



DOGS IN EDUCATION POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the school administration office on (03) 5782 1268 or via kilmore.ps@education.vic.gov.au

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 our wellbeing dog program to support student engagement and mental health.

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.

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** refers 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

Kilmore 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)



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- 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. Kilmore 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 Assistant Principal (Positive Climate for Learning) on 5782 1268.

Wellbeing dogs

Kilmore Primary School supports the use of wellbeing dogs for the benefit of our students subject to the conditions of this policy. The role of the wellbeing dog is to support the social and emotional needs of our students, under the guidance and supervision of their handler and other school staff.

Kilmore Primary School has a permanent wellbeing dog arranged through a mental health menu provider, the *Dogs Connect Program*. Kilmore Primary School has a wellbeing dog who supports our students' mental health and engagement. Our wellbeing dog is suitably trained and integrated into the school community through Dogs Connect, delivered as part of the Department's Mental Health initiative.

Recognised benefits from working or visiting with a wellbeing dog include:

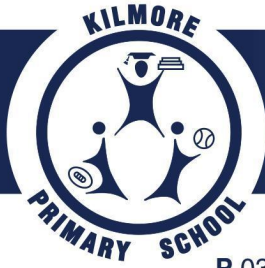
- Reduced stress and anxiety, including decreased learner anxiety behaviours
- Improved physical and emotional wellbeing
- Improved self-esteem, empathy and interpersonal skills
- Improved relationship building and ability to pick up on social cues
- Improved attendance (for disengaged students or students at risk of disengaging).

Examples of activities students may engage in with the wellbeing dog include:

- Petting and/or hugging the dog
- Speaking and reading to the dog
- Giving the dog commands that the dog is trained to respond to.

Where possible, Kilmore Primary School will only engage with low-allergen wellbeing dogs. Kilmore Primary School will take care to avoid, where possible, contact between the wellbeing dog and students, staff, and visitors where the school is aware they have allergies to dogs.

Staff, students and visitors are requested to notify the school of any health or safety concerns about the wellbeing dog. We are committed to consulting with students and



parent(s)/carer(s) in relation to any such health or safety concerns so that appropriate arrangements can be made on a case-by-case basis.

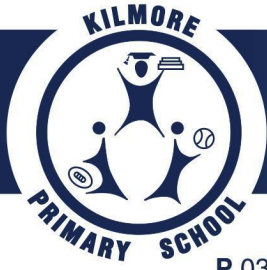
Further risk assessments and controls can be found in Appendix 1.

Wellbeing dog standards and procedures

- There will be a maximum of two school wellbeing dogs at any given time.
- When the wellbeing dog is on school grounds they will be under the supervision of a handler or staff member. The wellbeing dog will not be unsupervised or alone with students. A safe area separate to the school classrooms and offices will be allocated to the wellbeing dog and their handler where they will spend time when they are not working with students.
- The handler will ensure that the wellbeing dog does not pose a health and safety risk to any student, employee, or other person at school and that the wellbeing dog is brought to school only when properly groomed, bathed, free of illness or injury and of the temperament appropriate for working with the school community. In the event the school is made aware that the dog triggers a student's health condition (for example, allergies or asthma), the school will notify the student's parent/carer(s) and ensure appropriate steps are implemented to minimise health risks.
- The wellbeing dog will be appropriately identified while on school grounds by wearing a colour jacket.
- No student or staff member will be required to interact with the wellbeing dog. If a student indicates that they wish to overcome any fear of dogs, they can be supported to do so with coaching in a controlled environment with the wellbeing dog and their handler.
- The wellbeing dog program will be communicated to parent/carer(s) at the beginning of the year in the school newsletter, and on student enrolment. In these communications, parent/carer(s) will be given the opportunity to 'opt out' of the program for their child, raise any concerns or update student medical information (such as allergies or asthma) which may be triggered by a visit from the wellbeing dog.

Pet dogs

Kilmore Primary School is not a public place, and the Principal has the authority to permit or decline entry to school grounds and impose conditions of entry.



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Dogs permitted with conditions

Whilst Kilmore 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:

- Written correspondence is required and approved by the Principal for a pet dog to attend Kilmore Primary School
- Pet dogs must be leashed at all times 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 remove the dog from school premises.

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.

Stray dogs

Unaccompanied or stray dogs sighted at our school should be reported immediately to school administration. 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



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FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The following [School Policies](#) are also relevant to this policy:

- *KPS Duty of Care Policy*
- *KPS Visitors Policy*

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

The Principal is responsible for reviewing and updating this policy every three years.

