

**Timboon P-12 School**  
**Pets As Worker in Schools Program (PAWS)**

**POLICY**

**1.0 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To enrich the school environment
- 1.2 To promote responsible treatment of animals
- 1.3 To provide an alternate form of emotional support when students feel distressed or upset
- 1.4 To provide a teaching resource in a range of subject areas.

**2.0 PRINCIPLES**

- 2.1 Access to the dogs will be encouraged
- 2.2 The well being of school community members will be considered when using the dogs
- 2.3 The health and safety aspects of having dogs in the school will be considered at all times
- 2.4 The health and safety of the dogs and other animals (eg: lizard & birds) will be considered at all times.
- 2.5 Dogs in training for seeing eye dog program will be able to participate in school life.

**3.0 POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

- 3.1 That the dogs used in the program have been assessed by a qualified dog trainer as having a suitable temperament for working with children and in a school setting.
- 3.2 A trained PAWS coordinator will be responsible for the development of PAWS program and ensuring policy is followed
- 3.3 PAWS handler P.D. will be held annually and only teachers who have undertaken the P.D. will work with the dogs at school
- 3.4 School community members will be given the opportunity to indicate their concerns about the dogs and other animals' presence in their working area - be it medical (allergy) or other personal (fear, distrust of dogs) reasons. (via annual parent/staff permission letter.)
- 3.5 The dogs will be on a leash during recess and lunch breaks.
- 3.6 Appropriate rest areas for the dogs will be allocated in consultation with staff
- 3.7 Appropriate hygiene practices are maintained at all times (hand washing, exclusion from eating area, correct toileting practice).
- 3.8 PAWS dogs will undergo regular veterinary checks and parasite treatment will be routine.
- 3.9 A budget will support the PAWS program where possible.
- 3.10 It is the responsibility of those staff using the animals in school to ensure that: When using animals in teaching, the school will comply with current legislation, including *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986* and its *Regulations 2008*, and the *Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes*
- 3.11 The PAWS co-ordinator will review the PAWS plan annually and make recommendations to the Curriculum Committee.