

DOGS AT SCHOOL POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help understanding the information in this policy, please contact the school Policy Leader on 9112 9500 or via email info@footscray.vic.edu.au

PURPOSE

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

SCOPE

This policy applies to School Support Animals, Therapy Dogs, Wellbeing and Engagement Animals and pet and stray dogs on school grounds.

POLICY

ASSISTANCE DOGS

Footscray High 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 in alleviating 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. Footscray High School will consider, on a case-by-case basis, a request by a student with a disability to allow an assistance animal to attend school with them. If you would like to discuss this further, please contact the Principal.

SCHOOL SUPPORT DOGS

School Support Dogs attend Footscray High School at the Principal's discretion and provide comfort while supporting students' social and emotional needs. These dogs must be appropriately trained as School Support Animals and are always under the care of their designated animal handler, who is responsible for and in control of the dog while on school grounds.



The dogs and their handlers have undergone therapy dog training to ensure safe and meaningful interactions. Handlers are trained to maintain appropriate boundaries and to identify signs of distress in the animal. The welfare of the dogs is a priority, and they are held to strict hygiene and health standards, including mandatory veterinary checks and professional grooming.

If you do not want your child to directly interact with a School Support Dog at Footscray High School, you can opt out by emailing info@footscray.vic.edu.au. For more information on the benefits and use of School Support Dogs at Footscray High School, please refer to our school website.

PET DOGS

Whilst Footscray High 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.

Footscray High School has School Support Dogs on-site; these dogs are trained, acclimatised, and supervised by trained handlers. Unfamiliar pet dogs on school grounds can interfere with the work and wellbeing of our School Support Dogs, compromising their ability to provide support to students and staff.

Our school community is diverse, including people who are allergic or uncomfortable around dogs. We are also conscious of the health hazards that dogs may pose. 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 reception. 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
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

- [Visitors Policy](#)
- [Duty of Care](#)

REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Endorsed by	Principal
Endorsed on	December 2025
Mandatory minimum review cycle	3 - 4 Years
Next review date	December 2029