



# Dogs at Maryborough Education Centre Policy



## Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Maryborough Education Centre (MEC) on 5461 7900.

## PURPOSE

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

## SCOPE

This policy only applies to assistance, pet and stray dogs on school grounds.

## POLICY

### Assistance Dogs

The use of assistance animals is protected under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth).

Assistance animals are defined under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) as animals accredited or trained to assist a person with a disability to alleviate the effect of their disability, and to meet the appropriate levels of hygiene and behaviour which are appropriate for an animal in a public place.

MEC understands its obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth), the Disability Standard for Education 2005 (Cth) and the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic) and will make reasonable adjustments for students with a disability to participate in their education on the same basis as their peers. In some circumstances, allowing a student to bring an assistance dog to school may be an appropriate reasonable adjustment.

If a student wishes to bring an assistance dog to school, parents/carers make a request to the principal to seek permission. The principal can lawfully ask a person to produce evidence that an animal:

- Is trained specifically to assist a person in alleviating the effects of a disability (for example, guide dogs).
- Meets standards of hygiene and behaviour appropriate for a school environment.

The principal will consider a request by a parent/carer for a student with a disability to attend school with an assistance dog with their handler on a case-by-case basis.

### Pet dogs

MEC 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 MEC 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 without written approval from the principal.

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 general 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.

### RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

- [Duty of Care](#)
- [Visitors' policy](#)
- [Dogs Working in Education Policy](#)
- [Dogs Working in Education Agreed Practice](#)
- [Wellbeing and Engagement Animals on PAL](#)

### 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.
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request.

### POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	February, 2025
Consultation	Education Policy Committee February 2025
Approved by	School Council, 25 <sup>th</sup> February 2025
Next scheduled review date	This policy was last updated on the 25 <sup>th</sup> of February 2025 and is scheduled for review in February 2028 as part of the school's 3-year review cycle.

Signed:



**Anita Ford**  
School Council President

**Date 25.2.2025**