



DOGS AT SCHOOL

POLICY



PURPOSE

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

POLICY

Assistance dogs Winters Flat 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 (eg 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. Winters Flat 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 on 5472 1522

Pet dogs/Dogs used at School

Winters Flat 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 Winters Flat Primary School 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 unless previously arranged with a teacher or the Principal.

At the moment the school is trialling the use of some dogs that belong to teachers. The dogs are trained and well behaved and used as companion dogs in their classroom activities and they also serve as a calming influence on students who become elevated.

The Principal has approved this trial and will make an informed decision as to the longer term use of these dogs as classroom therapy/companion dogs. These dogs remain the responsibility of their owners for their care and welfare and do not remain at the school in out of hours or school holidays.

In the event that these dogs cause any issues or contribute to any health concerns such as allergies the trial period/program will end.

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 presented to school Council on 16th March 2021 and will be reviewed in 1 year.