



DOGS AT SCHOOL POLICY

RATIONALE

Altona Primary School acknowledges the important role that pets play in our community and the positive impact they can have on family life. Dogs are an important part of life within the Altona Primary School community and as such, are often included in day-to-day activities such as walking children to and from school. While the school appreciates this inclusion, it also acknowledges and respects that some families and visitors to our school find contact with dogs stressful or frightening.

Our core business is to provide the optimum environment for student learning and our primary duty of care is to the safety of students, staff and the community. We acknowledge that whilst most dogs are friendly, some dogs may behave unpredictably in environments that are busy and crowded, particularly if other dogs are present. This policy takes into consideration all members of the Altona Primary School community and the public to minimise the risk of accident, injury or disturbance to people or animals within the school grounds.

PURPOSE

- To fulfil our duty of care responsibility towards our students, staff and community members.
- To ensure a safe and optimal learning environment for all students.
- To outline the responsibilities of dog owners and/or handlers within the school grounds, excluding dogs specifically trained to enhance or support learning, mobility or disability.
- To explain the procedures in place in relation to dogs attending the school grounds during and after school hours.

DEFINITIONS

Assistance dog is any dog that is trained to perform tasks or functions that help a person with a disability to alleviate the effects of the disability. This includes dogs trained to pick things up for people with mobility disabilities, and dogs trained to assist people who have seizures.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Assistance dogs

Altona 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 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 support them to participate in their educational program. Altona 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 Principal.

Pet dogs

Pet dogs are not permitted on school grounds at any time, including outside of school hours. Where community members wish to bring their dog into school for a reason/event, prior permission from the Principal is required. If you choose to walk your dog to school, we ask that all dogs remain with their owner outside the school grounds and away from all school gates.

Signage will be posted at all Altona Primary School entry gates to remind the community.

Stray dogs

Unaccompanied or stray dogs sighted at our school should be reported immediately to the school office. When a collar/tag can be safely located on a dog, school staff will endeavour to contact the listed owner.



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Alternatively, the municipal authorities will be contacted for assistance in managing and removing a stray dog from the school grounds, to ensure staff and students remain safe at school.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Related School Policies and Documents

- Altona Primary School Duty of Care Policy
- Altona Primary School Visitors Policy

EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's review cycle and/or if circumstances and regulations change. Proposed amendments to this policy may include consultation with school council.