

Dogs in the School Ground Policy

1. RATIONALE

Templestowe Park PS recognise the positive influence that pets, including dogs, can have in the community and in particular, on a child's life. Being an 'Active Travel School,' Templestowe Park PS encourages students and their families to walk to school whenever possible and acknowledge the benefits of walking to and from school with a dog.

However, with Templestowe Park Primary School's increasing enrolments, an increase in the amount of dogs entering the school grounds has been noted. In addition to this, Templestowe Park's Outdoor Eco Education Centre (OEEC) contains chickens. This policy has been designed to ensure the safety of all students, adults and animals while supporting the choice of families within the community to walk their dog to and from school.

2. GOALS

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

3. IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 Assistance Dogs

Templestowe Park PS 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 alleviate the effects of a disability (e.g. seeing eye 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.

Templestowe Park PS 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 school Principal.

3.2 Pet Dogs

Templestowe Park PS 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 Templestowe Park PS 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, we have in place a number of rules that we expect all families to follow if they wish to bring their pet dog onto school grounds:

- No dogs will be allowed in the school premises between the times of 9am and 3pm.
- Dogs brought into the grounds, including during holidays, weekends and after hours, must be kept on a short lead (not an extendable lead) at all times.

- Dog owners are required to always be mindful that children are the first priority in a school environment and that some children are allergic, unfamiliar and even afraid of dogs.
- Dog owners are required to assess the demeanour of their dog before entering the school grounds and are requested not to enter the school grounds if the demeanour of the dog is not suited to an environment where children are present.
- Dog owners must be familiar with their legal responsibilities and be aware that the school takes no responsibility for the behaviour or actions of their dogs.
- Staff can request that dog owners remove their dog from the school grounds at any time.
- Incidents involving dog bites or injuries to children, adults or other animals will be reported by Templestowe Park PS to the Manningham Council.
- Dog owners must remove and dispose of dog excrement.

The Principal has the authority to prohibit certain dogs from school grounds or modify this policy to ensure the safety and wellbeing of staff, students and members of our school community at any time.

3.3 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.

5. EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed by staff and the Education Sub Committee as part of the school's policy review process. This policy was last updated in June 2020 and is scheduled for review in June 2022.