



## DOGS ON SCHOOL GROUNDS POLICY

### Rationale

Moonee Ponds Primary School acknowledges the important role that pets, dogs in particular, play in our community and the positive impact dogs can have on family life. For many community members, dogs are an important part of the family. A dog can be a joy but they are also a big responsibility. The school also acknowledges the benefits of walking to and from school in a family group with a dog. However, increased enrolments at Moonee Ponds PS in recent years have resulted in more dogs being brought onto school grounds. This has the potential to increase the risk of injury to children caused by dogs (e.g. bites and scratches) through dogs reacting adversely to unexpected noise and/or movement of children. We implement City of Moonee Valley on-leash laws to promote and encourage positive health, safety and wellbeing for our community (see below).

### Aims

- For the safety of children to be the first priority at Moonee Ponds Primary School.
- For dog owners to carefully consider the risks involved in bringing a dog into an environment where there are lots of young children, some of whom are unfamiliar and/or afraid of dogs.
- For dog owners to carefully consider the necessity and risks of bringing a dog onto the school grounds.
- For dog owners to keep their dogs at home if there is any risk of their dog becoming aggressive at school towards humans or other dogs.

## Implementation

### Dogs are allowed on the school site under the following implementation conditions:

- All dogs entering Moonee Ponds PS grounds must be on short leads (not extendable leads) that are controlled by an adult, not by a child.
- Dogs are not permitted to be inside the school buildings (unless permission is granted by the Principal).
- Dog owners 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.
- Dog owners are requested to assess the demeanour of their dog before entering the school grounds and are requested not to enter the school grounds if the demeanour of the dog is not suited to an environment where children are present.
- Dog owners are requested to leave dogs at home during school events, such as, family gatherings, sports day, excursions and fetes.
- Dog owners must be familiar with their legal responsibilities and be aware that the school takes no responsibility for the behaviour or actions of their dogs.
- Staff can request that dog owners remove their dog from the school grounds.
- Incidents involving dog bites or injuries to children, adults or other animals will be reported by Moonee Ponds PS to the City of Moonee Valley.
- Dog owners must remove and dispose of dog excrement.
- Dog owners must abide by the City of Moonee Valley on leash laws, as follows:
  - A Council order, made under the Domestic Animals Act 1994, requires dogs to be kept on a leash at all times when in public places.

- This law does not apply to a Declared Dangerous, Menacing or Restricted Breed Dog or a greyhound which must meet the restraint requirements specified under the Domestic Animal Act 1994.
- The order also prohibits dogs from being within 15 metres of any children’s playground, public barbeque, shared path or exercise equipment area.

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.

**References:**

The following Moonee Valley City Council website outlines local council regulations regarding dog ownership <http://www.mvcc.vic.gov.au/for-residents/animals/dog-ownership.aspx>

The following Victorian Government website provides more information and outlines legal requirement of dog owners:

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

**Evaluation:**

This policy will be evaluated on a four (4) year review cycle.

**Key Person responsible this Policy is:** Principal

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| This policy was last ratified by School Council in.... | <b>2018</b> |  |
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