

TEACHER'S PET ROSIE IS A STUDENT'S BEST FRIEND

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Student Alex Roderick, 14, (left) in the classroom with Rosie the wellbeing dog at St Philip's Christian College in Newcastle. Picture: Justin Lloyd.

A NSW school is combating the “black dog” among its students in a unique way — by introducing a cuddly, tan-coloured one.

In order to tackle stress and anxiety among pupils, St Philip's Christian College at Newcastle has introduced a “wellbeing dog” to the classroom. Three-month-old Rosie has been a fixture in the school's classes for the past few weeks —and the lucky students cannot get enough of their new best friend.

Rosie visits students across two of the school's campuses, the DALE school for kids with autism, anxiety and PTSD, and the young parents school for teenagers and young adults dealing with parenthood.

“We've been thinking of getting a wellbeing dog to support the anxiety levels of our students for quite a long time,” Principal Bronwyn Thoroughgood said. “Rosie is fantastic, she loves to sit on the students' feet and they love petting her.”

Alex Roderick, 14, immediately took a shine to Rosie, saying: “She's a loving caring dog, she's fun to be around because she wants to play and then once she settles down you can do your work.”