



Geelong Lutheran College is committed to providing a safe environment for all our students when they are in the care of the College.

### Definitions

**The College:** Geelong Lutheran College, St John's Newtown and Armstrong Creek

**Parents:** Parents, Guardians, Caregivers

**Leadership Team:** Executive Principal, Business Manager, Head of sub-schools

### Purpose

To explain to our College community the rules and procedures we have in place in relation to animals attending our College grounds.

### Rationale

The keeping of animals is common to Australian culture. Animals kept in a sound condition can be both educational to children and promote a sense of caring and responsibility if the animal is in an appropriate environment.

In addition to protection of animal welfare rights, modelling positive behaviour in caring for animals is important in regard to children attending the College. Geelong Lutheran College values a warm and caring respect for the animal world. Whilst we welcome animals to the College, it is the responsibility of the owner to provide for the needs of the animal and for its control.

### Guidelines

Whilst animals in a school environment can bring much enjoyment and comfort to students, there is the potential for some risks if they are not managed appropriately. Similarly, to ensure the wellbeing of animals on College grounds, appropriate care arrangements need to be put into place.

### Implementation

Geelong Lutheran College is not a public place, and the Executive Principal and staff have the authority to permit or decline entry to College grounds and impose conditions of entry.

To minimise unnecessary risk and ill-treatment, approval is required for animals to be kept or brought to the College for any length of time. Staff members must demonstrate the pedagogical or wellbeing benefit to students of regularly bringing or keeping an animal at the College.

A request must be put to the Executive Principal stating which animals are to be brought on-site, for what purpose and how they will be cared for. The Executive Principal will make the final decision in response to the request. If approval is given, the following must be adhered to.

Any animals, birds or livestock kept on the premises of the College will be maintained in a clean and healthy condition;

- There will be an area provided where the animal's food and water containers are kept separate from children and staff;
- All cages, tanks or sleeping areas and outdoor areas used by animals will be kept clean and excreta free; and
- If used by animals, indoor areas will be cleaned regularly. In relation to children, staff will ensure that;
  - Animals will be only be handled with adult supervision. Children will be encouraged to help feed and care for the animals;
  - Animals will be inaccessible to the children unless under supervision of an adult. A physical barrier will be provided to separate animals from children and when not part of the program. A suitable cage, tank or pen will be used;



- Children with fears will be supported in any interactions they may choose to have with the animal;
- Children with allergies will be supervised by staff and interactions with animals will be in accordance with their individual needs;
- Children are closely supervised when they are with animals, including on excursions or incursions where children and animals are able to be in close contact;
- Children will be encouraged and reminded to follow appropriate hygiene practices.
- Children will be supervised when washing hands following contact with animals.
- Parents will be provided with information outlining the educational purpose and benefits of any activity involving animals on site, and formal permission will be sought prior to student participation.
- The College recognises that certain cultural or religious beliefs may restrict individuals from interacting with specific animals.

Dogs – Staff who propose to bring a dog to College regularly must complete a risk assessment of the animal being on-site. They must also show evidence of training that qualifies their dog to be an Assistance/Therapy Dog. It is the owner's responsibility that any dog must be held on lead at all times in the College grounds, or put into a cage or separate space when required. It is also the owner's responsibility to clean up after their animal. If children are distressed by the dog, or the dog shows any antisocial or aggressive behaviour, the Executive Principal may withdraw the approval for the dog to be brought onto College grounds.

### Parents/Guardians bringing animals on-site

Whilst Geelong Lutheran College understands that many families in our College community keep dogs as pets, to ensure that our College remains a safe and inclusive place for everyone, we have in place a number of expectations which will be enforced to promote the safety of students, their families, and the pet dogs of families.

The expectations that all members of our community must adhere to are outlined below:

#### During the hours of 8:00am – 4:15pm on school days:

- **Pet dogs are not permitted to be on College grounds.** This is inclusive of school drop-off and pick-up times.
- Should you wish to bring a pet dog to drop-off/ pick-up your child then you should arrange a meeting point along the College boundary.

#### During the hours of 6:45am-9:00am and 3:05pm-6.00pm on school days:

- Families are asked to be mindful that the College operates an Out of School Hours Service at St John's from 7:00am-9:00am and 3:10pm-6:00pm and Armstrong Creek from 6:45am-6:00pm on school days.
- Community members may walk their dog through College grounds prior to 8:00am, or after 4:15pm being aware that all dogs must be leashed at all times and in the control of a responsible adult.
- If there is a dog on the premises during the OSHC service hours, OSHC staff reserve the right to direct the owner and their dog to leave College grounds if the dog is deemed by staff to be impacting upon students and their ability to move around the College.
- Visitors to the College that bring pet dogs onto College grounds are required to pick up their dog's excrement
- Pet dogs must not be tied up on College grounds and left unaccompanied



### During sanctioned College events:

- **Pet dogs are not permitted to be on College grounds** during approved College events at which Geelong Lutheran College students will be present (for example: Concerts, Parent Teacher Interviews, Open nights and Family nights or sporting events)

### In-School Activities

At times, pet dogs may be approved to attend the College for educational purposes. Where families wish to bring their pet dog into the College for a particular event, prior permission of the Executive Principal is required.

### Students Bringing Pets to School (e.g., for Show and Tell)

Students who wish to bring a pet or animal to school for educational purposes, such as Show and Tell or class presentations, must seek prior approval from their Heads of School. Approval will only be granted where the activity supports learning and where the safety and wellbeing of students, staff, and the animal can be ensured.

When considering approval, the College will take into account factors such as student allergies, health and safety considerations, the suitability and temperament of the animal, and appropriate supervision. Animals brought to school must be appropriately restrained or contained at all times and remain under the supervision of the student's parent or a responsible adult unless otherwise agreed by the College.

The College reserves the right to decline requests where safety, wellbeing, or practical considerations cannot be adequately managed.

### Staff Pets

Staff pets are not allowed onsite unless they show evidence of training that qualifies their dog to be an Assistance/Therapy Dog.

- **Supervision:** The pet cannot be left unattended, tied up, or roaming freely.
- **Health & Hygiene:** Staff are responsible for immediate cleanup of waste, providing food/water, and ensuring the pet is up-to-date with vaccinations.
- **Safe Areas:** Pets must have a designated, secure, and separate area for resting.
- **Behavioural Standards:** Pets with history of aggression, dogs with excessive barking, or jumping are not allowed.

### Assistance Animals

Dogs that are specially trained to assist a person with a disability (e.g., Guide Dogs) are permitted, with the College making reasonable adjustments to accommodate them.

### Other conditions:

- Staff bringing pets into work will do so at their own risk.
- The staff member will be liable for any damage caused by the pet, such as property and injuries to staff members
- The College cannot be held liable for any injury sustained to the pet



## Stray Dogs

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

## Related Policies and Resources

- Student Duty of Care Policy

## Evaluation

This Policy will be reviewed as part of the College's two-year review cycle.

## Policy Administration

Responsible Person/s	Approver	Date Approved	Next Review
Executive Principal	College Board	March 2025	March 2028