



DOGS AT ELTHAM EAST POLICY

PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the rules and procedures we have in place in relation to dogs attending our school grounds- as assistance dogs, as therapy and support dogs, as strays and as community dogs.

POLICY

Assistance dogs

Eltham East 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. Eltham East 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 9439 9793 or via email, eltham.east.ps@education.vic.gov.au.

Therapy and support dogs- staff dogs

Eltham East Primary School recognises that many students benefit from being close to, and being able to interact with a dog in a therapy or support role.

As a school we welcome therapy dogs, with handlers, that have been officially trained for this purpose.

In addition, Eltham East Primary School welcomes staff to bring a support dog to school subject to the following conditions;

- be trained and well-behaved with no jumping or scratching and only minimal barking or noise making
- be of a size that does not intimidate or frighten students
- not interfere or impact on the staff member's ability to fulfill their job
- be only one (1) such dog at school at any given time
- have an introductory meeting with the Principal before commencing duty
- no responsibility will be taken by the school for any injury, illness or sickness to the dog that is incurred whilst the dog is at school
- commence on a probationary period for two weeks, or two visits, whichever comes first

- not visit parts of the school where a student with identified dog allergies or dog anxieties learns or plays

Pet dogs- parents / students and the community

Eltham East 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 Eltham East 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, 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:

- **pet dogs are only allowed on school grounds after hours, and on weekends and holidays**
- pet dogs must be always leashed and in the control of a responsible adult
- pet dogs must not be tied up on school grounds or left unaccompanied
- families that bring dogs to school that exhibit signs of aggressive behaviour, bark, or jump may be asked to leave.
- families safely tether them outside school grounds when attending our school or school events.

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.

We respect that our school community is diverse and includes people that are allergic or uncomfortable around dogs. We are also conscious of the health hazards that may be posed by dogs and will be respectful of this.

Stray dogs

Unaccompanied or stray dogs sighted at our school should be reported immediately to the school office on 9439 9793. 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
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

This policy must be read in conjunction to Eltham East Primary School's [Duty of Care](#) and [Visitors](#) policies.

REVIEW CYCLE AND EVALUATION

The Principal or nominee will review this policy in consultation- with Staff, OHS Committee, Consultative Committee and Sub-Committee of School Council on a 3 year cycle.

Revision dates	Version number	Summary of changes
October 2021	1	New policy