

	Policy Name:	Dogs at Schools Policy	Date of Approval:	2023
	Responsible:	Leadership Team	Review Date:	2027

DOGS AT SCHOOLS POLICY

PURPOSE

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

POLICY

Definitions

An **assistance dog** is trained and certified by a registered organisation to perform tasks or functions that help a person with a disability to alleviate the effects of the disability.

A **pet dog** relates to any dog that is privately owned in the community for companionate reasons, rather than as a support function that requires specific skills or training.

A **stray dog** is any dog that is not accompanied by their owner.

Assistance dogs

Tyabb Primary School understands its obligations under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth) and the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic) and will make reasonable adjustments for members of our school community with a disability who require an 'assistance animal' to help alleviate the effects of their disability. Assistance animals are permitted to attend our school with their handler. Our school Principal can lawfully ask a person to produce evidence that an animal:

- is trained specifically to assist a person to alleviate the effects of a disability (e.g., seeing eye dogs, hearing and physical assistance dogs and)
- meets standards of hygiene and behaviour appropriate for a school environment.

We understand that in some circumstances, students may require an assistance animal to attend school to help them to participate in their educational program. Tyabb Primary School will consider a request by a student with a disability to allow an assistance animal to attend school with them on a case-by-case basis. If you would like to discuss this further, please contact the office on 5977 4584.

Pet dogs

Tyabb Primary School is not a public place, and our Principal has the authority to permit or decline entry to school grounds and impose conditions of entry.

Whilst Tyabb Primary School understands that many families in our school community keep dogs as pets, it is important to respect the fact that our school community may include people that are allergic or uncomfortable around dogs. To ensure that our school remains a safe and inclusive place for everyone, **pet dogs are not permitted on school grounds, unless special permission has been granted by the Principal.** Special permission may be granted for educational purposes eg. Classroom visits from the Guide Dog Association and visits from dogs under the Responsible Pet Ownership Program. With

permission from the Principal, students may bring their pets for 'show and tell' (eg puppies, birds, guinea pigs) and teachers may have classroom pets after a risk assessment has been completed.

We appreciate that most pet dogs are tame and friendly but we must acknowledge that some children and adults can find contact with dogs stressful. Dogs can behave unpredictably when excited and this can lead to accidents such as falls and dog bites.

We ask that families please leave their pet dogs at home or wait with their pet dogs on a leash outside of the school property.

Stray dogs

Unaccompanied or stray dogs sighted at our school should be reported immediately to our office staff. Office 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.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	15.1.23
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	January 2027