

Point Lonsdale Primary School

DOG POLICY

Purpose: To ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the PLPS community.

Dogs are an important part of life for many PLPS families, and as such, are often included in day-to-day activities such as walking children to and from school.

While the school appreciates this inclusion and values pet ownership as an educational experience, it also acknowledges other families (and individuals) can find contact with dogs stressful, even frightening.

PLPS aims to introduce a policy that is fair to all parties and establishes clear guidelines concerning the presence of dogs in, and close to, the school grounds.

Dogs can behave unpredictably when placed in excited and/or crowded environments, sometimes leading to dog fights. Children too, behave unpredictably when excited, and this can lead to accidents such as falls and even dog bites.

The Dog policy aims to take into consideration the needs and expectations of all members of the PLPS community and also minimise the risk of accident or injury to people or animals within the school grounds. To this end, the policy seeks to separate children from dogs in the school ground at the busiest (and noisiest) times, such as the start and end of the school day.

Existing council by-laws already cover issues such as dog restraint and the need for owners to pick up their dog's excrement. For clarity these matters will also be dealt within the school Dog Policy.

Regulations concerning dogs on PLPS grounds are as follows:

- Dogs must be under control, and on-lead, at all times.
- Dogs can not be tied-up and/or left unattended at any time.
- Owners must pick-up, and appropriately dispose of, their dog's excrement.
- **Dogs are not allowed** in the immediate vicinity of the school crossing, entrance or school buildings between the times of **8.30am and 9.15am** and **3.15pm and 4.00pm**, from Monday to Friday, during the course of the school term. This includes the seats and tables-and-chairs at the front of the school, the area under the fig tree and in the play areas immediately around the school buildings.
- **Dogs can accompany their owners** to and from school during peak periods, such as lunch and recess, provided they enter via the double gates at the northern end of the oval, near the milk bar, or via the southern end of the school, near the student entry. They must remain well away from the main gathering of children and family members at all times. It is suggested dog owners wait on the school oval for children to exit classes. It is also suggested people with dogs arrange in advance with school children where they will be dropped-off and collected, at the beginning and end of each school day.
- **Assistance dogs, seeing eye dogs, customs dogs etc are exempt from these regulations.**

PLPS is committed to teaching children appropriate behaviour when approaching and interacting with all pets, in a bid to further minimise the risk of accidents and injury.

PLPS educational programs such as *Vets in Schools* both promote the relationship between people and their pets, and illustrate the school's acceptance and encouragement of pets as 'family members'.

This policy was last ratified by School Council on....

25.02.2014