



Grey Street
Primary School Traralgon

Grey Street Primary School Policy

Dogs at School

Issue Date: July 2023

Next Review: July 2025

Our purpose is to empower resilient learners to think critically, actively problem solve, be respectful and positively contribute to their world.

At Grey Street that means that we are all active and resilient learners, who learn in different ways. We challenge and support each other with our learning through setting goals, working persistently, problem solving, using feedback and reflecting on our progress. We value a culture of collaboration and mutual support that is focused on achieving success for all staff, students and members of the school community.

At Grey Street Primary School we are committed to maintaining a safe and inclusive environment for everyone, everywhere, all of the time.



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Grey Street Primary School.

Purpose

To explain to our school community the rules and procedures we have in place in relation to dogs attending our school grounds and to outline the Therapy dog program as it operates in our school.

Therapy Dog – Moby

At Grey Street Primary School we have a therapy dog on site called Moby. Moby is a Burnese Mountain Dog and is primarily utilised by our Wellbeing Team. The following are the guidelines in place to ensure a safe environment for both students and animals to operate together.

- When arriving at school or leaving and Therapy Coat is OFF, Moby may meet and greet all staff and students with low levels of excitement by all.
- When Therapy Coat is ON, staff and students are not to interact with Moby unless instructed by handler. This includes not even making eye contact.
- Students will be educated about therapy dogs, Moby and student expectations by the welfare team and/or classroom teacher as required.

Commands are to be given by handlers only (Except in emergencies)

- Come (when you want the dog to come to you)
- Stay (when you want the dog to stay, open hand facing the dog indicating stop)
- Sit (closed fist facing up in front of the dog)
- Drop (closed fist facing up and then lower to the ground)
- OK (dog is free to wander and move around the room)
- Shake (shake hands and greet students)
- On your Mat (dog will move himself to his mat and drop)
- Do your wees (toileting)



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All commands are directives, NOT options except for the OK command.

- Moby will work only 5 hours a day.
- Moby will be completely up to date with all medical and vaccination requirements. He will also be regularly wormed and flea treated.
- Moby is to be accompanied by an adult or trained “second handlers” at all times.
- Moby’s primary handlers are the Welfare team staff.
- Moby will engage in training as a therapy dog
- Moby will wear a training vest to demonstrate his working role while on the premises.
- If Moby is present in a learning space or the playground with a staff member they are officially working. He will be available for pats and cuddles, but we try to limit this to **two children** at a time and only under adult supervision.
- If Moby is working with a staff member who is supporting an individual student or small group of students, then other students must adhere to the ‘no touch, no talking’ with Moby both in the playground and when they enter the classroom.
- Rest areas have been set up for Moby in the School Office and welfare room so he can have some time out – the concentration they need when they are working means they get quite fatigued and need a rest.
- During working hours, Moby will have access to drinking water.
- Toileting is required periodically. Ensure option is given every 2 hours or after each session. Toileting command is, “Do your wees”. Wait 5 minutes, if no progress return to work/mat.
- Moby has a number of ‘second handlers’ (older students and staff) who understand the basic commands and can take the dogs from their primary handler if required.
- Moby is not permitted in any food preparation areas such as Kitchen Gardens, Breakfast Club, staffroom, etc.

Health and safety

To ensure that staff, students, parents and Moby remain safe at school there are a number of actions that need to occur.

- Moby is never to be left alone without a handler present.
- Watch for yawning/shaking, as this is a sign the dog is stressed or tired.
- All people must wash their hands after handling the dog.
- Any dog excrement needs to be cleaned and disposed of appropriately.
- Students must never put their face near the dog.
- Moby should be approached in a calm and quiet manner.
- If Moby is injured, his owner is to take him to the vet if required.
- Parents should be notified immediately if Moby injures a student and the school will investigate and document all findings.
- Moby is a member of staff and if a student injures Moby the usual student behaviour plan will be enacted.
- The school maintains a duty of care to all students and teachers with dog allergies or phobias and appropriate measures will be taken to ensure the health and wellbeing of these individuals. Students and teachers with these conditions are identified through the usual medical condition process upon enrolment/employment and supplementary annual student/teacher information updates.



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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** relates 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

Grey Street 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 alleviate 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. Grey Street 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 the Principal.

Pet dogs

Grey Street Primary School is not a public place, and our principal has the authority to permit or decline entry to school grounds and impose conditions of entry.

Whilst Grey Street 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:

- 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 leave.
- Students should not approach or pat a dog without first asking owners permission



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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 the school office. 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.

Review Period

Policy last reviewed	July 2023
Consultation	Presented for review with the School Council in July 2023.
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	July 2025