



# Wantirna South Primary School

## Animal Policy

### Rationale

At Wantirna South Primary School the inclusion of animals in the day-to-day learning program is a valuable and important component. The inclusion of well-cared for animals has many benefits for students, however it is imperative that a safe, hygienic, comfortable and secure environment for animals is both created and maintained. In order to provide rich animal learning opportunities, Wantirna South Primary School facilitates for animal husbandry by housing a brood of hens. A specialised school support dog program (PAWS Program) is also provided.

### Aims

Based on this rationale the aims of the policy are to:-

- To provide students with first hand experiences of caring for animals and pets, whilst at the same time ensuring that students realise and meet the obligations involved in caring for pets.
- To ensure all animals are treated with respect and consideration, ensuring that the level of care for animals is maintained over holidays and weekends.
- To allow students to bring animals to school for specific learning purposes; however approval must be gained by both the teacher in charge and the school principal.
- To facilitate the learning of responsible pet ownership.

### Implementation

Consistent with these aims this policy shall be implemented according to the following guidelines:-

#### *Safety for School-based animals*

To maintain a safe, settled and secure environment for the school animal's the protocols and procedures are implemented:

- dogs and other animals are **not permitted** within the school grounds between 8am and 4pm on school days, unless given pre approval by the school principal.
- dogs are to not to be tied to the front gate or left unsupervised at the front gate of the school grounds.
- children wishing to share the acquisition of a new family pet with classmates are to organise this with their class teacher and principal prior to bringing the animal onto the school grounds.

#### *Brood of Hens*

Wantirna South Primary School proudly strives to provide sustainable programs, the Brood of Hens that reside in the WASPS Nest are an important and valued component of our school program.

To ensure the welfare of the brood:

- a staff member is allocated to cater for the care and wellbeing of the hens.
- housed on the school grounds in a specially designed chicken coop called the WASPS Nest.
- wander the school ground during school days.
- may require veterinary attention at times, therefore it is the responsibility of the staff member in charge to ensure appropriate attention acquired.
- will always be provided with fresh water and food to maintain full health and vigour.



## ***Paws Program***

Wantirna South Primary School strives to support students socially, emotionally, physically and academically, therefore has engaged the PAWS program which focuses on developing the ‘whole child. The program:

- comprises of a dog (labradoodle), chosen thoughtfully and carefully for his breed as well as specifically trained as an Animal Assisted Therapy Dog.
- has an allocated co-ordinator responsible for the wellbeing, veterinary care of dog and will communicate the needs of the dog and his management to the teaching staff and students.
- is built on the pretence that the dog will reside in the school classrooms on occasions throughout the school day.
- when the dog is working with students the program co-ordinator or a teacher in charge must be present at all times.

Any staff engaging animals for use in Pet Therapy on school grounds will be required to provide evidence of certification of the animal, or progress towards this, in a request to School Council for permission for the animal to be on school grounds for this purpose, prior to the commencement of Therapy.

## **Other References**

For further specific information regarding the PAWS program please see:

<http://wantirnasouthps.vic.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/sites/55/2014/04/Paws-up-for-learning-updated.pdf>.

This Policy has been developed in accordance with the Department of Education’s Animals in Schools Advisory Guide and RSPCA guidelines

(<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/curriculum/pages/animals.aspx>,

<http://www.rspca.org.au/>).

## **Evaluation**

This Policy will be reviewed as part of a three year cycle or as directed by School Council.

This Policy was ratified by School Council in October 24<sup>th</sup> 2018.