



# Te Aroha College Animals on School Grounds Policy

## Purpose

To establish clear guidelines regarding the presence of animals on Te Aroha College premises, ensuring the safety, well-being, and educational interests of all students, staff, and visitors.

## Scope

This policy applies to all individuals on school property, including students, staff, parents, visitors, and contractors.

## Policy Statement

Te Aroha College recognizes the potential benefits of animals in educational settings, such as supporting learning and providing emotional comfort. However, to maintain a safe and conducive learning environment, the presence of animals on school grounds is regulated as follows:

### General Prohibition

- Animals are not permitted on school grounds during school hours or during school-sponsored events without prior authorization.

### Exceptions

- **Service Animals:** Animals specifically trained to assist individuals with disabilities are permitted in accordance with the Education and Training Act 2020, which ensures inclusive education for all students.
- **Educational Purposes:** Animals may be brought onto school grounds for educational purposes (e.g., classroom demonstrations) with prior written approval from the principal or designated authority.
- **Therapy Animals:** Certified therapy animals may be allowed on a case-by-case basis to support student well-being, subject to prior approval and appropriate documentation.

### Procedures for Approval

- **Request Submission:** Individuals seeking to bring an animal onto school grounds must submit a written request to the principal at least two weeks in advance, detailing the purpose, type of animal, and duration of the visit.
- **Review Process:** The principal will review the request, considering factors such as the animal's health and behavior, potential allergies among students and staff, and the educational relevance.
- **Notification:** Upon approval, the school community will be notified in advance to address any concerns or accommodations needed.

**Responsibilities of Animal Handlers**

- **Supervision:** Animals must be under the control of a responsible adult at all times.
- **Health and Vaccination:** Proof of the animal's good health and up-to-date vaccinations must be provided prior to entry.
- **Cleanliness:** Handlers are responsible for the immediate clean-up of any waste or mess created by the animal.

**Restrictions**

- **Unattended Animals:** No animal is to be left unattended on school grounds.
- **Transportation:** Animals are not permitted on school transportation vehicles unless they are service animals accompanying individuals with disabilities.

**Liability**

- The owner or handler of the animal assumes full responsibility for any injury, damage, or loss caused by the animal while on school property.

**Non-Compliance**

- Individuals who bring animals onto school grounds without prior approval will be asked to remove the animal immediately and may face further action as deemed appropriate by the school administration.

Date ratified: April 2025

Date of next review: April 2028