



ST. VINCENT DE PAUL PRIMARY SCHOOL DOGS AND ANIMALS ON SCHOOL GROUNDS POLICY

INTRODUCTION:

St Vincent De Paul Primary School acknowledges the important role that dogs & other animals play in our community and the positive impact that they can have on family life. For many school community members, dogs and other animals are an important part of the family unit and valuable companions for students.

St Vincent De Paul Primary School also acknowledges its obligation to take all reasonable precautions to protect the safety of all staff, students & other members of the school community who may be exposed to potential harm or injury as a result of their contact with dogs and other animals on the school grounds.

To ensure the safety of all members of the school community, dogs and other animals are not permitted on school grounds unless approval is first sought by a member of the Leadership Team.

The School does allow for animals to visit classrooms, but only for specific purposes (such as show and tell, pet days, or a small classroom pet under the care of a Staff Member). Furthermore, the policy only allows animals in classrooms with the prior consent from a member of the Leadership Team.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure the safety of all staff, students and other members of the school community by providing guidelines for ensuring dogs and other animals brought onto school grounds do not pose a health, safety or hygiene risk.

SCOPE:

These guidelines apply to all sites under the control of St Vincent De Paul Primary School and to members of the school community who intend to bring dogs or other animals to a school site.

PROCEDURE:

Any dog or other animals brought onto school grounds must be appropriately restrained at all times. This must be on either a short (non-extendable) lead, restrained by a person at least 16 years of age who is able to restrain the animal, or in an enclosed compartment. Owners of dogs and/or other animals on school grounds must comply with all relevant local council regulations & other statutory provisions such as the Victorian Domestic Animals Act 1994.

The school discourages the presence of dogs & other animals in the school grounds immediately before the commencement of the school day & immediately after school has concluded.

Owners of dogs & other animals are requested to:

- » Always be mindful that children are the first priority in a school environment and that some children are unfamiliar and/or afraid of dogs & other animals.
- » Assess the temperament & demeanor of their animal before entering the school grounds and are requested not to enter the school grounds if the animal is not suited to an environment where children are present. Animals with a difficult temperament and who are fearful, timid or dominant should not be brought onto the school grounds at any time.
- » Take responsibility for the care of the animal.
- » Not leave dogs or other animals tied-up and/or left unattended at any time.
- » Take responsibility for any injury or harm caused to people and / or damage to property as a result of the dog or other animal's presence.
- » Cleaning-up and disposal of any excrement from the school grounds.

NOTE: Incidents involving dog bites or injuries to children, adults or other animals will be reported by St Vincent De Paul Primary School to the Local Council.

Hygiene of all animals must be maintained at all times. Hygiene with respect to dogs and other animals shall be maintained by the owner through:

- » Appropriate cleaning of any toileting behaviour (carry plastic bags to do this) and by removing the refuse from school grounds for disposal;
- » Keeping dogs and animals out of sandpits or other play areas (keep to paths and passageways, and out of lunch and play areas);
- » Only healthy dogs and animals are allowed on school grounds (to prevent cross-infection to other pets etc);
- » Keeping dogs and animals from licking or other means of transfer of any infection.

ASSISTING / GUIDE DOGS:

St Vincent De Paul Primary School is an open entry school and welcomes all students & members of the community, including those that require assistance from 'service dogs'. The school will ensure that students or members of the school community who require the assistance of a dog are accommodated appropriately with suitable shelter and nourishment provided for the dogs whilst on site. These dogs are exempt from all other requirements of this procedure.

PROHIBITION OF ANIMALS FROM SCHOOL GROUNDS OR EVENTS:

There may be occurrences or circumstances where it is not appropriate to have dogs or other animals on the school grounds or at a school event. Such circumstances might include where the presence of an animal:

- » Would be contrary to any health, cultural, religious or safety consideration;
- » Would have an adverse impact on the amenity or welfare of students and/or staff;
- » Would unreasonably interfere with the day to day operation of the school or a school event such as a sports day, fetes;
- » Would contravene any other statutory provision.

In such circumstances referred to above, the School Leadership Team reserves the right to restrict or prohibit the presence of animals on School grounds or at a school event.

SECURING SCHOOL GROUNDS:

To ensure the safety of staff members & students from attacks by stray dogs or other animals, the school Leadership Team will make every attempt to ensure that the perimeter of the grounds will be secured at all times. If this cannot be achieved and the stray dog or animal enters the school grounds, all students will be moved to the safety of the nearest school building and remain there until the stray dog or animal can be removed from the school site.

REFERENCES:

Department of Environment & Primary Industries

<http://www.depi.vic.gov.au/pets/dogs/legal-requirements-for-dog-owners>

Dogs Victoria

<http://www.dogsvictoria.org.au/DogsPuppies/CaringforyourDog/DogsandtheLaw.aspx>

Victorian Government

[Domestic Animals Act 1994](#)

EVALUATION

This statement will be revisited by the whole staff as part of the review process.

DATE REVIEWED

May 2023