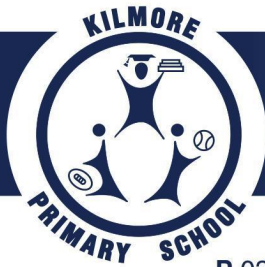
Policy last reviewed	May 2023
Consultation	School Council
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	May 2026



APPENDIX 1: RISK ASSESSMENT

Dogs on site at Kilmore Primary School Risk Assessment 2023

Risk Description/ Hazard	Outcome	Current Control Measures	Risk Rating			Planned Control Measures
<i>What can go wrong?</i>	Likely result if risk/hazard becomes an emergency	What the company/school is doing to prevent/ manage the risk	Consequence Likelihood Risk level			What procedure will be enacted to respond to the emergency?
<i>School dogs can cause an allergic reaction to people in contact with or in an area the dog has been in.</i>	People suffer from a range of reactions such as sneezing, itching, hives	Survey school population for information related to allergies so as to avoid direct contact with allergic people	Insignificant <u>Minor</u> Moderate Major Severe	Rare Unlikely Possible <u>Likely</u> Almost certain	Low <u>Medium</u> High Extreme	Person will be removed from the area and treated for allergy. Basic first aid-cold water/cool pack on itch, fresh air, antihistamine if needed.
<i>Person being injured while walking the school dog by being pulled on via the leash</i>	Person falls or is pulled by the arm causing strain or damage to skin from the leash	Teaching people the correct method of holding the leash and the dog while walking the dog on leash'	Insignificant <u>Minor</u> Moderate Major Severe	Rare Unlikely <u>Possible</u> Likely Almost certain	Low <u>Medium</u> High Extreme	School dogs are called to return to areas of restriction such as the classroom or office. Person to be assessed for injury and first aid to be administered where needed.

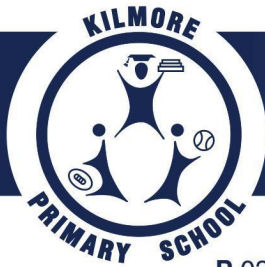


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<i>School dog can knock people over or scratch people when playing, responding to excitement or startling from person/s</i>	Person is injured as a result of being knocked into furniture or knocked over. Person is scratched through clothing or directly to skin and requires first aid	People can be educated about control measures for level of excitement and elements of surprise for dogs when working with or around the dog.	Insignificant <u>Minor</u> Moderate Major Severe	Rare Unlikely <u>Possible</u> Likely Almost certain	Low <u>Medium</u> High Extreme	<i>School dog is called to return to an area of restriction such as the classroom or office. Person to be assessed for injury and first aid to be administered where needed.</i>
<i>School dogs can scratch a person with teeth when playing tug of war or playing a game with a toy that can be retrieved from hand, air, or ground level.</i>	Person is damaged to the skin where teeth make contact and require first aid.	People will be educated about appropriate ways to engage the dog in play. Using set commands and common sense to do this.	Insignificant <u>Minor</u> Moderate Major Severe	Rare Unlikely <u>Possible</u> Likely Almost certain	Low <u>Medium</u> High Extreme	<i>Person to be assessed for injury and first aid to be administered where needed.</i>
<i>School dogs can become aggravated by people through physically threatening behavior, being cornered or physically mistreated.</i>	Dogs can snarl, bark, or snap/bite at the person requiring possible first aid.	People will be educated about giving the dog appropriate space and treating the dog with care and respect at all times.	Insignificant Minor Moderate <u>Major</u> Severe	<u>Rare</u> Unlikely Possible Likely Almost certain	Low <u>Medium</u> High Extreme	<i>School dogs are called to return to areas of restriction such as the classroom or office. Person to be assessed for injury and first aid to be administered where needed.</i>
<i>School dogs can be injured by physical mistreatment from a person.</i>	Dog require medical treatment, extra training or time away from the workplace to recover	People will be educated about the wellbeing needs of animals.	Insignificant Minor <u>Moderate</u> Major Severe	Rare Unlikely <u>Possible</u> Likely Almost certain	Low <u>Medium</u> High Extreme	<i>School dogs are called to return to areas of restriction such as the classroom or office. Dog to be assessed for injury and first aid to be administered where needed.</i>

