



DORSET PRIMARY SCHOOL- NO.5132

ANIMALS AT SCHOOL POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand this policy, please contact the office.

PURPOSE

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

SCOPE

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

Dorset 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)
- 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. Dorset 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 Principal.

Pet dogs

Dorset 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 Dorset understands that many families in our school community keep dogs as pets, to ensure that our school remains a safe and inclusive place for everyone, pet dogs are not permitted on school grounds under any circumstances.

Our school community is diverse and may include people that are allergic or uncomfortable around dogs. We are also conscious of the health hazards that may be posed by dogs. We ask that families please leave their pet dogs at home or safely tether them outside school grounds when attending our school or school events.

Stray dogs

Unaccompanied or stray dogs sighted at our school should be reported immediately to the 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 and Compass
- Included in staff induction processes and staff training
- Reminders in our school newsletter as needed
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	April 2023
Consultation	Consultation with School Council May 2023
Approved by	Principal and School Council
Next scheduled review date	April 2024