



PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the rules and procedures we have in place in relation to dogs and pets attending our school grounds.

Research has shown that pets in classroom, particularly dogs, enhance student learning and promote calmer classrooms.

POLICY

Animals:

- Are friends to all students and engage without judgement
- Encourage responsibility, empathy, pet ownership and respect for life
- Assist in social and emotional development
- Help create a fun, caring and calm atmosphere
- Bring increased sensitivity and awareness of the feelings and needs of others
- Listen to the children read
- Lessen tension or anxieties

When children have all of these, there is more engagement in learning and better learning occurs.

Implementation

Classroom Pets

- Any class wishing to incorporate a living animal or pet into their room must provide a plan to the Principal for approval (this must demonstrate that the class has appropriately considered essential issues such as feeding, housing, costs, cleaning, student allergies, vet care and school holiday periods) prior to the introduction of any animal into the room.
- A staff member must accept overall responsibility for each animal.
- The staff will review this annually or when the need arises, including associated risk management.
- The classroom teacher is responsible for communicating to the parents the necessary information prior to the introduction of the pet or when the need arises
- The teacher will ensure the students wash their hands before and after touching animals, their food or bedding.
- The teacher is responsible for ensuring the learning area is maintained in a hygienic and sanitary condition.
- The teacher is responsible for the grooming and the hygiene of the animal.

- The teacher will be responsible for the care of the animal outside school hours.

Family Pets

- Dogs must be on a lead at all times
- Parent/carers must make arrangements with the class teacher prior to bringing family pets into the classroom and notify the office upon arrival and departure.
- Any animal coming into the school must be clean and well groomed
- Parents/carers that bring dogs/pets into the school premises must clean up after them.
- All animals must be vaccinated where appropriate
- All animals brought in must have undergone temperament testing and training where appropriate
- The death of an animal can have a profound effect on the school community and will be managed in a caring manner. The death of a class/school pet will be discussed openly with students in a manner consistent with their age and understanding, as a natural part of the life cycle of all living things.

Stray dogs

Unaccompanied or stray dogs sighted at our school should be reported immediately to the school office. School staff will contact municipal authorities and/or Victoria police for assistance in managing and removing a stray dog from school grounds, and ensure staff and students remain safe at school.

REVIEW PERIOD

This policy was last updated on March 2021 and is scheduled for review in March 2022.