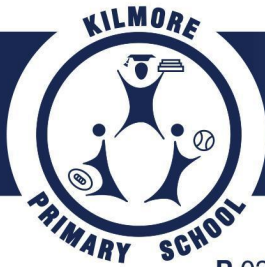


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<i>Person is frightened by school dog rushing toward him/her in excitement, anticipation of playing, or defense of food when feeding.</i>	Person requires space and time to recover from fright or mild shock.	People will be educated about giving dog appropriate space when feeding, and dog to be tethered when in open areas.	Insignificant Minor Moderate Major Severe	Rare Unlikely Possible <u>Likely</u> Almost certain	Low <u>Medium</u> High Extreme	Person to be assessed for injury and first aid to be administered where needed.
<i>School dog injured by sharp objects or ill from ingesting chemicals in the garden area</i>	Dog is wounded or becomes unwell and shows signs such as vomiting or diarrhea.	Vegetable garden area to be kept clear of sharp objects or hazardous materials such as fertilizers.	Insignificant <u>Minor</u> Moderate Major Severe	Rare Unlikely <u>Possible</u> Likely Almost certain	Low <u>Medium</u> High Extreme	School dog to be assessed for injury and to see vet if deemed necessary. If not necessary, dog should be stationed to relax and rest in a quiet area.
<i>School dog accesses public roads and moves throughout traffic.</i>	Dog is frightened or injured.	All gates remain locked during school time, and school dog is kept in supervised areas outside of these times. Holes in fence to be repaired.	Insignificant Minor <u>Moderate</u> Major Severe	Rare Unlikely <u>Possible</u> Likely Almost certain	Low <u>Medium</u> High Extreme	School dog to be assessed for injury and to see vet if deemed necessary. If not necessary, dog should be stationed to relax and rest in a quiet area.
<i>Wellbeing dog may pull away, jump up, run off, be startled, react aggressively, obstruct walkways or trip staff or students</i>		Staff and students briefed before the dog enters the school. Students are supervised.	Insignificant Minor Moderate Major Severe	Rare Unlikely Possible Likely Almost certain	Low Medium High Extreme	School dog approached from front on if engaging with the dog. School dog to sit or stand calmly if a new student first approaches the dog. Students to be given permission to walk the dog or engage with the dog before they do so.

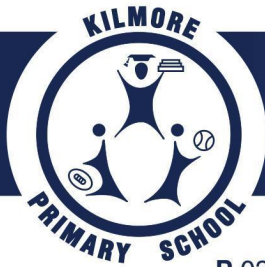


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<p><i>Students may provoke school dog to react or engage to another student.</i></p>		<p>Dogs to be checked regularly by their carers to ensure they are in good health and their needs being met with balance.</p> <p>Staff and students instructed how to calmly approach the dog. Not from behind, or with sudden movements or escalating behaviour.</p>	<p>Insignificant Minor Moderate Major Severe</p>	<p>Rare Unlikely Possible Likely Almost certain</p>	<p>Low Medium High Extreme</p>	<p><i>Students to be given permission to walk the dog or engage with the dog before they do so.</i></p>
<p><i>Startled school dog reacts in an unpredictable or sudden manner</i></p>		<p>Dog response plan communicated to all staff and students.</p>	<p>Insignificant Minor Moderate Major Severe</p>	<p>Rare Unlikely Possible Likely Almost certain</p>	<p>Low Medium High Extreme</p>	<p><i>School dog sleeping or resting bed located away from traffic areas. Students and staff do not intentionally disturb the dog while resting or sleeping.</i></p> <p><i>If the dog chooses to sleep or rest in the classroom or student activity area, students are not to deliberately wake or disturb the dog, engage in loud activities or make sudden movements that may startle the dog.</i></p>



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<p>Students could get sick from contact with school dog.</p> <p>Hygiene issues -dirty hands, transfer of contaminants. Licking.</p>		<p>General personal hygiene procedures in place eg handwashing.</p>	<p>Insignificant Minor Moderate Major Severe</p>	<p>Rare Unlikely Possible Likely Almost certain</p>	<p>Low Medium High Extreme</p>	<p>Handwashing after contact with the dog.</p> <p>Designated areas for cleaning of dog waste equipment.</p> <p>Dog is regularly groomed</p>
<p>School dog could become sick.</p>		<p>Dog has annual veterinary appointment including hallucinations.</p>	<p>Insignificant Minor Moderate Major Severe</p>	<p>Rare Unlikely Possible Likely Almost certain</p>	<p>Low Medium High Extreme</p>	<p>Health of the dog is monitored and if the dog sick or tired does not attend school.</p>
<p>Outside dog or other animal enters the school and attacks the school dog.</p> <p>New visitors do not follow rules and protocols associated with engaging with and care of the school dog.</p>			<p>Insignificant Minor <u>Moderate</u> Major Severe</p>	<p>Rare Unlikely <u>Possible</u> Likely Almost certain</p>	<p>Low <u>Medium</u> High Extreme</p>	<p>School community is made aware of the dog in school via social media and newsletters.</p> <p>School gates shut at all times.</p> <p>Signs on gates informing visitors: Wellbeing dog onsite. No other dogs allowed unless authorised.</p>
<p>Dog carers and handlers advise where and when other animals are in school. Dog is moved indoors if threatening towards wildlife</p>			<p>Insignificant Minor Moderate Major Severe</p>	<p>Rare Unlikely Possible Likely Almost certain</p>	<p>Low Medium High Extreme</p>	<p>School dog on lead if outdoors or taken near other animals.</p>