

TERANG COLLEGE

DOGS

POLICY (Students)

1. RATIONALE

- 1.1. This policy explains to our school community the rules and procedures we have in place in relation to dogs attending our College grounds.

2. IMPLEMENTATION

2.1. Assistance Dogs

2.1.1. Terang College 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 College with their handler. Our College Principal can lawfully ask a person to produce evidence that an animal:

- 2.1.1.1. Is trained specifically to assist a person alleviate the effects of a disability (e.g. seeing eye dogs).
- 2.1.1.2. Meets standards of hygiene and behaviour appropriate for a school environment.

2.1.2. We understand that in some circumstances, students may require an assistance animal to attend the College to help them to participate in their educational program. Terang College will consider a request by a student with a disability to allow an assistance animal to attend the College with them on a case-by-case basis.

2.2. Therapy Dogs

2.2.1. Terang College understands that some students benefit from contact with a therapy dog. Any therapy dog permitted on College grounds must be a certified therapy dog. In addition, approval must be sought from the Principal. The school community will be notified prior to the therapy dog entering the grounds. The dog will only be in contact with children that want to work with.

Benefits include:

- 2.2.1.1. Stimulating memory, problem-solving and game playing;
- 2.2.1.2. Providing a positive mutual topic for discussion, encouraging responsibility, wellbeing, and focused interaction with others;
- 2.2.1.3. Improving self-esteem, acceptance from others and lifts moods, often provoking laughter, fun and respect for other living things;
- 2.2.1.4. Interacting with a furry friend reduces blood pressure, provides tactile stimulation, assists with pain management, gives motivation to move, walk and stimulates the senses;
- 2.2.1.5. Helping children develop reading skills and build their confidence, through the calming effect the dog's presence has on children as they read aloud.

2.3. Stray Dogs

2.3.1. Unaccompanied or stray dogs sighted at our College should be reported immediately to the school's office. School staff will contact municipal authorities and/ or Victoria Police for assistance in managing and removing a stray dog from the College grounds, and ensure staff and students remain safe at Terang College.

2.4. This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- 2.4.1. Available publicly on our College's website.
- 2.4.2. Included in staff induction processes and staff training.
- 2.4.3. Included in staff handbook/ manual.
- 2.4.4. Discussed at annual staff briefings/ meetings.
- 2.4.5. Included in transition and enrolment packs.
- 2.4.6. Discussed at parent information nights/ sessions.
- 2.4.7. Reminders in our College newsletter.
- 2.4.8. Hard copy available from the College Administration upon request.

3. EVALUATION

- 3.1. This policy will be reviewed as part of the College three-year review cycle