapy dog – Alice

I am writing to inform you that we will have a new member of our school community after October half term. We have decided to have a School Therapy Dog, please meet Alice who will be joining us one day a week.



Research has shown that there are many benefits of having a therapy dog, including promoting the social and emotional development of some of our students. We also have contacts in other schools who have shared with us their positive experiences about the impact the dog has had with students.

Studies have shown that the presence of companion animals can improve the well-being of children and lower anxiety levels, simply by making the environment happier and more enjoyable.

Dogs in school can be used to calm fears, relieve anxieties and teach skills. We believe that the use of the therapy dog alongside our qualified BACP counsellor will greatly benefit some of our students who are undertaking therapy sessions.

To ensure that we have selected the most suitable breed of dog for our school, pupils and staff, we have chosen a cockapoo. Research shows that cockapoos are intelligent, devoted, loyal and clean. They are patient, friendly and affectionate; they love children and adapt well to new situations. Research also shows that cockapoos are even-tempered, and they make good house pets.



A full risk assessment has been completed. The therapy dog will be certified as a 'therapy dog,' and will be regularly tested for health, obedience and temperament. Our therapy dog is a low shedding dog to minimise the chance of allergic reactions. There will also always be a designated, trained adult present during any interaction with pupils.

Your child will only receive dog therapy with your written consent in advance. If your child has any known allergies to dogs that we are not already aware of then please inform school.

Many thanks,

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Crowder".

Mrs L Crowder
Deputy Headteacher