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Rel Principal: Sophie Bissell

DOGS/PETS AT SCHOOL POLICY

We all love our furry friends, but they can only be on school grounds under special circumstances.

NSW Department of Education states under the Companion Animals Act 1998 (NSW), Section 14, dogs are prohibited on school grounds unless the Principal grants permission.

Reasons why the Principal may grant permission for a dog to be in a school include:

- Assistance or Service dogs – are accredited and specially trained to assist an individual person with a disability. Assistance dogs have undertaken a Public Access Test (PAT) and meet the NSW standards for public access rights. The term assistance dog is the generic term for a guide, hearing, or service dog, specifically trained to perform identifiable physical tasks and behaviours that assist a person with a disability in order to aid in quality of life and/or independence.
- Visits by organised groups or programs for school incursions – includes such programs as Responsible Pet Ownership Education Program offered by the Office of Local Government.
- School support dogs – are used in schools to provide emotional support, companionship or wellbeing support. They are often known as therapy, emotional support or companion dogs.

Occasionally a community member may request a visit to the school with their pet including a family dog or puppy for a news item. These will be considered on a case by case basis, be well managed and only for a limited time where the adult brings the animal to the school for the item. The Principal must grant permission and be supported by a risk assessment.