

# Avondale Primary School

## DOGS AT SCHOOL POLICY



### Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

*Avondale Primary School is a child safe organisation which welcomes all children, young people and their families.*

*We are committed to providing environments where our students are safe and feel safe, where their participation is valued, their views respected, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Our child safe policies, strategies and practices are inclusive of the needs of all children and students.*

*Avondale Primary school's approach to creating and maintaining a child safe school environment is guided by our school philosophy and values. At Avondale Primary School our vision is 'to create a community that strives for excellence through high quality learning, engagement and wellbeing for all.'*

*We have no tolerance for child abuse and take proactive steps to identify and manage any risk of harm to students in our school environments.*

*We promote positive relationships between students and adults and between students and their peers. These relationships are based on trust and respect.*

*When child safety concerns are raised or identified, we treat these seriously and respond promptly and thoroughly.*

*Particular attention is given to the child safety needs of Aboriginal students, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, international students, students with disabilities, those unable to live at home, children and young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) and other students experiencing risk or vulnerability. Inappropriate or harmful behaviour targeting students based on these or other characteristics, such as racism or homophobia, are not tolerated at our school, and any instances identified will be addressed with appropriate consequences.*

*Child safety is a shared responsibility. Every person involved in our school has an important role in promoting child safety and wellbeing and promptly raising any issues or concerns about a child's safety.*

*We are committed to regularly reviewing our child safe practices, and seeking input from our students, families, staff, and volunteers to inform our ongoing strategies.*



### Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the school office on 9318 1755.

### PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the rules and procedures we have in place in relation to dogs attending our school grounds. This includes the procedures in place for a training assistance dog.

### 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 **wellbeing dog** is a dog that has been suitably trained to provide animal-assisted wellbeing programs under the control of his/her handler.

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A **handler** is a volunteer in the school who is responsible and in control of a wellbeing dog while on school grounds and when facilitating the animal wellbeing program.

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

Avondale 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 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. Avondale 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 9318 1755.

Staff who are recognised as qualified trainers may submit a request to the Principal to have an assistance animal accompany them during school hours.

Staff trainers will be expected to ensure that:

- the animal is leashed at all times
- they maintain an appropriate level of supervision of the animal and the assistance dog will not be unsupervised or alone with students
- their duty of care to students is not compromised
- the assistance dog will be appropriately identified while on school grounds by wearing a colour jacket
- the school community is well informed of appropriate behaviours when the animal is in attendance at school
- they are able to perform normal work duties/tasks
- the animals meets standards of hygiene and behaviour appropriate for a school/classroom environment
- care is taken to avoid, where possible, contact between the assistance dog and students, staff, and visitors where the school is aware they have allergies to dogs.

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### Pet dogs

Avondale 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 Avondale 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 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 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.

## COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes and staff training
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

## RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

[Duty of Care Policy](#)

[Visitors Policy](#)

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	15 June 2023
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	15 June 2027